

# **Disenfranchisement Policy in America and How it Reflects Public Opinion**

Gabriella Cristiano

A THESIS

Submitted to

The University of Michigan

Department of Political Science

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

HONORS BACHELORS OF ARTS

April 2024

Advised by Professor Arthur Lupia

**Table of Contents**

<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Literature Review.....</b>	<b>8</b>
a. Legal and Penal Codes.....	8
b. Impact on Government.....	11
c. Public Opinion.....	12
<b>Synopsis of Literature.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Theory/Hypothesis.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Survey.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Control:.....	19
Treatment:.....	20
<b>Data.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Table 1:.....	23
<b>Analysis.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Further Research.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Future Implications.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Figure 1:.....	35
Figure 2:.....	36
Figure 3:.....	37
Figure 4:.....	38
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>39</b>

## **Acknowledgements**

My interest in this project began with the realization that members of my own family and my friends are denied certain basic civil liberties in perpetuity because of their pasts. What started as a dinner table conversation became a passion to learn more about the complexities of the justice system and why current policies still exist today.

There are many people who need to be thanked for the completion of this project; for it would not be possible without them.

Firstly, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Professor Arthur Lupia who was instrumental in guiding my research and process from beginning to end. His help acquiring the funding for my survey allowed me to focus on the development of my theory, which was essential in achieving the best results.

Next, I would like to thank Mitchell, the graduate student who helped me work through the coding necessary to analyze my data. His guidance was invaluable.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my family and friends for their unwavering support throughout the entirety of this process. Without them, the completion of this thesis would have been exorbitantly more difficult.

Lastly, I would like to thank the University of Michigan for giving this amazing opportunity to an undergraduate student. Carrying out this research project taught me so much about myself, what I am capable of, and what I hope to accomplish in the future.

## **Abstract**

Americans with violent and nonviolent felony convictions can be stripped of their right to vote through state disenfranchisement policies. Because policy often groups felony statuses together, regardless of the nature of the crime, individuals are punished long after they complete their sentences. Each state designates their own penal code and establishes the population they believe should be stripped of certain rights. The outdated nature of existing research shows the lack of change over time. I examine the extent to which the American public is aware that current policy barred 4.6 million people from the right to vote in 2022<sup>1</sup>. My primary data collection is a national survey experiment that tests whether informing participants of different state penal codes through vignette-style questions would have an effect on their stance on disenfranchisement policy. Results showed that 67% of the control group (those who did not see vignettes) felt like they needed more information before definitively taking a stance on the issue, while 46% of the treatment group (those who did see the vignettes) felt this way. These results prove that exposure to the stimulus decreased hesitance by -31%.

## **Introduction**

The criminal justice system is regulated by American courts, both in federal and state sectors. This system allows each state court the autonomy to determine sentences. With no federal policy in place, there is inconsistency across states. In particular, people receive different sentences for committing similar crimes in different states. Because of the complexities and intricacies that develop from this dynamic, I conjectured that the American public is generally unaware of how their states handle felonious convictions. My motivation for writing this thesis is that many Americans likely do not understand that there are differing sentencing timelines and different appeal processes among states. I am particularly interested in Americans' knowledge and beliefs about state-level differences in felons' civil liberties after the completion of their sentences.

---

<sup>1</sup> Stewart, Christopher Uggen, Ryan Larson, Sarah Shannon and Robert. 2022. "Locked Out 2022: Estimates of People Denied Voting Rights." The Sentencing Project. October 26, 2022. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/locked-out-2022-estimates-of-people-denied-voting-rights/>.

This thesis addresses the question of whether Americans are aware that certain crimes include not only unequal imprisonment across states, but also the lifelong loss of certain voting rights in some states. This occurrence is known as disenfranchisement. I will use a survey experiment to examine the extent to which respondents, after learning details of a felonious circumstance, believe that a person should lose their right to vote, and whether that loss should continue for the rest of that person's life. Through this process we can learn about the extent to which current state disenfranchisement policies reflect the American public's belief systems about what should happen to felons after they leave prison.

Especially strict disenfranchisement policies in place today are multifaceted. Variations across states are important to understand. Consider, for example, a state like Alabama. It is clear by looking at their policy that states such as Alabama are extremely wary of restoring most felons' voting rights. Their restoration processes prove this, as Alabama categorizes certain acts "Crimes of Moral Turpitude", including about fifty specific felony convictions ("Crimes of Moral Turpitude" 2018). These convictions result in the loss of voting rights forever, unless the felon has the knowledge and resources to apply for restoration; however, this process is difficult and success is improbable. There exists another list of fourteen felonies in Alabama, which are "Ineligible Convictions," and only a complete pardon by the Board of Pardons and Paroles would allow a felon who committed one of these acts to vote again ("Voting Rights Restoration" 2017). I conjecture that the lack of success for both restoration and pardon are not only due to the state government's resistance, but can also be attributed to both felon and citizen lack of education on the issue. If awareness is limited, felons may not know the processes to restore their rights or do not have the resources to do so. Policies like this have real consequences. Consider the example of Larry Joe Newby. He is an Alabama resident who was convicted of a felony in

2003. In 2018, the *Campaign Legal Center* wrote about disenfranchisement's effect on his life.

Here is his story:

Larry Joe, 60, is a U.S. citizen living in Huntsville, Alabama. He has adopted his two grandsons (ages 14 and 15) and is supporting them through private school. He works for Madison County, and has gained increasing responsibility at work in the 17 years he has been there, now serving as an assistant supervisor. He is married, attends church, and regularly gives back to his community. Yet, he's unable to vote.

In 2003, Larry was convicted of receiving stolen property, a minor felony, and sentenced to 17 years in prison. He was released from the state penitentiary in 2007 and completed his parole in 2016.

Prior to his convictions, he was registered to vote in Madison County, but was removed from the voter registration list by the Madison County Board of Registrars because of his conviction. Larry completed his parole and probation in 2016, and soon after applied to register to vote, but his application was denied because the county claimed his felony convictions were "crimes of moral turpitude." Under Alabama law, if someone is convicted of a "crime of moral turpitude," he/she is prevented from registering to vote without applying to the state to restore the right<sup>2</sup>.

Mr. Newby's restoration status is unknown at this date, but his story is relevant for many reasons. Firstly, personal lack of knowledge regarding his own state's voting restoration processes is significant. Larry Joe is not solely at fault for being unaware of how the system works; I speculate it is not a priority of the prisons or courts to comprehensively inform felons of their rights.

Another significant portion of his story is the imbalance between his crime and his sentence. It is cited that he was convicted for *receiving* stolen property, which Alabama deems a 'crime of moral turpitude.' Therefore, his sentence supersedes his days in prison and time on parole, as his punishment will continue unless he finds restoration. So the question becomes: how can so many people be punished in this unbalanced fashion?

---

<sup>2</sup> "Alabama's Silenced Voters Tell Their Stories." 2018. Campaign Legal Center. June 19, 2018. <https://campaignlegal.org/story/alabamas-silenced-voters-tell-their-stories>.

Larry Joe Newby is just one example of a man who committed a non-violent, minor felony, and will be unable to vote for the rest of his life unless educated and given ample resources to *apply* for restoration. His story, and so many others like his, is what prompted me to attempt to find the root of the problem, in terms of societal education and acknowledgement. My project focuses on whether giving people information about felon disenfranchisement changes their views on the matter.

I test if the American public is aware of the system exemplified by Mr. Newby's story through a survey experiment. This experiment consists of a control and treatment group; the independent variable is education and is tested through vignette-style questions. Results of this experiment show that offering the public information on disenfranchisement causes a more definitive stance on the issue. In other words, the treatment group that is offered education on the matter is less likely to need more information regarding the issue when taking a stance. Additionally, within the treatment group, there is a decrease in hesitance after the treatment is given (71% decreased to 46%). Furthermore, this experiment reveals that those given the treatment were more likely to definitively answer that all states should take the right to vote away from felons, or no states should take the vote away from felons.

