

THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

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In the aftermath of Barack Obama's historic victory in the 2008 presidential election, two questions have frequently arisen. How did he manage to turn nine or ten "red states" into "blue states," (as of this writing, Missouri is still too close to call), and why was the voter turnout "flat," that is, not much greater than the voter turnout in the 2004 presidential election? As it happens, the two questions are somewhat related. This paper addresses them both.

Voter turnout is equal to total ballots cast divided by total registered voters, expressed as a percentage. Those who are wondering about the 2008 voter turnout are actually inquiring about total ballots cast, or more precisely, those with a choice for president -- the total popular vote.

Naturally, the historic trend is that more ballots are cast in each presidential election than in the preceding one, primarily because of steady growth in population. But this does not always hold true. Listed below are the popular vote totals for every presidential election since the advent of women's suffrage, with the exception of the 2008 election for which the results are still, as of this writing, incomplete and unofficial. The incremental increases or decreases in the total popular vote are expressed both in raw numbers and as percentages.

COMPARISON OF POPULAR VOTE TOTALS

2004	122,295,345	+ 16,890,245	+ 16.02%
2000	105,405,100	+ 9,127,466	+ 9.48%
1996	96,277,634	- 8,147,380	- 7.80%
1992	104,425,014	+ 12,830,878	+ 14.01%
1988	91,594,136	- 1,046,906	- 1.13%
1984	92,641,042	+ 7,144,191	+ 8.36%
1980	85,496,851	+ 3,943,359	+ 4.84%
1976	81,553,492	+ 4,049,834	+ 5.23%
1972	77,503,658	+ 4,483,454	+ 6.14%
1968	73,020,204	+ 2,347,361	+ 3.32%
1964	70,672,843	+ 1,796,539	+ 2.61%
1960	68,876,304	+ 7,016,663	+ 11.34%
1956	61,859,641	+ 307,722	+ 0.50%
1952	61,551,919	+ 12,758,093	+ 26.15%
1948	48,793,826	+ 817,156	+ 1.70%
1944	47,976,670	- 1,838,542	+ 3.69%
1940	49,815,212	+ 4,447,660	+ 9.80%
1936	45,367,552	+ 5,623,235	+ 14.15%
1932	39,744,317	+ 2,971,395	+ 8.08%
1928	36,772,922	+ 7,682,664	+ 26.41%
1924	29,090,258	+ 2,378,535	+ 8.90%
1920	26,711,723		

As shown in the table above, the popular vote totals are not predictable. For example, there were sharp increases in 1928, when Alfred E. Smith was the first Catholic nominated for President, and in 1936, when Franklin D. Roosevelt first ran for reelection. In 1948 the popular vote was unexpectedly low, when the complacency and overconfidence of Thomas E. Dewey allowed Harry S. Truman to win an upset victory. In 1952, voters turned out in droves to elect Dwight D. Eisenhower, but there were relatively few additional voters for his 1956 rematch with Adlai E. Stevenson. In 1960 there was another sharp increase in the popular vote when John F. Kennedy narrowly defeated Richard M. Nixon in a spirited campaign. In 1988 there was an actual

decrease in the popular vote when the choice was between George H. W. Bush and Michael Dukakis. In 1992, there was a sharp increase due to the independent candidacy of Ross Perot. In 1996, when Bill Clinton ran for reelection against Bob Dole, the decline in the popular vote was the sharpest in modern times. In 2000, when the stalemate between George W. Bush and Al Gore was decided by the United States Supreme Court, the increase in the popular vote brought the total only slightly higher than in 1992. So the huge increase of 16.02% in 2004, when George W. Bush ran against John Kerry, was the third highest percentage increase in modern times, exceeded only in 1928 and 1952, and is not to be expected always.

As stated above, the 2008 election returns are, as of this writing, incomplete and unofficial. Moreover, the totals of the third-party candidates are not yet easily accessible, especially on a state-by-state basis. It is more meaningful to compare the vote totals of the two major-party candidates when comparing the two elections.

COMPARISON OF POPULAR VOTE, 2008 AND 2004 ELECTIONS

	Democratic	Republican	Total	Increase	
2008	66,882,230	58,343,671	125,225,901	+ 4,157,186	+ 3.43%
2004	59,028,109	62,040,606	121,068,715		

The numbers for 2008 are subject to change. There are provisional ballots and late-arriving absentee ballots still to be counted. But it is safe to say that the percentage increase in the popular vote total for 2008 compared to 2004, presently 3.43%, will be unusually low when and if all of the votes are counted. But it already exceeds the comparative showing in six modern presidential elections, two of which, 1988 and 1996, were actual decreases. This modest 3.43% increase, though perhaps surprisingly low, is not in and of itself cause for suspicion. The appropriate thing is to analyze the numbers, state by state, to find out where and why the popular vote was lower than so many observers had expected.

