

Locked Out



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"Mr. Manza and Mr. Uggen...wade into one of the most contested empirical debates in political science: How many (if any) recent American elections would have gone differently if all former felons had been allowed to vote?"--The Chronicle of Higher Education. Jeff Manza and Christopher Uggen, who understand the vastness of the jailers' reach, follow the story out of the cell and into the voting booth. *Locked Out* examines how the disenfranchisement of felons shapes American democracyhardly a hypothetical matter in an age of split electorates and hanging chads...Exacting and fair, their work should persuade even those who come to the subject skeptically that an injustice is at hand. The New York Review of Books. 5.4 million Americans--1 in every 40 voting age adultsare denied the right to participate in democratic elections because of a past or current felony conviction. In several American states, 1 in 4 black men cannot vote due to a felony conviction. In a country that prides itself on universal suffrage, how did the United States come to deny a voice to such a large percentage of its citizenry? What are the consequences of large-scale disenfranchisement--for election outcomes, for the reintegration of former offenders back into their communities, and for public policy more generally? *Locked Out* exposes one of the most important, yet little known, threats to the health of American democracy today. It reveals the centrality of racial factors in the origins of these laws, and their impact on politics today.

Marshalling the first real empirical evidence on the issue to make a case for reform, the authors' path-breaking analysis will inform all future policy and political debates on the laws governing the political rights of criminals.

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