In this paper, I will first give context by offering literature that elaborates on legal and penal codes in the United States, the impact disenfranchisement has on the government, and public opinion work that already exists on the subject. Next, I will discuss the methodology used to administer a survey experiment. I will also include a copy of the survey, both the control and treatment branches. Then I will outline the theories and hypotheses that have led to the development of my survey experiment. Finally, I will analyze the data collected from the

experiment, specifying what can be drawn from the population, and what it tells us about American sentiment as a whole.

## **Literature Review**

### *a. Legal and Penal Codes*

Existing research assesses “whether states are becoming more or less restrictive of convicted felons' rights, identify[ing] rights most and least restricted, and not[ing] any regional differences in the restricting of civil rights” (Olivares et al., 1996: 10). Specifically, this work identifies the ‘get tough movement’ and how it has contributed to mass incarceration and the deployment of the death penalty. Olivares et al. reinvestigate the same nine rights focused on by Burton et al. in 1986: “voting, parenting, divorce, public employment, serving on a jury, holding public office, firearm ownership, criminal registration, and imposition of civil death” (Olivares et al., 1996: 10). Compared to the study done in 1986, Olivares et al. find that states restricted the rights of felons more from 1986 to 1996. The research determined that each of the nine rights was equally or more restricted in 1996 as compared to 1986. While this data has not been updated, it gave insight to how American policy has changed over time, and gave a baseline for testing the education levels of the citizenry.

There are fifty-two American penal codes (each state, Washington D.C., and the federal guideline), which draw clear distinctions from one another. Some states have not modernized their codes, while others have. Many states look to the *Model Penal Code* when their policy does not provide an adequate law. This code is an overarching publication created by the American Legal Institute that helps guide state legislators in determining what they believe their specific state codes should be. In other words, this is a generalized doctrine of criminal penal codes in



America. Because of the diversity of codes, there is rarely only one way ‘America’ handles each situation; it typically varies in each state. However, the Model Penal Code is “the closest thing to being an American criminal code,” even more so than the federal criminal code (Robinson & Dubber, 2007: 320). Existing research provides background on how the state and federal courts pursue convictions and examines how corrupt methodology may contribute to a higher felon incarceration rate. This information allows me to assess how the process of conviction plays a role in incarceration, and how inappropriate sentencing may generate a large population of disenfranchised individuals who may never have been felons in a different conviction scenario. I used these inferences in creating and developing my survey. Knowing the convoluted nature of penal codes in America, and specifically how there is not just one ‘right way’, is very important in taking a stance on the issue. So one question that motivates my work below is: Does the lackluster and disjointed nature of the system cause Americans to trust and endorse it less?

The vague nature of sentencing guidelines disallows specifics to be given on what retribution is adequate in determining sentences. Past researchers presented “an alternative approach to specify more precisely the effects of legally relevant factors on sentencing outcomes and test the approach using felony sentencing data from Washington State” (Engen & Gainey, 2000: 1207). Their findings show that in the year 2000, justice systems failed to make sentencing decisions accurately and efficiently and vast improvement is possible. This begs the question, why has the system not been changed if proven to have systemic flaws? My hypothesis asserts that lack of public pushback may factor into the answers to these questions. Therefore, this literature is vital in allowing my research to further explain how many individuals are wrongly or inappropriately incarcerated, explore why disenfranchisement is not always necessary or

effective for every felon/ex-felon, and survey peoples' positions regarding the disenfranchisement of those who fall victim to this inaccurate system.

A more specific issue in disenfranchisement is the nature of fraud code sentencing, and how “lumping so much conduct under a single statutory umbrella” disallows any separation between the varying severities of fraud (Baer, 2018: 225). In other words, fraud crimes should be sentenced by degree, similar to homicide or robbery, in order to differentiate between the different types of white-collar crimes committed. The American legal system uses statutes that do not use methodology that “distinguish[es] wrongdoing... [rather just] prohibits it” (Baer, 2018: 225). These assertions contribute to my thesis because it focuses on nonviolent felonies. There is a large gap in research about how these kinds of crimes are treated, and even more specifically, what the sentencing looks like. Many people associate fraud with wealthy people who get sentenced to ornamental prisons, but few discuss the ramifications of the sentences after prison. Therefore, I use this literature in writing survey questions to examine if people are aware that different types of fraud are felonies and that in some states felony convictions can affect people for years after they have served their time.

Particular research discusses the evolution of Virginia's sentencing guidelines and how standardizing and automating a system where data is collected on each felony reduced “unwarranted disparity in the sentencing of felony offenders” (Farrar-Owens, 2013: 168). This development began in the 1980s and continues to assist policymakers and practitioners of the court in formulating and enforcing criminal justice sentencing. Existing literature offers evidence of reform that has been implemented and produced successful results. With this effort in Virginia, I can compare the current federal guidelines/practices and assess how and why they may not work as effectively in a state with more antiquated policy. This direct comparison of

policy happenings will be shown to the treatment group in order to get initial reactions. This can help identify the real impact of systems like the one implemented in Virginia and formulate an educated position on what modifications of the criminal justice system would result in more just convictions of those who commit crimes.

*b. Impact on Government*

A key argument from Guy Padraic Hamilton-Smith and Matt Vogel's work states that disenfranchisement is unconstitutional in nature because it leads to a greater rate of recidivism, or reincarceration. Because of this correlation, researchers argue "it should be abandoned as a draconian and costly practice of a pre-democratic era" (Hamilton-Smith, Guy Padraic; Vogel, Matt, 2012: 408). If the criminal justice system attempts to follow a rehabilitative model, how is stripping individuals of their rights productive, if in practice it will most likely lead them to recommit crime? Current research identifies this dichotomy between intention and institution, aiming to identify which holds the most validity. My research attempts to corroborate this evidence by gauging if public opinion regarding the harm of disenfranchisement is swayed after learning about the specifics and shortcomings of the institution.

Existing research compares levels of disenfranchisement in a particular state with its specific restrictions, looking for a correlation between the two. This research and methodology create a strong image of what disenfranchisement looked like in America in 2016 and how these conditions not only affect each state, but the country as a whole. This data will be important for my thesis in multiple dimensions. It will be used to create my survey in order to test if people are aware of just how prevalent disenfranchisement is in America. While the purpose of my survey is to see if individuals' stance on disenfranchisement changes as they learn more about the broad

categories of felonious crime, I collect data on participants' awareness of how many people are currently disenfranchised.

Current research shows that allowing people to participate in society following a felony conviction increases their chances of successful re-assimilation. A study by Victoria Shineman surveys citizens with felony convictions that were stripped of their right to vote but became eligible or had their right reinstated. She runs two studies, one in Virginia and one in Ohio. Shineman states that from both surveys her results show "that reversing disenfranchisement causes newly enfranchised citizens to increase their pro-democratic attitudes and behaviors," resulting in lower crime and recidivism rates (Shineman, 2018: 1). This study offers evidence that giving ex-felons the right to vote not only makes them think of the government optimistically, but also allows them to trust federalism and law enforcement more. This finding reveals that a felon (regardless of the crime they serve for) is more likely to be a positive part of society if they are allowed to reenter as a citizen with full rights. Allowing a person to feel heard and to play a role in society tends to decrease their likelihood of recommitting a crime. Shineman reveals that disenfranchisement gives ex-felons greater reason to engage in anti-social practices, as they are not given any stakes in the society that they are living in. This data is important in supporting my hypothesis that the education of the American public on disenfranchisement would change the way they view it. It reveals that disenfranchisement is destructive, not only for the ex-felons, but for all of society.

