

# US Presidents & Demographic Change: Is Demography Destiny? Or...The Impact of Rewards or Punishment in 2010

Dave McCuan  
Associate Professor, Sonoma State University  
and  
Fulbright Scholar, Masaryk University  
Department of International Relations & European Studies  
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## Today's Lecture

- Let's examine how the US electorate has changed in important ways over the last 8-10 years.
- How has the US electorate (voting public) changed in the last decade?
- This analysis has important relevance to the midterm election prospects for President Obama, Democrats, and Republicans as we head to the midterm election, November 2010.
- Do Democrats face a 'gathering storm' of wrath from the voters?
- What are the prospects for GOP pickups?
- What of the Tea Party movement & momentum as candidates & parties look to 2012?

## The Context of 2010 Midterms

- Part I: How the US Electorate Has Changed & the Leading Indicators for 2010 Midterm Vote
- Part II: The 2008 Obama Electoral Coalition
- Part III: The Dilemma of 2008 in 2010 – Turnout, Turnout, Turnout & Demographic Change
- Part IV: Predictions & What to Watch

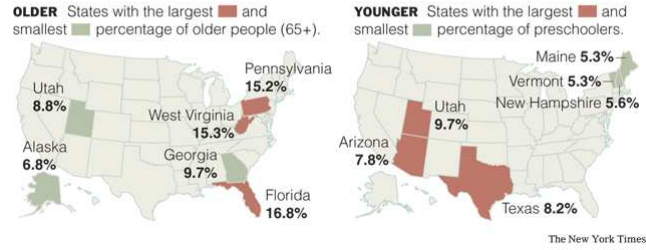
## How Are Traditional Electoral Divisions Changing in the U.S.?

- **Traditional View** of the U.S. Electoral Map:
  - Defined by:
  - SES;
  - Neighborhood;
  - Simple media messages;
  - Gender as homogenous;
  - Red (DEMS) vs Blue (REPS) with little in between
  - Party-Group alliances
- A **New View** of the Map:
  - Differences Today by:
  - Race/ethnicity;
  - Region, place of residence;
  - Gender w/ complications;
  - Partisanship, ideology;
  - Trends by the media; beyond the self;
  - Changes in region that are “micro” and not aggregated;
  - HTM & “stealth democracy”

# Population Shifts vs. Electorate Shifts

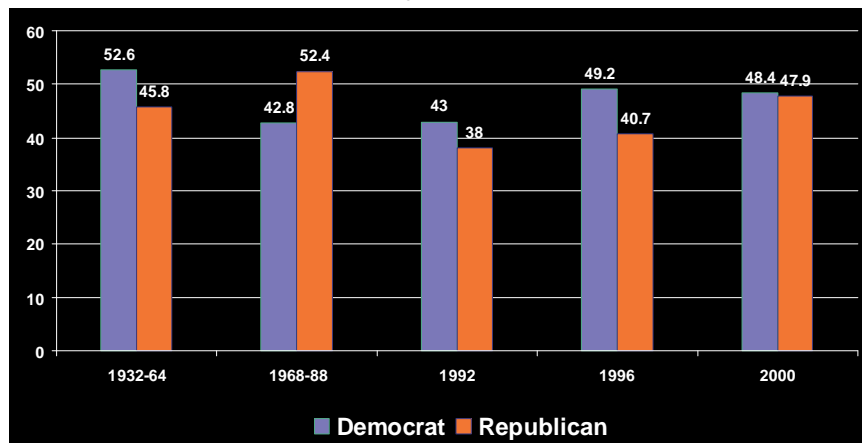
## Population Extremes

New figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau last week show which states have the largest and smallest percentages of old and young.



