

The advancement of colored people – formed

[Economics](#), [Budget](#)



The United States of America, a country that makes up about 5% of the world's population and yet the country has 21% of the world's prisoners. One in almost every 37 adults in the United States is under some sort of correction supervision, whether it be parole or prison and that's about 2.7% of the population. The number of people incarcerated in the country has increased between 500,000 and 2.2 million from 1980 to 2015. In 2014 African-Americans made up 34% of the 6.8 million correctional populations although African-Americans make up less than 2% of the population, 1.3% to be exact. The usual charge African-Americans face is drug possession and abuse but statistics by the NAACP (the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - formed in 1908) shows that people who are not of color consume drugs at the same rate if not more than an African-American yet African-Americans are six times more likely to be incarcerated because of drug charges than the average white man or woman. In a 2015 national survey on the drug use and health of Americans, about 17 million white people reported having used an illicit drug within the last month prior to the survey being taken, but only 4 million African-Americans reported taking illicit drugs within the same time span. With that being said, if there are that many people incarcerated in the United States, they lose their right to vote. Voting is such an important part of American politics millions of people losing that right, being more likely to be incarcerated because of the color of their skin, their right to vote is stripped of them the moment the jury decides they are guilty even if they are not. Is it right that any and all Americans, regardless of age or felony are stripped of their constitutional right to vote? Why does a country that says it stands for liberty, equality, democracy and

freedom have such a high amount of people in prison? What has been the effect of mass incarceration on the country and has it done any good for the country's crime rate?

Two states, Vermont and Maine, give felons the right to vote while incarcerated but having a drug charge disqualifies an individual from voting. The term is called felony disfranchisement because certain charges being more serious to other's some who have committed a serious crime or have more than one criminal offence the right to vote is revoked.

A right that shouldn't be taken away from every person with a criminal record especially since the poorer the individual the more likely they are to commit crimes in order to survive and create a livable habitat for themselves whether it be by buying necessities like food and clothing or it be by paying the rent, heat, and lighting in their homes. The right to vote should not be revoked when it comes to people from the poor neighborhoods, people who don't have the funds to even hire an adequate lawyer whether it be from the public or private sector, therefore they accept plea deals without even having the chance to go to trial whether they be guilty of any crime they're being accused or innocent. The right to vote should not be taken away from the poorer individuals for one very important reason that is usually overlooked and that is the fact that most politicians do not care about the poor. There are a few politicians who truly care about the less fortunate, most politicians care about making the rich richer and that's mostly because rich businessmen and women endorse the politicians with policies that are both good for their company and reputation. Money makes money. For example in both the US Senate and US House of Representatives, make at

least \$174, 000 a year and with the campaign, especially large-scale campaigns costing a lot more than one-hundred and seventy-four thousand.

Hilary Clinton spent four million eighty-eight thousand on each of the fifty states worker unions alone and spent 1. 4-billion dollars on her campaign as a whole from the party and joint fundraising committees to her 600 million dollar campaign. Meanwhile the current president only spent one million five hundred eighty-six thousand on workers unions in each state but the about worker unions is that each union could have from fifty to thousands of people so that amount of money won't go far helping the bigger unions and since unions usually consist of blue collar workers rather than white collar workers, the people a part of those unions don't make as much as the white collar workers (doctors, lawyers, anyone who holds a position at a major company, etc.) and since white collar workers are usually not majorly effected by policy changes because they hold the most power when it comes to endorsements which have the power to sway voters. Since blue-collar workers are more likely to be caught by the cops if they commit a crime especially because Hispanic and African-Americans are more likely to be arrested even if they have no truly committed a crime, therefore they lose their right to vote. With that being said, people of color are already a large minority in the states, being arrested and treated like criminals even if they're innocent is another reason why their right to vote should not be taken away because when they leave prison, after years of being treated like they weren't even human, like they were nothing but a number by a system that might have failed them, they deserve to have at least the right to feel like they are a part of their country. Of course, killer, rapists, predators, etc.

are an exception to this, but drug dealers, illegal gun owners, people with minor crimes right to vote should not be revoked. An

important question we have to ask ourselves as citizens of the world is why does the United States of America's population make up 5% yet the largest amount of people in their prisons. The jail occupancy percentage is 7.