### *c. Public Opinion*

While I conducted my own survey of public opinion, I also needed to understand existing data that reflects public opinion on the general idea of disenfranchisement in America. Research

by Jeff Manza, Clem Brooks, and Christopher Uggen published in 2004 addresses this question. At the time, “Disenfranchised felons...constitute[ed], by far, the largest group of Americans denied the franchise” of voting (Manza et al., 2004: 276). While some action was taken in the early 2000s to bridge the divide, the main issue with achieving reform was citizens’ distrust in felons’ behavior when reentering society: “Public fear of crime coexists alongside broad support for basic civil liberties, democracy, and a right to due process for those accused of crime” (Manza et al., 2004: 276). Manza et al. find that while a large proportion of respondents do not believe in the disenfranchisement of felons, often their fear that ex-felons might add to crime in society overpowers their rejection of disenfranchisement policy. My hypothesis contends that this statement is still accurate today, and if their survey was carried out again in the modern day, a similar sentiment would be voiced by American citizens. They surveyed Americans in 2002 using a national telephone survey, finding “that between 60 and 68 percent of the public believes that felony probationers, who make up a full one-fourth of the disenfranchised felon population, should have their voting rights restored,” “60 percent support voting rights for parolees (who have been released from prison), and 66 percent support voting rights for even ex-felons convicted of a violent crime who have served their entire sentence” (Manza et al., 2004: 283). I build upon these results with a new survey asking a similar question and then emphasize the type of felons that are experiencing these consequences with the addition of the vignettes. I can analyze if the addition of more specific variables changes public opinion, while also observing if general public sentiments have changed in the past 20 years. Finally, this source paired with my findings may prove that public pushback is not the reason criminal justice reform is failing, but actually the failure of government efforts. If both my and Manza et. al’s findings show the

majority of people do not believe in certain disenfranchisement laws, then we have to ask: why are we still living in a society with these outdated, traditional statutes?

Research in the Fordham Urban Law Journal discusses “public attitudes toward the disenfranchisement of felons” (Pinaire, Heumann, and Bilotta 2003: 1531). They use a telephone survey approach to understand the reasoning behind public attitudes when asking about disenfranchisement policy. Results show that of those 500 individuals surveyed, they were “able to conclude that 81.7% of those surveyed rejected the policy of *permanent disenfranchisement* for convicted felons” (Pinaire, Heumann, and Bilotta 2003: 1540). However, their survey questions attempt to identify reasoning behind participants’ view of felons in general and do not differentiate individuals based upon the crimes committed. While I believe this general finding is significant of public sentiment, the rest of the survey is too general to offer adequate insight into the real intricacies of the system.

### **Synopsis of Literature**

The three components of the literature review are the basis for understanding why I designed and conducted the survey experiment centered around education. Specifically, it is important to recognize the variance in legal and penal codes across America as it results in felons being treated differently around the country. Furthermore, the lack of an official federal penal code<sup>3</sup> realizes the opportunity for variance in sentencing. The survey uses these niche aspects of the system to see if the further information has an effect on the populace’s stances.

In addition, the role that disenfranchisement has on the government and society is significant. Not only does the current system contradict the rehabilitative model advertised, but it

---

<sup>3</sup> “Federal Sentencing Guidelines.” 2023. Cornell Law School. LII Legal Information Institute. January 2023. [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/federal\\_sentencing\\_guidelines](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/federal_sentencing_guidelines).

further disconnects ex-felons with society. Research reveals that disenfranchisement increases recidivism, or reincarceration, due to individuals' lack of stake in society.

Finally, I include previous public opinion research carried out on disenfranchisement and similar topics as it provides a basis for what findings already exist, can be built upon, and may have changed since. Importantly, research on disenfranchisement policy, and voting specifically, are out of date making my updated research crucial.

### **Theory/Hypothesis**

There is a specific gap in the literature that speaks about disenfranchisement policy and American public opinion, pertaining to the role awareness of each individual citizen plays in the growth and development of policy. While thinkers like Pinaire et al. thought about public sentiment around disenfranchisement policy, their methods lacked nuance and overgeneralized the felon population in their survey. In doing this, participants answered questions based on their feelings towards *all* felons without consideration of the specific crimes each individual committed. That is the motivation of my research; I believe that if more awareness is put on the categorical breadth of the term 'felony', and how much one can lose from a felonious conviction, public sentiment would be different overall. In other words, there are many studies and surveys that ask if people support the disenfranchisement of felons, or subscribe to the idea that having the right to vote is the most basic civil liberty for an American citizen. But, the literature does not go further and unpack why these studies yield the numbers they do. They simply pose the percentages of participants that answer a certain way, given whatever knowledge they have, and proceed with the findings. Significantly, even if these surveys showed displeasure with policy in the past, change rarely spawned from it.

Does the diverse split among studies limit the change that has occurred? I hypothesize that if a study could prove that a majority of respondents lean toward a particular response when details about the penal system are presented, previous study data would reveal that public opinion is influenced when the population is unaware of the nuances of the system. Because of the disharmony and complexity of penal codes among state governments, I predict this to be the reason why the results do not show the American public favoring one side or another. However, I believe that my study, which presents the complexity of the issue, may yield a majority result that shows Americans disagree on the overall disenfranchisement of certain felons' voting rights.

The theory correlating with this hypothesis relies on the disjointed relationship between public opinion and governmental action. I believe there is a disconnect between the American governmental system and the people in the current period, particularly with policy regarding the criminal justice system. Therefore, the current state-by-state model employed by the federal government, and underpublicized to the American public, seems to play a role in the perpetuation of the punitive nature of the system even after felons are released from prison. Therefore, the assertion that information regarding the system could result in people supporting a more lenient approach assumes a lack of information is given to the public in the first place. This is the disconnect referenced in the beginning of this section and one I attempt to identify in my research. The methods in testing this disconnect will be more specifically outlined in subsequent sections, but the idea of misinformation or lack of information is central to the hypothesis of this paper.



## **Methodology**

To test the hypothesis, I conducted a survey experiment on a group of American adults over the age of eighteen. The purpose of this survey was to test if the application of information changes a person's stance on disenfranchisement policy. A control and treatment group received the same four questions, and then the treatment group received an additional six. These included vignette-style questions, or short synopses of how different felons would be punished in specific states, and the disenfranchisement they would experience pertaining to voting. The object of the vignette is not to offer an accurate prison sentence for the character, but rather to enlighten the participant on what the character may experience in terms of loss of voting rights based on their crime and state of perpetration. Both the control and treatment groups were guided on the what a felony convictions means, receiving the following lines at the beginning of the survey:

“In some states, when people commit certain types of serious crimes, they lose the right to vote forever.

In other states, when people commit the same crimes, they lose the right to vote, but only while they are in prison.

In other states, no person ever loses their right to vote as a result of committing a crime.”

There is no mention of the term ‘felony’ or ‘disenfranchisement’ in either group's survey in order to mitigate misunderstanding or confusion. Therefore, these initial lines are used to offer some information about how criminals may or may not be treated in America.

In the treatment group, after answering the same four questions the control group received, the participant was asked how strongly they agree or disagree with the punishment of each character. After the participants completed these questions, they were presented with the same general question as prior to the vignettes (Q1, Q1.1, and Q10 are all the same).

“In some states, when people commit certain types of crimes, they lose the right to vote. Which of the following statements best reflects your current point of view on this issue?

- a. All states should do this.
- b. No states should do this.
- c. Before I answer, I would like to know more about the types of crimes and whether they are losing the right to vote forever or just while they are in jail.”

With this, my intention was to see if the administration of education changes the way the participants view losing the right to vote. Does the specific felony in the vignette affect the participant’s answer? Does the participant believe in multiple courses of action or just one? Does the participant believe in different treatments for different types of felons? The goal of the survey was to reveal how, if any, change occurred when participants were given a broad breadth of knowledge on the matter, as a way of modeling the complex effects that ensue according to individual states for different levels of felonies. Furthermore, questions to capture participants' feelings about the criminal justice system (non-vignettes) were used twice in the survey, using the exact same language both times. This was done intentionally in an attempt to observe if the treatment group answered the same question differently before and after the administration of information to participants.

There are four vignette questions, each accompanied by a scale of agreement. This scale spans from *strongly disagree*, *somewhat disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *somewhat agree*, and *strongly agree*. Each vignette asked for participants to rate their agreement on a separate scale for each independent case. This structure looked to make an observation between disenfranchisement preference and type of crime (i.e., violent or nonviolent). Discussion of these observations and findings will be done in more detail in the “Analysis” section of this paper.