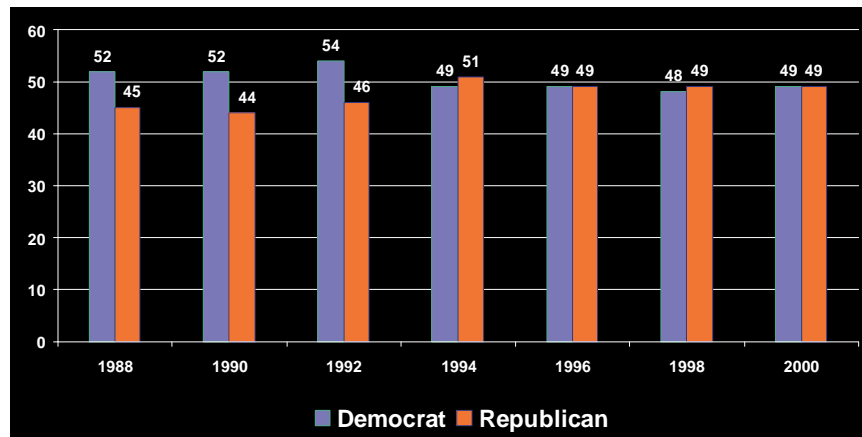
# The Parties at Parity, 1932 - 2000

## The Elusive Majority in Presidential Politics



## Parity, continued

### The Tie That Was in the US House



## Parity, continued

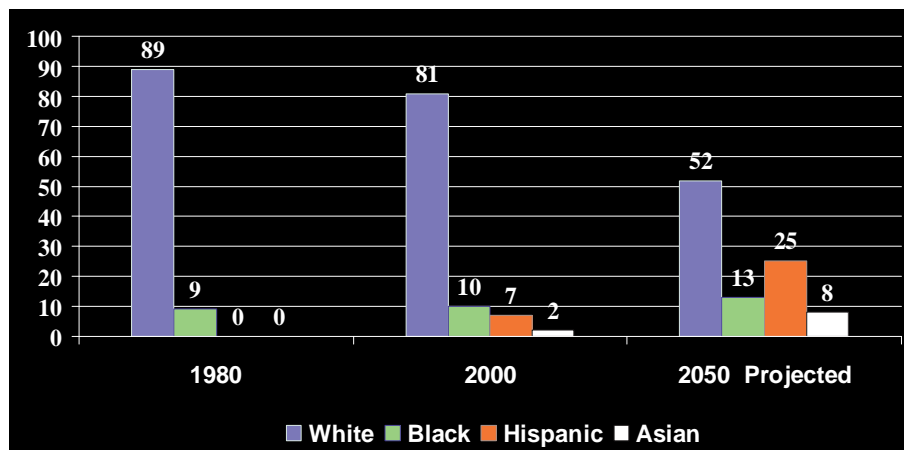
### The Reasons for Parity?

- A “New Economy” Driving a New Electorate
- The Political Arrangements that Shaped Politics in the Industrial Age are Collapsing
- A New Political Order Has Not Yet Taken Shape for the Information Era

## A New, Emerging Electorate?

PERIOD	DOMINANT VOTERS
Industrial Era	Working Class
Information Age	Rising Learning Class

## With Growing Diversity

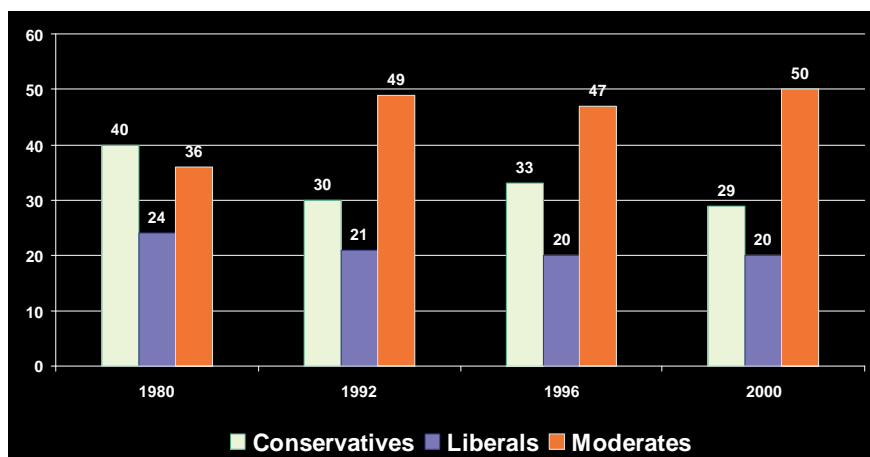


## Electorate of Generational Change

In the 2000 Election...

- Less than 10 percent of the electorate were New Deal Era voters.
- The dominant generations are the “skeptical generations”--the Baby Boomers, GenXers and GenYers.

## Political Views Are Changing



## How Do Trends of Last 10, or even 20 Years, Affect Election Outcomes in November 2010?

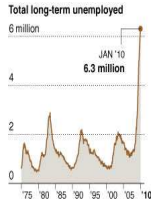
### How Do We Explain National Midterm Election Outcomes?

- Referendum on the president
- Reversion to Party ID (PID) and/or ideology
- Response to economy & job approval
- Response to other issues (war/peace, etc.)
- Action of strategic politicians
- The money & turnout races
  
- Reliable pattern of the 20<sup>th</sup> century save 3 elections
  
- What is “average” midterm presidential seat loss?
- What “variables” determine the depth of seat loss?

### Long-Term Unemployment

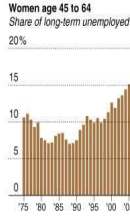
The number of long-term unemployed, meaning people who have been out of work for longer than six months, has grown sharply.

As of January, about 6.3 million people had been out of work for 27 weeks or more.

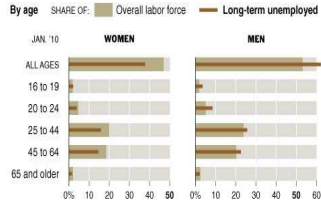


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

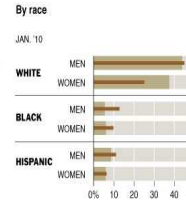
Middle-age women are one of fastest growing segments of the group.



Overall, men still make up a disproportionate share of frustrated job-hunters. While they make up 53 percent of the labor force, they are more than 60 percent of the long-term group.



