

Preface

Legislative redistricting brawls are the quintessential American game of politics. But more than a game, redistricting creates profound and long-lasting effects by shifting the fortunes of political parties, individual politicians, and racial, ethnic, and community representation, thus potentially redirecting policy outcomes. In this volume, we seven political scientists and lawyers seek to shine a spotlight on the world of Texas congressional, state legislative, and local redistricting. Those redistricting outcomes have not just affected Texas politics; national leaders have emerged from and engaged in Texas redistricting battles. The 2003 Texas redistricting shenanigans entertained the nation as Democratic legislators fled, first to Oklahoma, then to New Mexico, in unsuccessful attempts to thwart redistricting plans that hurt them. In 2011, for the first time since the 1870s, Republicans controlled the Texas House, Texas Senate, and governorship during a regular redistricting session and consolidated their status, much as partisan majorities state after state, decade after decade, have done. In this volume, we seek to provide historical, institutional, legal, legislative, realpolitik, and sociological insight into the history of redistricting in Texas.

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