

Incarceration vs. Representation

How America's correctional system damages government.

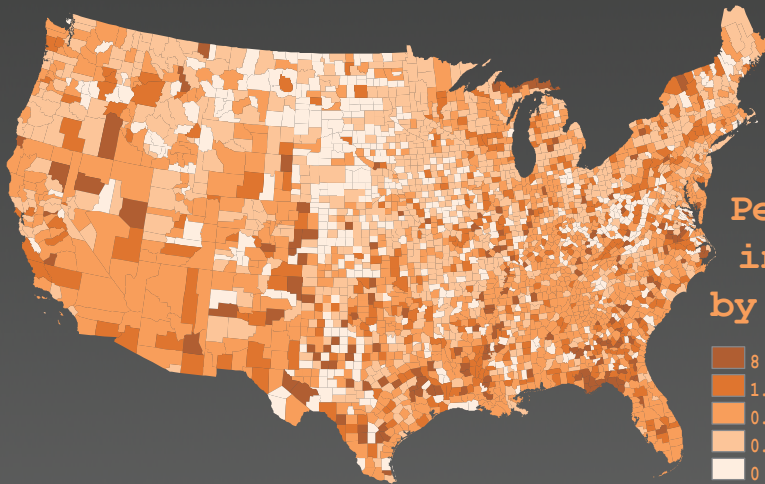
The geography of mass incarceration...



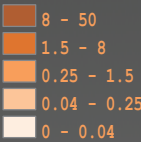
Every correctional facility in the U.S.
1 dot = 1 facility.

The U.S. has over 5,300 correctional facilities at a cost of \$80 billion. This system has a tremendous geographic impact that affects government on all levels.

allows a modern three-fifths compromise...

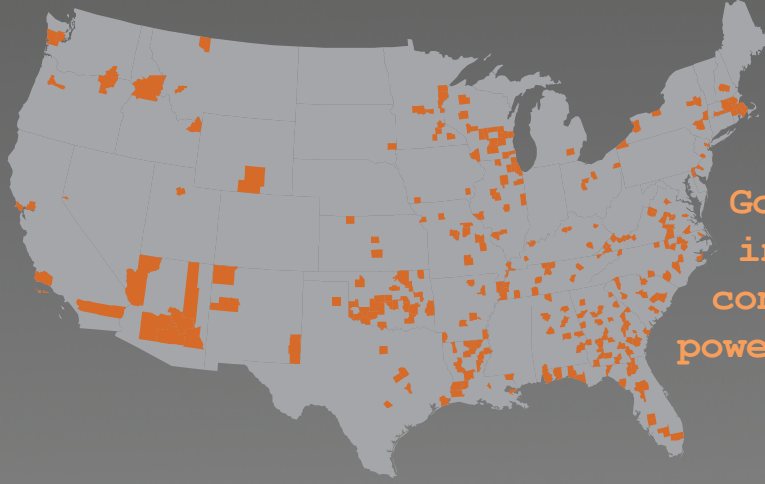


Percent population incarcerated, by county.



Prisoners are denied the right to vote (except in Maine and Vermont), yet usually count as constituents for government redistricting and funding.

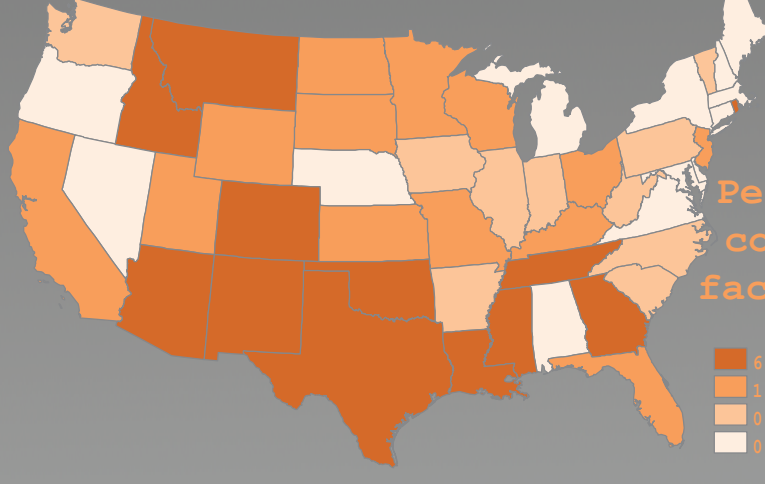
giving power to prison towns...



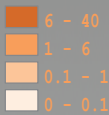
Governments abusing incarcerated constituents for power.

Hundreds of local governments pad their official populations with nonvoting prisoners to gain more power and funding.

and money to interested corporations.



Percent private correctional facilities by state.



Only five percent of total correctional facilities are private, but 25 percent of new ones are. Corrections corporations have an interest in keeping people incarcerated and spend millions lobbying to do so.

But there are solutions:

Restrict

Many states and local governments already prohibit counting prisoners, often non-local and non-voting, as residents. This measure is common sense and prevents any conflict of interest for governments to encourage incarceration.

Redesign

Change the Census to count prisoners in their homes of record instead of their prisons. Prisoners tend to be moved from urban to rural areas an average of 100 miles from their homes, making prisons poor measures of demographic realities.

Enfranchise

Denying the vote from prisoners contributes to the very cycles that place them in prison. Giving the vote to prisoners, as Maine and Vermont already do, will help prevent governments and corporations from benefiting from mass incarcerations.