While black men make up only 5.5 percent of the labor force, they are almost 13 percent of the long-term unemployed.



### Change in Presidential Job Approval Averages, Second to Third Quarter in Office, Elected Presidents

President	Second-quarter average %	Third-quarter average %	Change (pct. pts.)
Eisenhower	72	68	-4
Kennedy	76	77	+1
Nixon	62	60	-2
Carter	64	60	-4
Reagan	61	57	-4
G.H.W. Bush	64	69	+5
Clinton	44	48	+4
G.W. Bush	56	72	+16
Obama	62	53	-9

### Prior Presidents' Fifth Quarter Average Approval Ratings, Gallup Polls

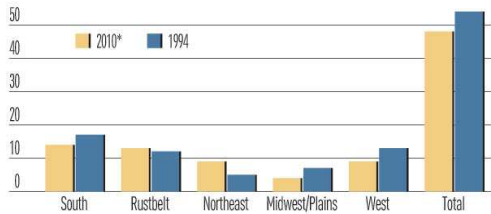
Presidents elected to first term

President	Dates of fifth quarter	Average approval rating
Eisenhower	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1954	67.8%
Kennedy	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1962	78.0%
Nixon	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1970	56.6%
Carter	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1978	48.0%
Reagan	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1982	46.3%
G.H.W. Bush	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1990	70.5%
Clinton	Jan 20-Apr 19, 1994	52.1%
G.W. Bush	Jan 20-Apr 19, 2002	79.5%
Obama	Jan 20-Apr 19, 2010	48.8%

GALLUP

### 1994 All Over Again?

Possible 2010 House GOP pickups vs. 1994 actual gains, by region

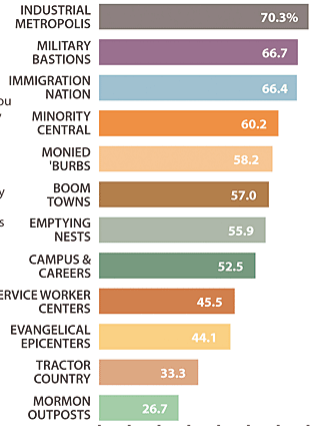


\*districts rated from Lean Democrat to Likely GOP, average of leading election analyses

Sources: Cook Political Report, Real Clear Politics, Rothenberg Political Report, Sabato's Crystal Ball

### Obama's approval rating

An independent survey asked: Do you approve of the way President Obama is handling his job as president? Patchwork Nation analyzed the survey results, and the chart at right shows the percentage of respondents in each community type who said they approved.



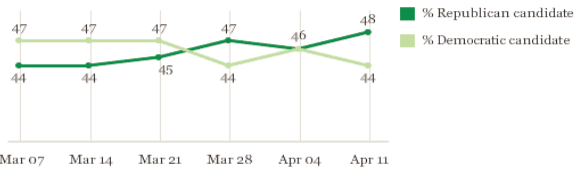
SOURCE: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, with analysis by James Gimpel/University of Maryland

RICH CLABOUGH/STAFF



Candidate Preference in 2010 Congressional Elections

Based on registered voters

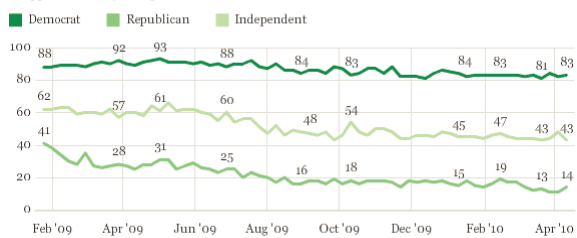


Results based on weekly averages of Gallup Daily tracking; date indicates last day of interviewing for each week.

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Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

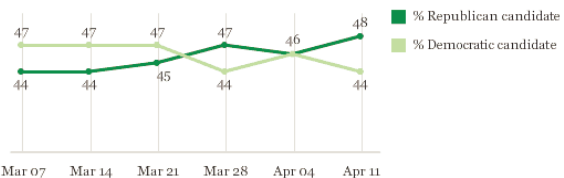
% Approve -- weekly averages



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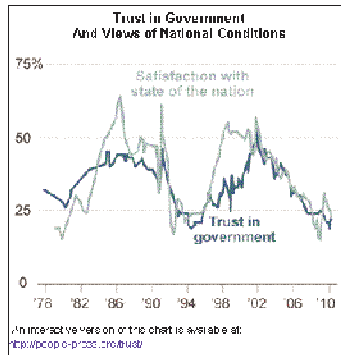
Candidate Preference in 2010 Congressional Elections