**Survey***Control:*

In some states, when people commit certain types of serious crimes, they lose the right to vote forever.

In other states, when people commit the same crimes, they lose the right to vote, but only while they are in prison.

In other states, no person ever loses their right to vote as a result of committing a crime.

1. In some states, when people commit certain types of crimes, they lose the right to vote. Which of the following statements best reflects your current point of view on this issue?
  - a. All states should do this.
  - b. No states should do this.
  - c. Before I answer, I would like to know more about the types of crimes and whether they are losing the right to vote forever or just while they are in jail.

- 1a. *If you chose answer "c" to answer Question #1, please answer again and choose between choices "a" and "b":* In some states, when people commit certain types of crimes, they lose the right to vote. Which of the following statements best reflects your current point of view on this issue?
  - a. All states should do this.
  - b. No states should do this.

2. Do you ever think about the criminal justice system when you are making decisions about who to vote for in an election?
  - a. Always
  - b. Most of the time
  - c. About half the time
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
3. Think of all the people with whom you have a close personal relationship. This includes family members, friends, neighbors, or people you know from school or work. Please choose the statement that is closest to what you know about them.
  - a. None of these people have been arrested.
  - b. One or more of these people have been arrested, but none of them have gone to prison for more than a month.
  - c. One or more of these people have been arrested and one or more of them have gone to prison for more than a month..

4. In 2020, it is estimated that about 6 million American citizens were unable to vote in the presidential election because they had committed a crime. Which of the following statements best reflects your feeling about this number?
- It is more than I expected.
  - It is less than I expected.
  - It is about the same as I expected.

*Treatment:*

In some states, when people commit certain types of serious crimes, they lose the right to vote forever.

In other states, when people commit the same crimes, they lose the right to vote, but only while they are in prison.

In other states, no person ever loses their right to vote as a result of committing a crime.

- 1.1 In some states, when people commit certain types of crimes, they lose the right to vote.

Which of the following statements best reflects your current point of view on this issue?

- All states should do this.
  - No states should do this.
  - Before I answer, I would like to know more about the types of crimes and whether they are losing the right to vote forever or just while they are in jail.
- 1a.1 *If you chose answer "c" to answer Question #1, please answer again and choose between choices "a" and "b":* In some states, when people commit certain types of crimes, they lose the right to vote. Which of the following statements best reflects your current point of view on this issue?
- All states should do this.
  - No states should do this.

- 2.1 Do you ever think about the criminal justice system when you are making decisions about who to vote for in an election?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Rarely
- Never

3.1 Think of all the people with whom you have a close personal relationship. This includes family members, friends, neighbors, or people you know from school or work. Please choose the statement that is closest to what you know about them.

- a. None of these people have been arrested.
- b. One or more of these people have been arrested, but none of them have gone to prison for more than a month.
- c. One or more of these people have been arrested and one or more of them have gone to prison for more than a month..

4.1 In 2020, it is estimated that about 6 million American citizens were unable to vote in the presidential election because they had committed a crime. Which of the following statements best reflects your feeling about this number?

- a. It is more than I expected.
- b. It is less than I expected.
- c. It is about the same as I expected.

5.1 In some states<sup>4</sup>, it is considered a serious crime to get married without properly ending a previous marriage. Mike lives in one of these states and got married before legally ending his previous marriage. Because of this, he can be imprisoned and lose his right to vote forever.

- a. How do you feel about Mike losing his right to vote forever?

6. Sally was found guilty of being in possession of drugs when she was younger. She spent a few years in prison for this crime and lost her right to vote while she was in prison. Because of the rules in her state, she regained the right to vote when she was released<sup>5</sup>.

- a. How do you feel about Sally regaining her right to vote?

<sup>4</sup> Reference to Alabama restoration of rights processes (“Voting Rights Restoration.” 2018. ACLU of Alabama. May 1, 2018. <https://www.aclualabama.org/en/voting-rights-restoration>.)

<sup>5</sup> Reference to New York restoration of rights processes (“Voting After Incarceration.” n.d. New York State Board of Elections. Accessed March 11, 2024. <https://elections.ny.gov/voting-after-incarceration>.)

7. Andrew was found guilty of robbing a house. Andrew went to prison for a few years and is currently on parole. He lost his right to vote when he was found guilty, and still does not have this right because he is on parole. He could be on parole for many years. His state rules indicate that when his parole is over, he will regain the right to vote<sup>6</sup>.
- a. How do you feel about Andrew retaining the right to vote?

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

8. Ann was found guilty of murder. Ann is in prison and does not have the right to vote. If she is ever released, she could regain her rights by getting a pardon from the governor, but this is very rare<sup>7</sup>. Otherwise, according to her state, she will lose her voting rights forever.
- a. How do you feel about Ann potentially losing her voting rights forever?

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

9. Ricky was found guilty of forgery. He spent several years in prison and several more years on parole. Ricky never lost his right to vote, even when he was in prison, because of his state's rules<sup>8</sup>.
- a. How do you feel about Ricky never losing his right to vote?

|-----|-----|-----|-----|  
 strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

10. In some states, when people commit certain types of crimes, they lose the right to vote. Which of the following statements best reflects your current point of view on this issue?
- a. All states should do this.
- b. No states should do this.
- c. Before I answer, I would like to know more about the types of crimes and whether they are losing the right to vote forever or just while they are in jail.

<sup>6</sup> Reference to Georgia restoration of rights processes ("Felon Voting Rights." 2023. December 5, 2023. <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights>.)

<sup>7</sup> Reference to Virginia restoration of rights processes ("Restoration of Rights Process." n.d. Accessed March 11, 2024. <https://www.restore.virginia.gov/restoration-of-rights-process/>.)

<sup>8</sup> Reference to Maine restoration of rights processes ("Felon Voting Rights." 2023. December 5, 2023. <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights>.)

## **Data**

The data was collected through a national survey experiment administered through Qualtrics using a sample of 1041 participants drawn by Prolific. This experiment was conducted on January 26 through January 27, 2024. Participants were American citizens able to vote, and they were randomly assigned to the control and treatment groups upon their consent (Figure 1). The average reward per hour was recorded to \$21.05/hr, and the median time of completion was 2 minutes and 51 seconds.

The data reveals that on average about 520 people answered each question given. In order to properly visualize and analyze the results, the programming language R was used to filter and clean the data. As seen in the survey, the control group was given a series of four questions regarding disenfranchisement. The treatment group was given the same initial four questions, then five vignette-style questions (the treatment) and a final gauging question. The table on the next page summarizes the findings from the vignette questions of the treatment group (Table 1).

Table 1:

<b><u>Question</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Somewhat Disagree</u></b>	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Somewhat Agree</u></b>	<b><u>Strongly Agree</u></b>
Q5. In some states, it is considered a serious crime to get married without properly ending a previous marriage. Mike lives in one of these states and got married before legally ending his previous marriage. Because of this, he can be imprisoned and lose his right to vote forever.	318	123	33	35	13

<p>Q6. Sally was found guilty of being in possession of drugs when she was younger. She spent a few years in prison for this crime and lost her right to vote while she was in prison. Because of the rules in her state, she regained the right to vote when she was released.</p>	37	30	24	107	324
<p>Q7. Andrew was found guilty of robbing a house. Andrew went to prison for a few years and is currently on parole. He lost his right to vote when he was found guilty, and still does not have this right because he is on parole. He could be on parole for many years. His state rules indicate that when his parole is over, he will regain the right to vote.</p>	27	58	57	157	223
<p>Q8. Ann was found guilty of murder. Ann is in prison and does not have the right to vote. If she is ever released, she could regain her rights by getting a pardon from the governor, but this is very rare. Otherwise, according to her state, she will lose her voting rights forever.</p>	89	73	56	128	176
<p>Q9. Ricky was found guilty of forgery. He</p>					



spent several years in prison and several more years on parole. Ricky never lost his right to vote, even when he was in prison, because of his state's rules.	79	138	80	105	120
---	----	-----	----	-----	-----

### Analysis

I used R to deduce the difference between control and treatment groups, in terms of if the application of vignettes reduced the number of participants who felt they needed more information. Results from a t-test showed that 67% of the control group (Q1, those who did not see vignettes) felt like they needed more information, while 46% of the treatment group (Q10, those who did see the vignettes) felt like they needed more information. This yielded a p-value of  $1.034e-12$ , proving to be statistically significant. The proportional split of control and treatment group participants who needed more information can be found in Figure 2. Because I made this comparison between the control and treatment groups, it is assumed there is a causal relationship between being exposed to the stimulus and perceiving a need for more information. I also used R also to evaluate responses to this question within the treatment group, who were asked the question both before and after being exposed to the stimulus. This analysis revealed that 71% of people who answered Q1.1 (treatment group before administration of vignettes) needed more information, while only 46% of people who answered Q10 (treatment group after administration of vignettes) needed more information. Therefore, there was about a -35% change, or 35% decrease, in the percentage of participants who needed more information after the administration of vignettes.