6% above a hundred, that's 107. 6% jail occupancy. China has the second largest amount of incarcerated people in the world with 1.5 million people in prisons but with their population exceeding 1.3 billion, it makes sense that they would have such a large amount of people incarcerated. With the population of the United States being 325.6 million, why are so many people incarcerated? Well, one answer is Nixon's war on drugs that he started during his term (1969-1974) and that 'War on Drugs' mainly targeted people of color, resulting in them being harassed and hurt even more by law enforcement.

The thing about Nixon's war on drugs was adopted by Portugal and since they legalized most drugs with scientific evidence that they do not harm the brain (Marijuana, weed, etc) most other drugs completely disappeared. Fake drugs are being sold to tourists and there is no drug problem in Portugal, but with the United States demonizing all drugs including the ones with actual medical benefits (birth control, medical marijuana which calms down people with severe anxiety and other mental disorder) the people imprisoned for using illegal drugs who cause no actual damage to the human brain are losing so many opportunities, months even years of they live, they're losing so much of their lives because the legal system is operating under laws that

were written decades ago. That is one of the reasons, another reason is that poorer teenagers, juvenile delinquents, committing petty crimes to make some cash and help their family. Another reason is the growth of families in more disadvantaged parts of the states which makes it more likely that people from poorer backgrounds will end up in situations that are unfavourable to them and their future's and might end up incarcerated. An argument presented often is ' The more criminals incarcerated for their crimes, the safer the streets.' Yes, theoretically that would be right, but that's not the case at all.

There are 2.2 million people incarcerated in the United States, that's 10 times the amount of people in prison fifty years ago. There are an additional 700 thousand people in jails and detention facilities.

The nation's spending on prisons has increased by 400% and as a budget for prisons has increased there's less money for education, healthcare, economic development, state and local police, and the list could go on. A study conducted by the NYU School of Law confirms that since the year 2000 the effect mass incarceration has had on crime rate is essentially zero. Prison has turned into a business, just like everything else, people being incarcerated can be and has been capitalized on. The Corrections Corporation of America and to quote the co-founder of CCA Tom Beasley ' You just sell prisons like you were selling cars, or real estate, or hamburgers,' and of course prisons, come with prisoners. In 2015 the CCA made 1.7 billion dollars.

Another argument that could be made is that private prisons are saving taxpayer money, which is a lie. Private prisons cost as much money as public prisons and of course, private prisons found a way to keep a prisoner in prison for the longest amount of time possible. Private prisons give out twice as many infractions as government or public prisons, those infractions can result in prisoners sentence's to be extended because it leads the government to believe that the prisoner is not yet ready to be a functioning member of society and that makes CCA even more money. Private prisons sneak occupancy clauses in their contracts which requires states to keep prisons full. In 2011 a private prison in Arizona didn't reach their 97.9% occupancy rate and the state had to pay a three-million-dollar fine. Another argument that can be made is, at least the prisoners are getting an education well again, that is a lie, nothing but a myth. In 1847 prisons had an education program that included Reading, Writing, History, Geography, Physiology, Mathematics, and even Physical Education but due to the government systematically eliminating any chance at educating themselves while in prison.

In 1994 American politicians hated the idea of prisoners getting anything, the idea of being tough on crime was like a trend all politicians followed and since then the country has gone from having 350 allege degree programs for prisoners all around the country to just 12. Studies show that education is the fastest, cheapest way to reduce recidivism and with the best prison education program having a ten thousand people wait list, which means that 40% of people are back behind bars In just 3 years.

In conclusions, with prisoner rate's like the ones we've seen in the United

States, the right to vote should not be taken away from most prisoner's. The ones who have committed violent crimes, the state has a full right to take away their right to vote but the ones who have committed non-violent crimes, those are the people who still deserve to be apart of America's voice today. More money should be spent on education and less should be spent on trying to keep prisoners in prison and when they leave the system should help them stay out of prison instead of doing what it can to bring them back.

Private prisons to be eradicated if the United States wants to grow as an economy and as a country. The United States should educate rather than treat anyone who isn't rich, white and male as criminals or lesser than.