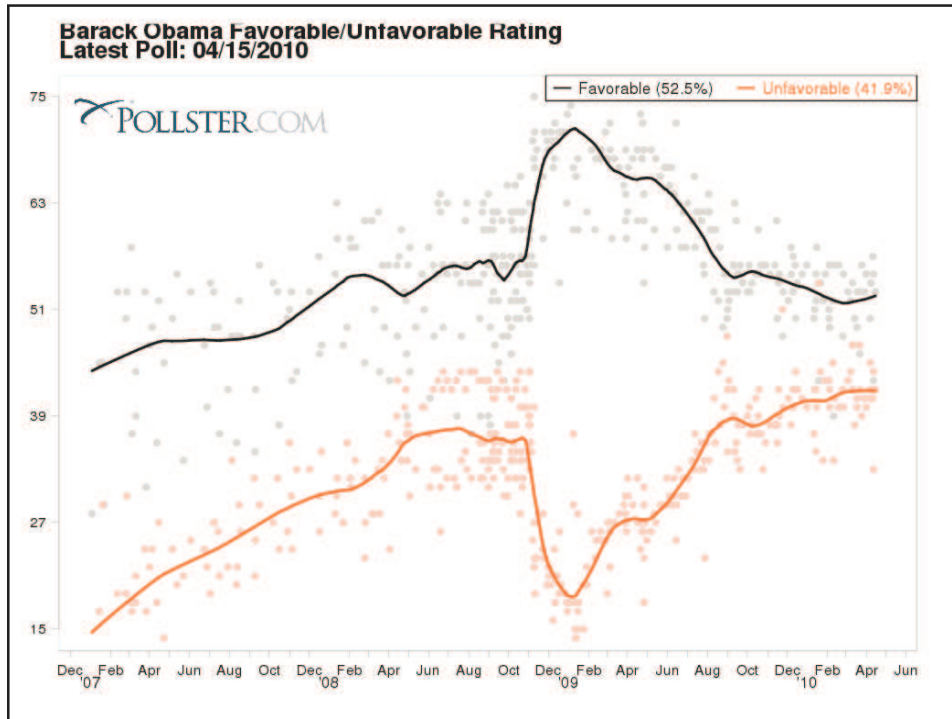
Based on registered voters



Results based on weekly averages of Gallup Daily tracking; date indicates last day of interviewing for each week.

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## Macro Conditions – 2010 Outlook

- Democrats now have an accomplishment with the passage of health care reform, but it's far from clear that it dramatically enhances their prospects for the fall, as some of their officeholders and supporters argue.

Polling still shows the public dissatisfied with the country's direction and with President Barack Obama's performance, and as long as the national unemployment outlook doesn't start to show significant improvement, Democratic prospects for November are poor.

Democrats will have the financial advantage in the fall, and their strategists will try to localize elections, (just as Republicans tried to do for a number of elections). But the atmospheric remain strongly behind the GOP, and major Republican House gains are extremely likely.

With 68 Democratic House seats at risk and only 11 Republican seats in play – to say nothing of national and districts-level survey data showing voters hesitant to support Democratic incumbents – it's clear that the battleground is almost entirely on Democratic soil. Obviously, control of the House is at risk.

## Part II: Setting Up 2010

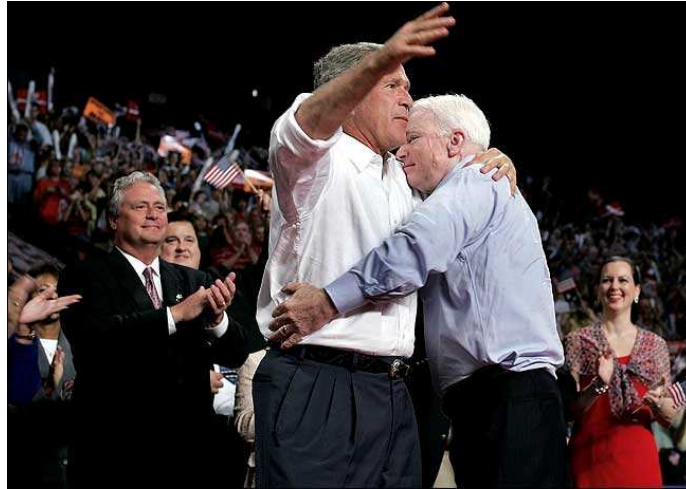
The Obama Electoral Coalition of  
November 2008

### 2008 Conventional Wisdom: An Unpredictable Election

- For first time since 1952, there was no incumbent president or vice-president in the race
- The Republican candidate had reputation as a maverick frequently clashed with his party's leadership
- Democratic candidate was the first African-American nominee of a major party

## Conventional Wisdom: 2008-A Time for Change?

Key Assumption: Even though George Bush was not running, the 2008 presidential election would be a referendum on the performance the Bush Administration



## Three Leading Indicators of Presidential Vote

- Real GDP Growth in Second Quarter
- Incumbent President's Approval Rating at Mid-Year
- First Term vs. Second or Later Term for Incumbent Party (referendum on party in White House)
- Relevance here, with qualifications, for the November 2010 midterm elections

## Elections & Voters in Nov 2008

- **Voters in 2008**

- 28% Independents
- 44% H/S Turnout (4-14% primaries)
- 55% Presidential Turnout (63.8% of eligible voters from 2004)
- Conclusion: High Interest Election with High Turnout in November 2008
- 33% early voting
- Party Identification (PID) changing from Partisan Parity to Democratic Dominance
- Signal of party shifts to come? New groups mobilized & appearing en masse in the electorate

## Democratic Advantage in Voter Registration

“In 13 swing states, there are 1.49 million more Democrats and 61,438 fewer Republicans registered than there were at the time of the 2004 general election.”