The goal of the analysis was to observe if the treatment, administered through the vignettes, has an effect on participant disenfranchisement policy stance. Next, I compare the

control and treatment groups in terms of how many participants answered definitively, “All states should do this” or “No states should do this,” without being forced. The results show that 16% of the control group answered that no state should take the vote away from people who commit certain types of crimes, while 30% of the post-vignette treatment group answered this way. This t-test yielded a p-value =  $2.693e-07$  making it a statistically significant proportional difference. The proportional split of control and treatment group participants who definitely said no state should revoke felons’ right to vote can be found in Figure 3. These results reveal a causal relationship between the independent variable of information through vignettes and having a stronger stance on the issue. Because the treatment group projected higher values of definitive responses, we are able to infer that the information learned through the survey was a factor in their decisiveness.

To better understand the effect of the treatment (vignettes), I tested the difference in response rates between the forced choice of the control group (Q1a) and the definitive answers of the final question in the treatment group (Q10). These two questions are not verbatim and cannot be directly compared. However, by analyzing the split between the forced group in the control, I am looking at the instinctual lean of those who are unsure and would like more information. Their response to the forced choice gives an understanding as to where they want to stand. Taking this notion and comparing it to those offered that information (treatment Q10), I analyzed if the administration of the vignettes brought the averages of responses closer to equilibrium compared to when I observed the initial responses of the control group without forced choice (Q1) versus the treatment results (Q10). To remind the reader, these results yielded that 16% of the control group answered that no state should take the right to vote away from felons, while 30% of the treatment group answered this way after seeing the vignettes. Both groups had the

option to answer that they would like more information before making a decision. However in Q1a (forced choice), participants did not have the option to opt for more information. When comparing the forced choice question of the control group to the post-vignette question treatment of the treatment group, I observed a closer relationship between the numbers. In the control group, 36% of forced participants answered that all states should take the vote away from felons. As seen earlier, 30% of the post-vignette treatment group answered this way ( $p = 0.03448$ , statistically significant). Here, the difference between response percentages were smaller than before. The proportional split of control and treatment group participants who answered no state should revoke felons' voting rights can be found in Figure 4. To reiterate, the treatment group question being analyzed, Q10, is not a forced choice and has a third option, allowing participants to deem they still would like information. But the control question being looked at is a forced choice, allowing only for an all state response or a no state response. Therefore, the response values to this question will inevitably be higher as less options are available to the respondents. The importance of the finding is that the gap lessened between the number of respondents for each question. In the previous analysis, we were comparing percentages of about 16% to about 30% when looking at the difference between control and treatment. But here, we see closer numbers of about 36% and 30%. This reveals that the post-vignette treatment response rates are more similar to the forced choice control responses. Significantly, the increase in definitiveness as a metric proves that even when a third option of more information is available, the treatment group is almost as likely to pick a definitive answer compared to those forced into a definitive answer in the control group. That the addition of context (treatment group) yields a greater definitiveness similar to the forced choice in the control group.

The next observation assessed if a correlation exists between personal experience with disenfranchisement and policy position. For this, I examined the treatment group specifically. First, participants' responses to Q3.1 recorded if they knew anybody personally who was imprisoned for more than a month. These responses, observed with Q1.1 (the treatment group initial assessment of policy position), gave a look into if initial stance and experience correlate. First, I tested for a correlation between the following groups: (1) participants who designated that no state should take voting rights away from felons and (2) participants who answered that they know one or more people who have gone to prison for more than a month. Here, the goal of the analysis was to answer, "Does having a personal connection to people that may have experienced disenfranchisement cause a decrease in participant support of disenfranchisement policy?" Results show that before the showing of vignettes to the treatment group, 16% answered definitively "no states should do this" (not including those forced to choose). Furthermore, 24% of the treatment group answered that a family member or friend "have been arrested and one or more of them have gone to prison for more than a month." This t-test yielded a p-value = 0.002437, making it statistically significant. This result was important because it shows that all of the participants who identified with knowing someone who has been incarcerated for more than a month did not definitively oppose disenfranchisement policy. A smaller percentage of participants answered definitively "no state should do this" compared to those who answered that they were personally affected by disenfranchisement. If there was a direct correlation, we would see a closer connection between these values. To see the effect of the vignettes on this group of participants, I then assessed their responses to Q10 and Q3.1. To remind the reader, Q10 is the restatement of Q1.1, only after the administration of the vignette questions. Results show that 30% of participants answered that no states should take the right to vote away from felons. As

calculated before, 24% of participants answered Q3.1 with the designation that they have family or friends that were imprisoned for more than a month. These results yielded a p-value = 0.02973, making them statistically significant. Looking at the increase of those answering definitively “no states should do this” proves the overall effectiveness of information on participants rather than personal experience. The pre-vignette response to Q1.1 is revealing of the lack of influence experience has on the respondent. Furthermore, by testing before and after the administration of vignettes, we can deduce education to be the main factor changing response rates.

On the alternate side of the spectrum, I also wanted to test that if the participants that did not have personal experience with disenfranchisement were more likely to be supportive of stricter policy. Before showing the vignettes, 12% of treatment participants answered Q1.1 with the notion that all states should rescind the right to vote from felons (not including those forced to choose). As for Q3.1, 46% of participants revealed a lack of personal experience with disenfranchisement, answering that none of their close family or friends have been arrested. A t-test between these two values yielded a p-value =  $2.2e-16$ , proving it statistically significant. In terms of analysis, these results show that those who do not have disenfranchisement experience do not seem intrinsically motivated to support the disenfranchisement of felons' voting rights. There is a large margin between the responses in Q1.1 and Q3.1 (12% versus 46%). I wanted to see if the vignettes would change this observation, so a t-test was run between Q10 and Q3.1. Of the participants in the treatment group, 25% answered Q10 with the choice that all states should take the right to vote away from felons. As noted previously, 46% answered Q3.1 with none of their family having previously been arrested. This t-test was statistically significant, yielding a p-value =  $8.136e-14$ . Here, I observed that the vignettes did increase the number of participants

that answered definitively that certain felons should lose their right to vote, however, a strong correlation between lack of experience with disenfranchisement and choosing to support strict policy cannot be assumed.

In those exposed to disenfranchisement and those unexposed, the factor that causes their opinion on policy to change is the increase in information they have, not their previous experience. When testing for this, I looked to observe if previous experience played a role in the results of the survey, and most importantly, if it changed the overall effect of the independent variable: education. But, I believe this testing only increased the evidence, proving how lack of education throughout the American public is a main cause of the stagnancy seen in disenfranchisement policy. Not only were the correlations weak between experience and likelihood of supporting more lenient/strict policy, but it further reveals the efficacy of the education variable.

### **Further Research**

By administering this survey experiment, I tested if the treatment (1) caused participants to need less information regarding disenfranchisement, (2) prompted participants to have a clearer stance on the issue, and (3) mitigated any experience bias participants may have previously had. As discussed earlier, the treatment group required less information after receiving the vignettes and took a clearer stance compared to the control group. However, I did not observe experience bias in this survey, importantly.