October 14, 2008

**AP** Associated Press

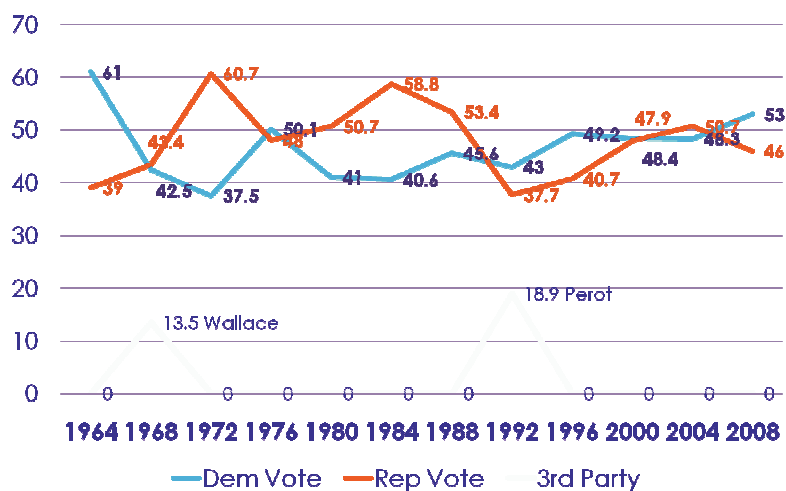
	All voters	First Time Voters
<i>Support</i>	%	%
Obama	52	62
McCain	38	28
Other/Don't know	10	10

Source: Pew Research Center, 10-23-08

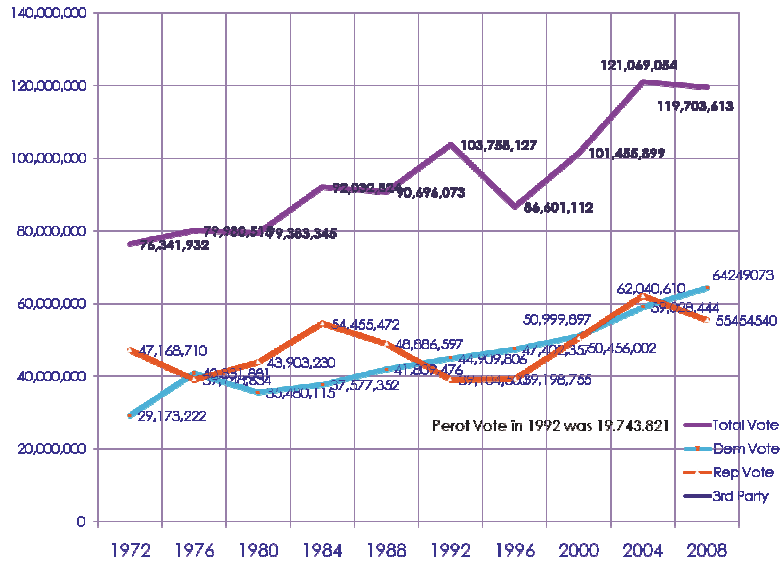
## Shifts in Party Identification (PID)

- Oct. 2008 Pew: Dem. 51% - Rep. 36%
- Avg. 2007 Pew: Dem. 50% - Rep. 36%
- Oct. 2008 Gallup: Dem. 52% - Rep. 41%
- Avg. 2007 Gallup: Dem. 51% - Rep. 40%
- The averages are the lowest numbers for the GOP since Gallup started measuring this statistic more than 20 years ago and Pew 18 years ago.

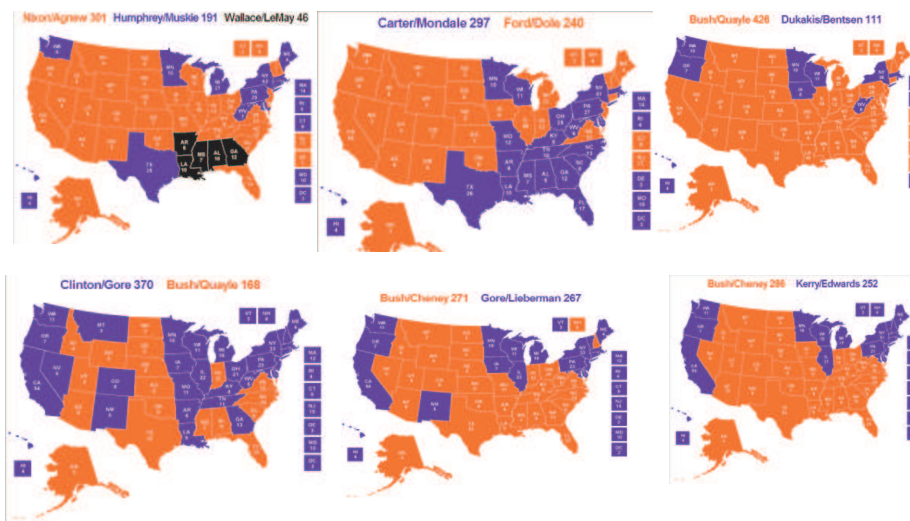
## Popular Vote Percentages: 1964-2008



## Actual Votes: 1972-2008



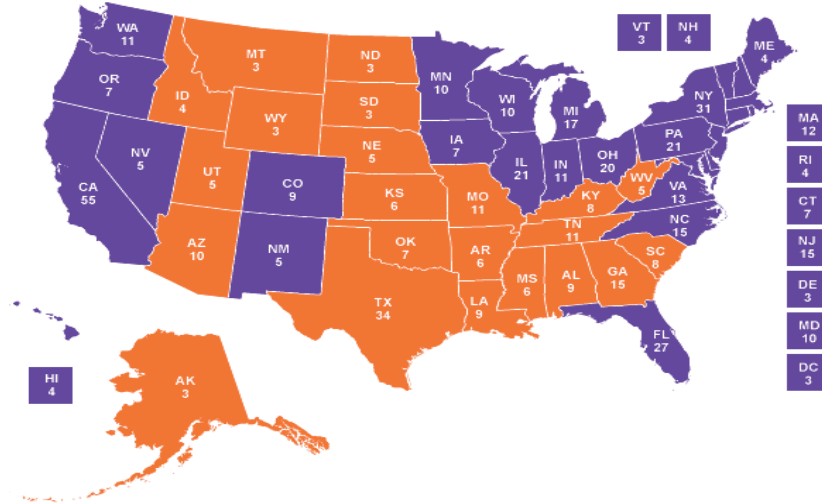
## Electoral College Results 1968 - 2004



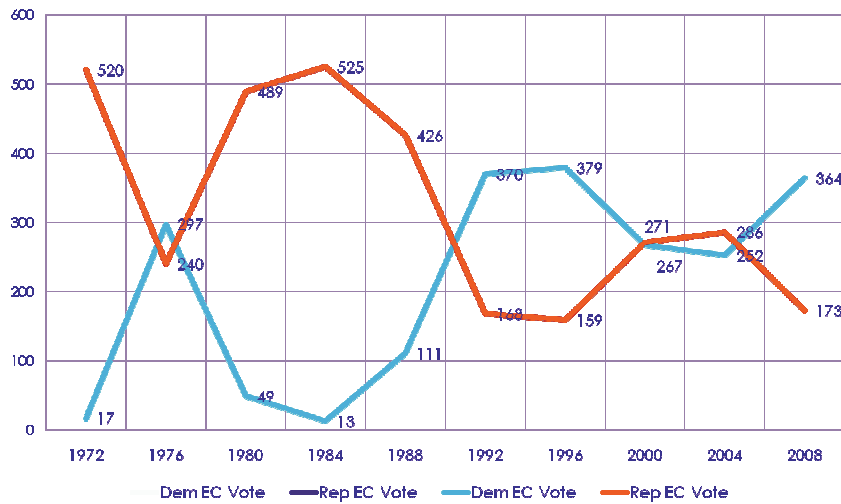
# Electoral College 2008

**Obama/Biden 364**      **McCain/Palin 174**      **Toss Up 0**  
 ■ 364 Solid   ■ 0 Leaning   ■ 174 Solid   ■ 0 Leaning   ■ 0 Toss Up

(Click on State to Change Status)



# Electoral College Votes 1972-2008





## Part III: The Dilemma of 2008 Governing vs Electioneering

Turnout, Turnout, Turnout &  
Demographic Change for Both  
Major US Political Parties