If given the opportunity to build on these results and perform further research, there are a few things I would test. Firstly, my next experiment would take into account demographic information, so I could do subgroup analysis to better understand if race, gender, political

affiliation, etc. play a role in policy stance. Next, I would include another forced choice question at the end of the treatment group for those still unsure of their stance. By doing this, I could see if there was any movement overall towards more lenient or stricter policy compared to before the vignettes. Lastly, if given the opportunity, I would attempt to increase my sample size to get a more accurate representation of the country as a whole. If funding allowed, I would attempt to pull a proportionally representative sample from each state. This would give an understanding of if a state's citizenry's opinion aligns with its disenfranchisement policy.

### **Future Implications**

As discussed in the “Literature Review”, the disenfranchisement of felons has effects beyond that of stripping Americans of their constitutional rights. Not only does it increase rates of crime and recidivism, but it disallows the positive reentry of individuals and further perpetuates antiquated stereotypes<sup>9</sup>. My research began with the understanding that disenfranchisement of all felons can be extremely destructive not only for the individual, but for all of society. I thought about the general idea of a felon, the distinction between crimes (or lack thereof), and designed my survey accordingly. My research differs from what already exists because of the specificities it relies on. The main proponent of the experiment is the vignette-style questions of the treatment group, which offer participants information about a state's disenfranchisement policy dependent on the crime committed in each scenario. I chose this design because of what was lacking in prior research. What was done in the past gave a very generalized view of if the population believes in disenfranchisement as a whole, but the results

---

<sup>9</sup> Budd, Kristen M., and Niki Monazzam. 2023. “Increasing Public Safety by Restoring Voting Rights.” The Sentencing Project. April 25, 2023.  
<https://www.sentencingproject.org/policy-brief/increasing-public-safety-by-restoring-voting-rights/>.

did not effect change because they did not identify a clear cause or factor. I took this observation and attempted to see if educating a participant myself would cause a change.

The findings of this study are important because they prove the effectiveness of educating the population on disenfranchisement to be positive. Showing participants that felonies of all natures are often treated the same way, and may result in the stripping of rights forever, changes their stance on the issue. These results are important for future reform. There is still a large population of ex-felons without the right to vote and disenfranchisement is a relatively modern problem: “Over 4.6 million Americans cannot vote due to a felony conviction – nearly four times as many people since the onset of mass incarceration in 1973”<sup>10</sup>. But it is important that this number is finally dropping.

The peak of disenfranchised voters due to felony conviction existed in 2016 (~ 6 million)<sup>11</sup>. Therefore the drop in recent years shows not only governments willing to make changes, but also populaces who are less afraid of those previously convicted. It is safe to assume that these populaces are still taking cues from their governments regarding this issue, so an increase in their education would only expedite the process of re-enfranchising individuals. The research by Jeff Manza, Clem Brooks, and Christopher Uggen published in 2004 reveals that public fear of felons often outweighs their lack of support for disenfranchisement policies. If governments used educational methods to inform citizens that a large majority of ex-felons in our communities want to contribute positively, factors such as fear can be mitigated.

Furthermore, following methods of my research, if governments show citizens that many ex-felons in communities that want to contribute are positive members of society, citizens would

---

<sup>10</sup> Budd, Kristen M., and Niki Monazzam. 2023. “Increasing Public Safety by Restoring Voting Rights.” The Sentencing Project. April 25, 2023.

<https://www.sentencingproject.org/policy-brief/increasing-public-safety-by-restoring-voting-rights/>.

<sup>11</sup> Porter, Nicole D., and Morgan McLeod. 2023. “Expanding the Vote: State Felony Disenfranchisement Reform, 1997-2023.” The Sentencing Project. October 18, 2023.

<https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/expanding-the-vote-state-felony-disenfranchisement-reform-1997-2023/>.



most likely be more open to their reinstatement of rights. If we circle back to the man that opened the paper, Mr. Larry Joe Newby, citizens can see how his felony is not an accurate representation of his character or what he contributes to society. And importantly, those whom society fears the most (violent felons such as murderers or rapists) are often not given the opportunity for enfranchisement even in lenient states. This is information that governments and organizations should give to communities so those who deserve it can have their rights restored.

I believe that if organizations or governments follow the methods of my research by using education of the nuances of the system as the main focus, a large proportion of Americans would be open to disenfranchisement policy reform. This does not mean change will happen quickly, but my research proves that a lack of education on the issue exists. If fostered correctly, I believe that an educated public would believe it just to reinstate those who are disenfranchised for the incorrect reasons.

### **Conclusion**

I administered this survey experiment in an attempt to reveal that the American public is uneducated on disenfranchisement policy in America, and if given adequate information, their stance becomes more definitive. My results prove this to be true, as the treatment group was more likely to adopt a stance after the administration of the treatment. Furthermore, the treatment group was more definitive than the control group, who did not receive information (education). It is significant that the treatment group's definitiveness was closer in percentage to the control group's forced choice than the initial gauge question of the control group. That reveals that the treatment group was almost as certain as those forced to choose in the control group. Importantly, my survey also gave a greater understanding of the correlation between personal

experience with disenfranchisement policy and stance. Through analysis, I found that there is not a drastic lean one way or the other: those with experience are not more likely to be lenient, and those without experience are not more likely to be strict. This further proves that those with personal experience may not know their own, or their loved one's own, rights.

I believe that this survey touches on an aspect of research that has not been used in this sector before. While the issue of disenfranchisement is large and getting states to align their individual policies is difficult, the information gained from my research gives policymakers and organizations a greater understanding at how to convince the public of the importance of the issue. Even given my short survey experiment, people's minds were changed. Imagine the impact a government could have if they wanted to.

## Appendix

Figure 1:

**CONSENT FORM**

**Disenfranchisement in America and How it Reflects Public Opinion**  
**HUM#00242137**

Principal Investigator: Gabriella Cristiano, University of Michigan  
Faculty Advisor: Arthur Lupia, Ph.D., University of Michigan

You are invited to participate in a research study about voting.

If you agree to be part of the research study, we will ask questions about your views on who votes in US elections.

Benefits of the research: Understand more about who can vote in US elections.

Risks and discomforts: The survey includes questions about people in different situations and whether they should be allowed to vote.

Compensation: You will be paid \$1 for completing the survey.