### Search for the Modal Voter in the Electorate & Congress

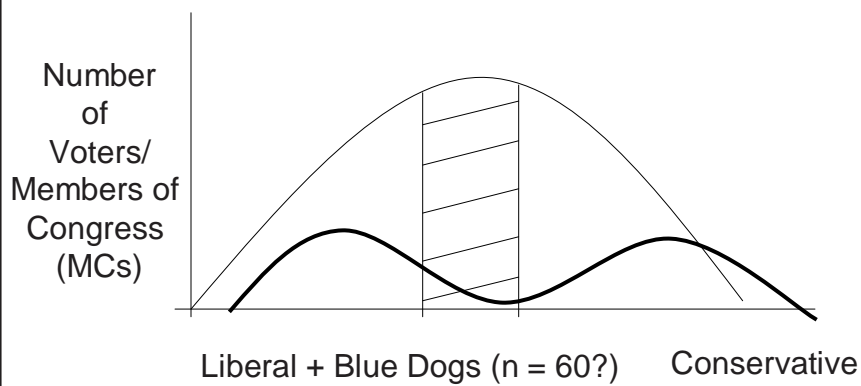
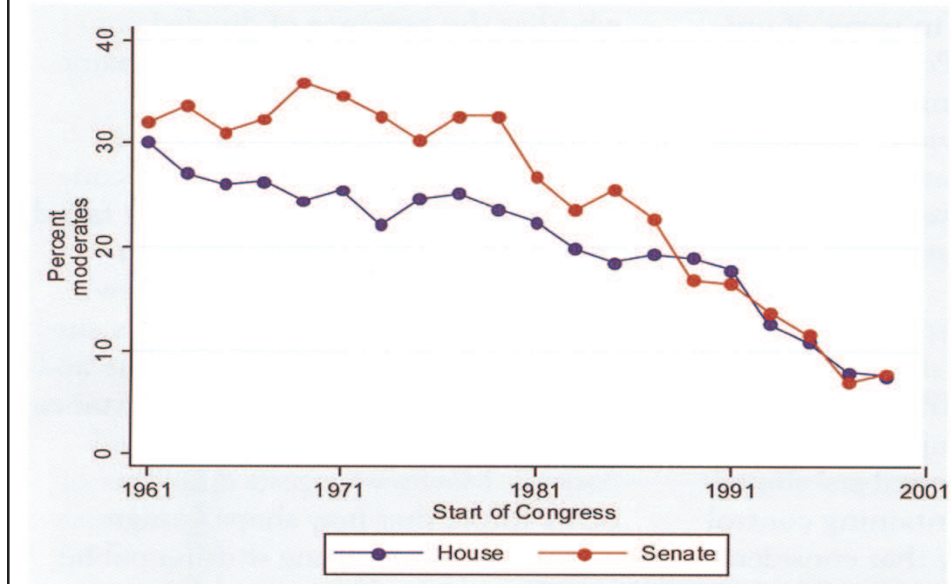


Figure 1  
Decline of the Political Center, 1961-2000



## 2008 Results in Context

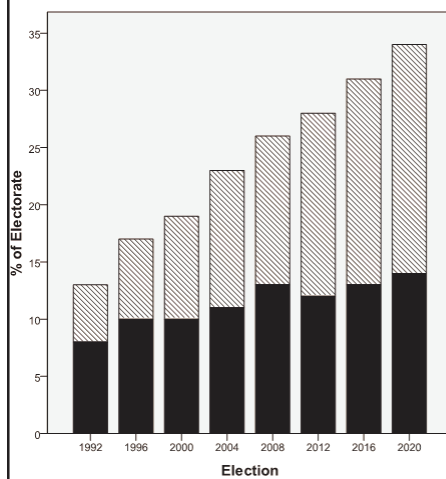
- This is the first election since 1964 that the Democrats have won the White House and gained seats in both the House and Senate
- Obama's campaign was mostly positive amassing a large number of small donors and volunteers
- Obama's central message was thematic.

## Demographic Shifts, Aftermath of 2008

Year	Whites	Nonwhites	Total
1992	-1.8	7.6	5.8
1996	-1.6	9.8	8.2
2000	-10.3	10.8	0.5
2004	-14.9	11.9	-3
2008	-11.6	21.1	9.5

Democratic Vote Totals, 1992-2008

## Changing Composition of the US Electorate, 1992 - 2020

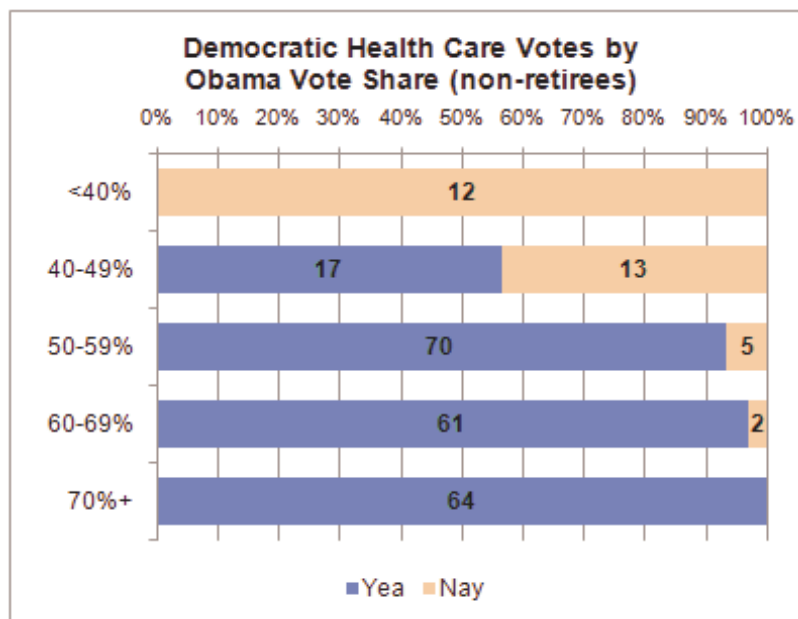


Age Group	White	Black	Hispanic	Other
65-plus	80.7%	8.4%	6.6%	4.3%
14-17	59.9%	16.3%	18.0%	5.8%
5-13	57.5%	15.3%	20.6%	6.6%
Under 5	54.1%	15.5%	23.7%	6.7%

## Results of 2006 + 2008 Elections: Expanding Democratic Majorities

- More Democrats → It should be easier to build coalitions for Democratic bills
- But Democrats are constrained by Republican filibustering in the Senate
  - Definition
  - Threshold: 60 Votes
  - Then, the Massachusetts Senate race (Jan. 2010) came along to change the game

### MC Votes, Final HC Bill



## Part IV: Predictions & What to Watch As We Move to Midterms

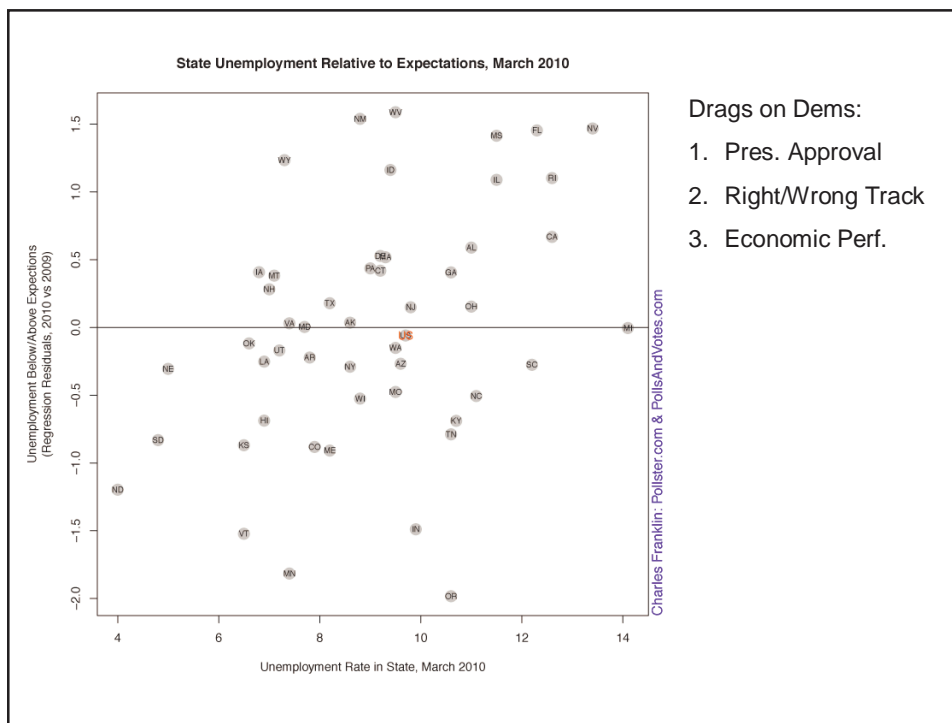
Predictions, Directions, & Developments Over The Next 167 Days Until 02 November 2010

### What of the Targets & the Marginals?

- Retirements mount for both parties
- Does GOP promote another, “Contract with America” in Sept. 2010?
- GOP has targeted 55 Democratic seats in the House.
- In the Senate, any chance of gaining 10 seats to takeover that Chamber would require the GOP to win at least two of the following four states: Connecticut, California, Wisconsin and Washington.
- Pay close attention to the following:
  - GOP has 100+ challengers running in House races, but many are running against each other in primaries. Two-thirds of the targeted Demo. seats have a crowded GOP primary field.
  - Rust Belt State gains for the GOP (MI, OH, PA, Gubernatorial races in these states as well) & Dems success in FL, TX
  - How well GOP does in trying to pick up Senate seats in
  - Internal US Senate dynamics between Schumer (NY) & Durbin (IL)
  - Role of ‘centrists’ in both Houses, post-November results
- Fundraising ratios Dems vs. GOP, esp. GOP fundraising “surges”
- Demographic & ideological “shifting” vs. motivated voters - who turns out to vote?
- Vulnerability vs. inevitable losses

## Political Terrain for the Democratic Agenda

- **Sequence / Timing:** Which issues does the President want to press? And Congress?
- **Duration:** How long is Obama's "window of opportunity" before Congress reverts to business-as-usual? Has this already occurred?
- **Constraints:** How is the agenda limited by economic, fiscal, & budgetary woes?
- **Ideology:** Do Democrats push a moderate or a progressive agenda?
- **Exposure:** Are Dems over-exposed on seats like the GOP was in 2006?
- **Funding:** \$\$\$ helped drive turnout in 2006, 2008.



## The 2012 Ramifications of 2010 Results



## Websites for Additional Information

- [www.thegreenpapers.com](http://www.thegreenpapers.com)
- [www.pollster.com](http://www.pollster.com)
- [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com)
- [www.pollsandvotes.com](http://www.pollsandvotes.com)
- [www.cqpolitics.com](http://www.cqpolitics.com)
- [www.rollcall.com](http://www.rollcall.com)
- [www.thehill.com](http://www.thehill.com)
- [www.fivethirtyeight.com](http://www.fivethirtyeight.com)
- [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)