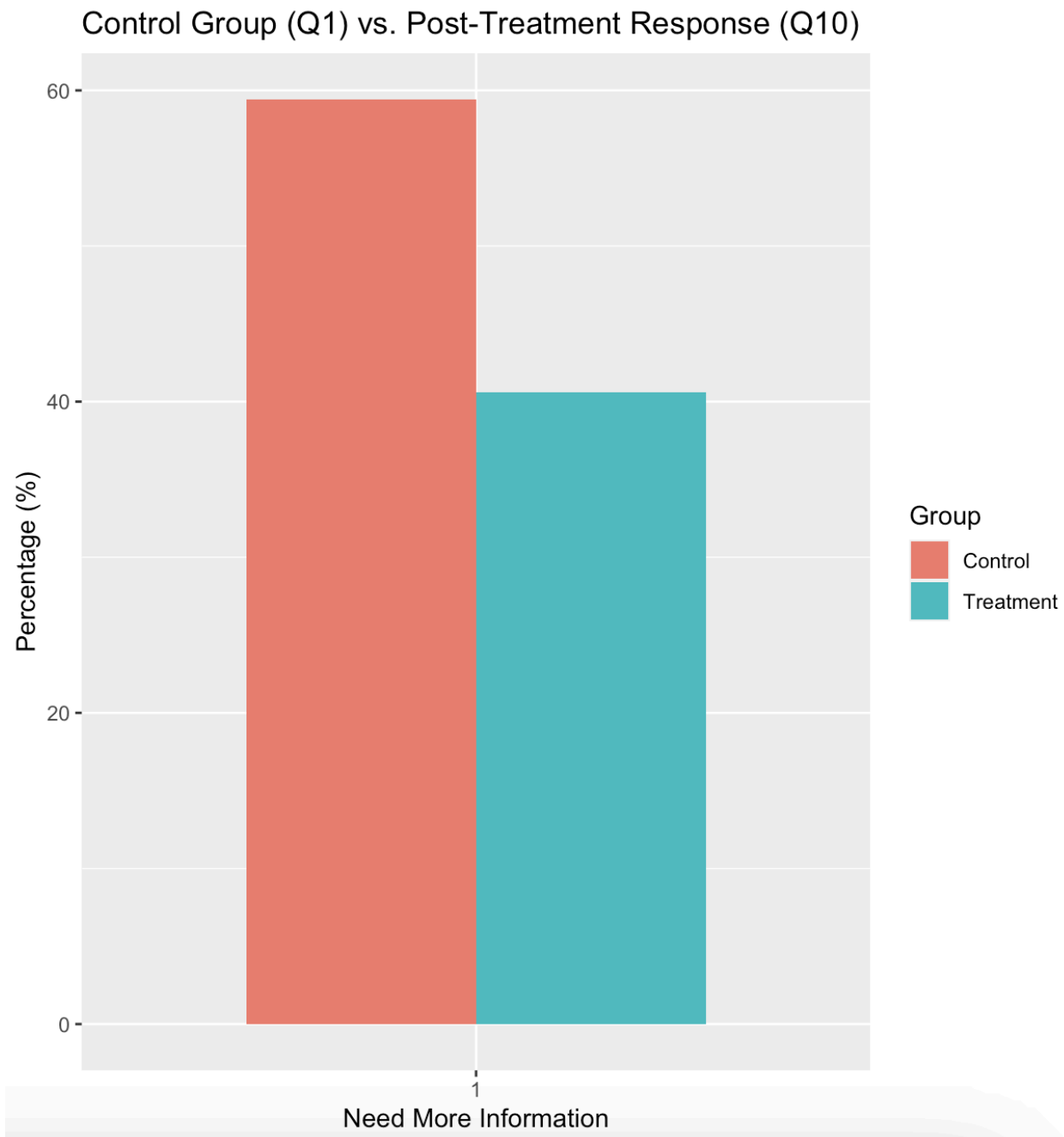
Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any survey question for any reason.

Information collected in this project may be shared with other researchers, but we will not share any information that could identify you.

If you have questions about this research study, please contact Gabriella Cristiano ([gcrist@umich.edu](mailto:gcrist@umich.edu)) or Arthur Lupia ([lupia@umich.edu](mailto:lupia@umich.edu)).

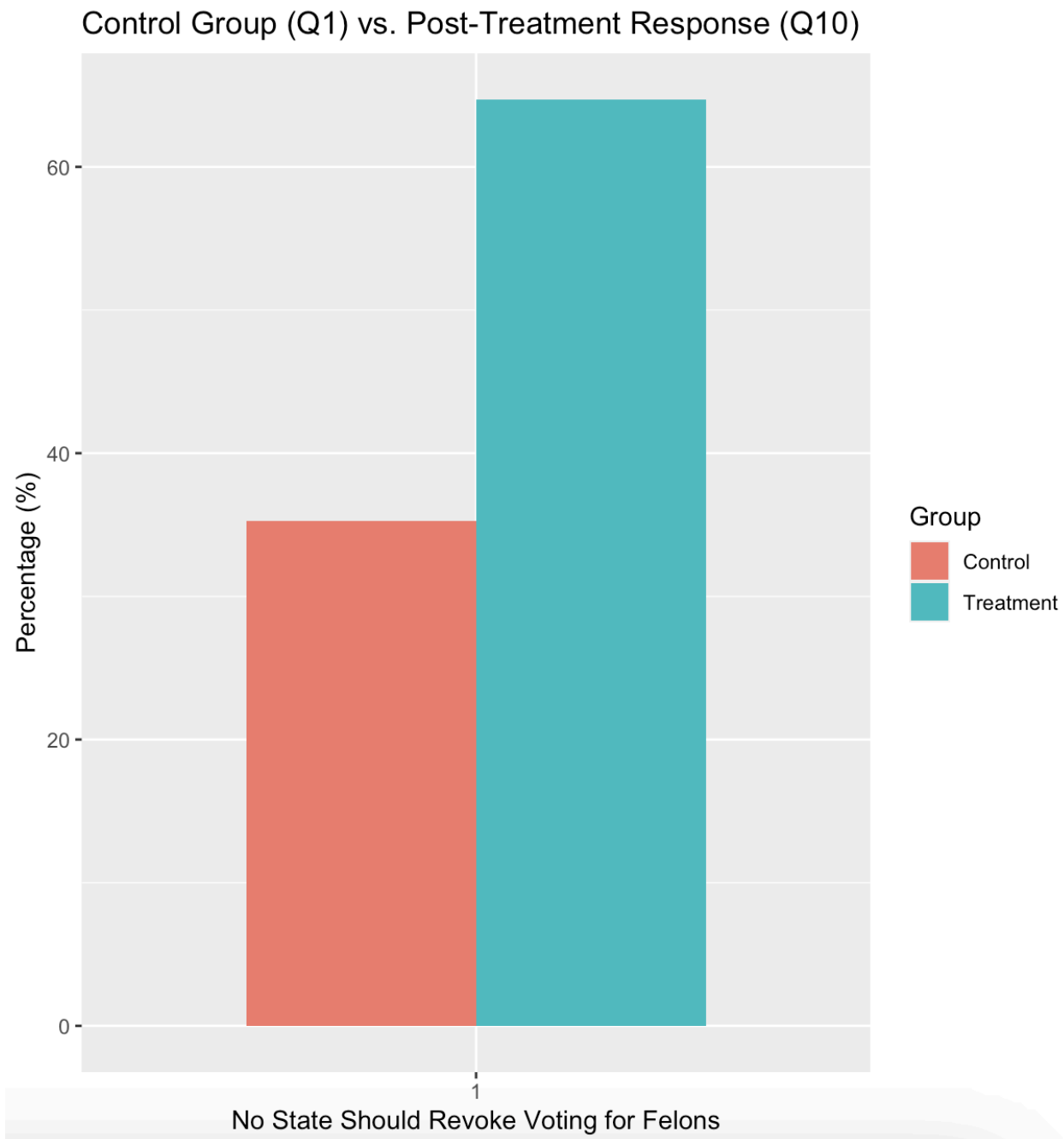
As part of their review, the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences has determined that this study is no more than minimal risk and exempt from on-going IRB oversight.

Figure 2:



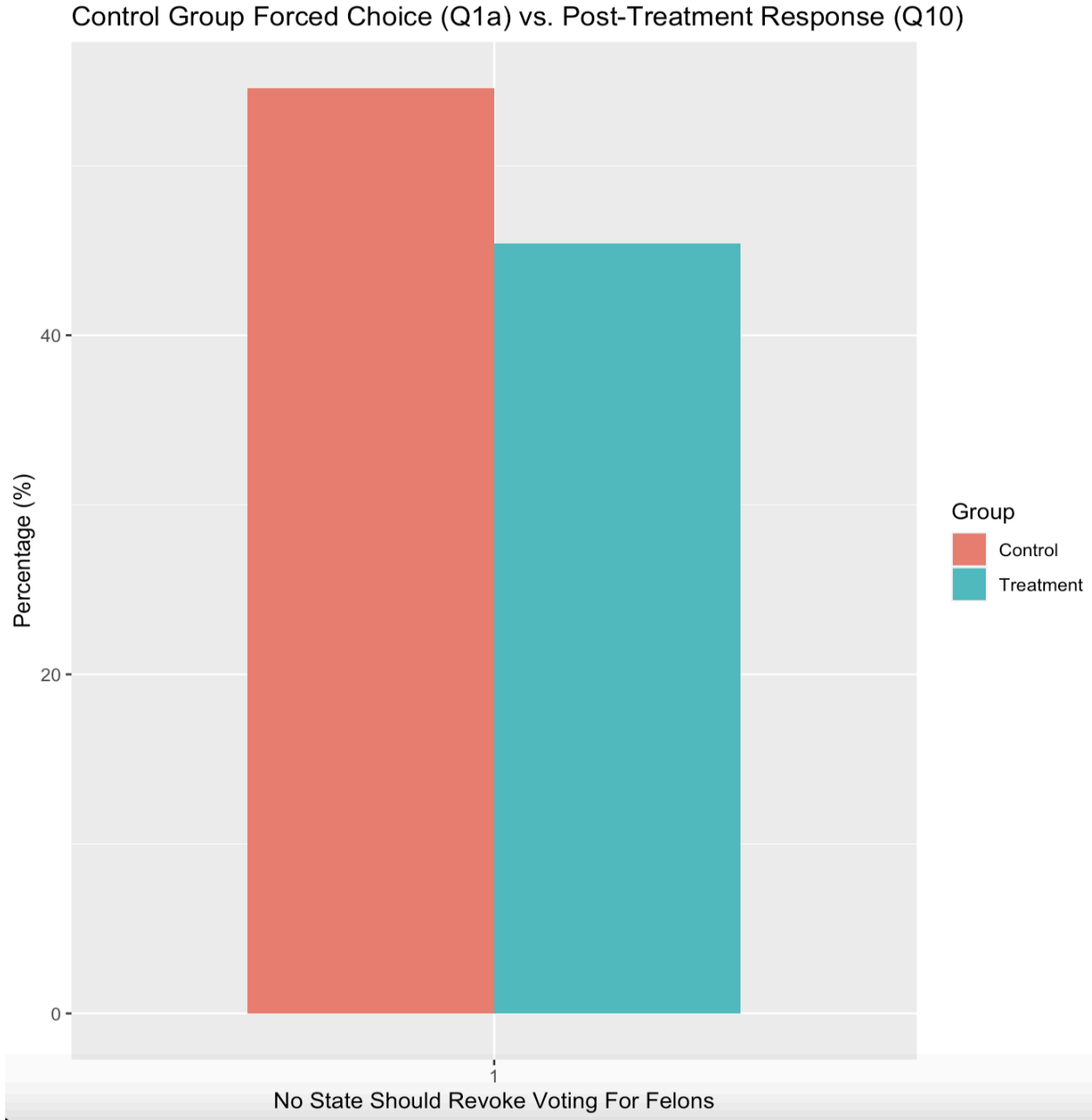
The proportional split of control and treatment group participants who needed more information can be found in Figure 2. Results from a t-test showed that 67% of the control group (Q1, those who did not see vignettes) felt like they needed more information, while 46% of the treatment group (Q10, those who did see the vignettes) felt like they needed more information. This yielded a p-value of  $1.034e-12$ , proving to be statistically significant.

Figure 3:



The proportional split of control and treatment group participants who definitely said no state should revoke felons' right to vote can be found in Figure 3. The t-test results show that 16% of the control group answered that no state should take the vote away from people who commit certain types of crimes, while 30% of the post-vignette treatment group answered this way. This t-test yielded a p-value =  $2.693e-07$  making it a statistically significant proportional difference.

Figure 4:



The proportional split of control and treatment group participants who answered no state should revoke felons' voting rights can be found in Figure 4. The t-test reveals 36% of forced participants in the control group answered that all states should take the vote away from felons. As seen earlier, 30% of the post-vignette treatment group answered this way ( $p = 0.03448$ , statistically significant).

### **Bibliography**

“Alabama’s Silenced Voters Tell Their Stories.” 2018. Campaign Legal Center. June 19, 2018.

<https://campaignlegal.org/story/alabamas-silenced-voters-tell-their-stories>.

Aviram, Hadar, Allyson Bragg, and Chelsea Lewis. 2017. “Felon Disenfranchisement.” *The Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 13: 295–311.

Baer, Miriam H. 2018. “Sorting Out White-Collar Crime.” *Texas Law Review* 97 (2): 225–84.

Budd, Kristen M., and Niki Monazzam. 2023. “Increasing Public Safety by Restoring Voting Rights.” The Sentencing Project. April 25, 2023.

<https://www.sentencingproject.org/policy-brief/increasing-public-safety-by-restoring-voting-rights/>.

“CRIMES INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE INCLUDE:” 2017. Alabama Secretary of State.

“Crimes of Moral Turpitude.” 2018. ACLU of Alabama. May 1, 2018.

<https://www.aclualabama.org/en/crimes-moral-turpitude>.

Engen, Rodney L., and Randy R. Gainey. 2000. “Modeling the Effects of Legally Relevant and Extralegal Factors Under Sentencing Guidelines: The Rules Have Changed\*.”

*Criminology* 38 (4): 1207–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2000.tb01419.x>.

Farrar-Owens, Meredith. 2013. “The Evolution of Sentencing Guidelines in Virginia An

Example of the Importance of Standardized and Automated Felony Sentencing Data.”

*University of California Press on Behalf of the Vera Institute of Justice, Federal*

*Sentencing Reporter*, 25 (3): 168–70.

“Federal Sentencing Guidelines.” 2023. Cornell Law School. LII Legal Information Institute.

January 2023. [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/federal\\_sentencing\\_guidelines](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/federal_sentencing_guidelines).

“Felon Voting Rights.” 2023. December 5, 2023.

<https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights>.

Hamilton-Smith, Guy Padraic; Vogel, Matt. 2012. “The Violence of Voicelessness: The Impact of Felony Disenfranchisement on Recidivism.” *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal* Volume 22 (2): 407–32. <https://doi.org/10.15779/Z38Z66F>.

Manza, Jeff, Clem Brooks, and Christopher Uggen. 2004. “Public Attitudes Toward Felon Disenfranchisement in the United States.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 68 (2): 275–86. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfh015>.

Mauer, Marc. 2018. “Confronting Felony Disenfranchisement: Toward a Movement for Full Citizenship.” *Social Justice* 45 (1): 13–25.

Olivares, Kathleen M., Velmer S. Burton, Jr., and Francis T. Cullen. 1996. “The Collateral Consequences of a Felony Conviction: A National Study of State Legal Codes 10 Years Later.” *Federal Probation* 60 (3): 10–17.

Pinaire, Brian, Milton Heumann, and Laura Bilotta. 2003. “Barred from the Vote: Public Attitudes Toward the Disenfranchisement of Felons.” *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 30 (5): 1519–50.

Porter, Nicole D., and Morgan McLeod. 2023. “Expanding the Vote: State Felony Disenfranchisement Reform, 1997-2023.” The Sentencing Project. October 18, 2023. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/expanding-the-vote-state-felony-disenfranchisement-reform-1997-2023/>.

“Restoration of Rights Process.” n.d. Accessed March 11, 2024.

<https://www.restore.virginia.gov/restoration-of-rights-process/>.



- Ristroph, Alice. 2018. "Farewell to the Felonry." *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, Legal Studies Paper No. 576, 53 (November): 563.
- Robinson, Paul H., and Markus D. Dubber. 2007. "The American Model Penal Code: A Brief Overview." *New Criminal Law Review* 10 (3): 319–41.  
<https://doi.org/10.1525/nclr.2007.10.3.319>.
- Shineman, Victoria. 2018. "Restoring Rights, Restoring Trust: Evidence That Reversing Felon Disenfranchisement Penalties Increases Both Trust and Cooperation with Government." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, November, 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3272694>.
- Stewart, Christopher Uggen, Ryan Larson, Sarah Shannon and Robert. 2022. "Locked Out 2022: Estimates of People Denied Voting Rights." The Sentencing Project. October 26, 2022.  
<https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/locked-out-2022-estimates-of-people-denied-voting-rights/>.
- Uggen, Christopher, Ryan Larson, and Sarah Shannon. 2016. "6 Million Lost Voters: State-Level Estimates of Felony Disenfranchisement, 2016." *The Sentencing Project*, October, 1–18.
- "Voting After Incarceration." n.d. New York State Board of Elections. Accessed March 11, 2024.  
<https://elections.ny.gov/voting-after-incarceration>.
- "Voting Rights Restoration." 2018. ACLU of Alabama. May 1, 2018.  
<https://www.aclualabama.org/en/voting-rights-restoration>.