The most noticeable factor is that while Barack Obama has already received 66,882,230 votes, which is 7,854,121 (13.31%) more than received by John Kerry, John McCain has thus far received only 58,343,671 votes, which is 3,696,935 (5.96%) fewer than received by George W. Bush. The principal reason for the relatively low increase in the popular vote may have been a lack of enthusiasm for John McCain and Sarah Palin. Thus far, according to incomplete returns, there are only eleven states where McCain has received more votes than Bush. Nine of these states were part of the old Confederacy, and the other two involved home-state advantage - Arizona, the home state of John McCain, and Massachusetts, the home state of John Kerry.

STATES WHERE McCAIN RAN AHEAD OF BUSH

	Obama	McCain	Kerry	Bush
Alabama	811,764	1,264,879	693,933	1,176,394
Arizona	948,648	1,132,560	893,524	1,104,294
Arkansas	418,049	632,672	469,953	572,898
Georgia	1,843,452	2,048,244	1,366,149	1,914,254
Louisiana	780,981	1,147,603	820,299	1,102,169
Massachusetts	1,891,083	1,104,284	1,803,800	1,071,109
Mississippi	520,864	687,266	457,766	684,981
North Carolina	2,123,390	2,109,698	1,525,849	1,961,166
South Carolina	862,042	1,034,500	661,699	937,974
Tennessee	1,093,213	1,487,564	1,036,477	1,384,375
Virginia	1,958,370	1,726,053	1,454,742	1,716,959

In nine of these states, the exceptions being Arkansas and Louisiana, both major party candidates ran ahead of their 2004 counterparts. Five of these states are among the ten with the largest percentage increases in the popular vote.

STATES WITH LARGEST INCREASES IN POPULAR VOTE

	Obama	McCain	Kerry	Bush	Increase
North Carolina	2,123,390	2,109,698	1,525,849	1,961,166	21.40%
Georgia	1,843,452	2,048,244	1,366,149	1,914,254	18.63%
South Carolina	862,042	1,034,500	661,699	937,974	18.56%
Virginia	1,958,370	1,726,053	1,454,742	1,716,959	16.17%
Nevada	531,884	411,988	397,190	418,690	15.69%
Alabama	811,764	1,264,879	693,933	1,176,394	11.03%
Indiana	1,367,503	1,341,667	969,011	1,479,438	10.65%
Delaware	255,394	152,356	200,152	171,660	9.67%
Texas	3,521,164	4,467,748	2,832,704	4,526,917	8.55%
New Mexico	464,458	343,820	370,942	376,930	8.08%

Five of these ten states (North Carolina, Virginia, Nevada, Indiana, and New Mexico) owe their large popular vote increases, at least in part, to the fact that they were “battleground states,” the ones where the candidates campaigned, the ones where the money was spent, the ones where the election was decided. Three other states (Georgia, South Carolina, and Alabama), though not as hotly contested, experienced unprecedented turnout among black voters. By contrast, there were twelve states with decreased popular vote totals compared to the 2004 election. And one of them, Ohio, was a “battleground state.”

STATES WITH DECREASES IN POPULAR VOTE

	Obama	McCain	Kerry	Bush	Decrease
West Virginia	301,438	394,278	326,541	423,778	7.28%
Oregon	978,605	699,673	943,163	866,831	7.28%
Washington	1,548,654	1,098,072	1,510,201	1,304,894	5.98%
Utah	301,771	555,497	241,199	663,742	5.27%
New York	4,363,386	2,576,360	4,314,280	2,962,567	4.63%
Ohio	2,784,532	2,582,297	2,741,167	2,859,768	4.18%
Alaska	111,560	179,424	111,025	190,889	3.62%
California	7,441,458	4,544,643	6,745,485	5,509,826	2.20%
South Dakota	170,886	203,019	149,244	232,584	2.08%
Wisconsin	1,670,474	1,258,181	1,489,504	1,478,120	1.31%
Maine	421,484	296,195	396,842	330,201	1.29%
Oklahoma	502,294	959,745	503,966	959,792	0.12%

Some of these states may show an increase in total popular vote when and if all of the votes are counted. But as of this writing, there are 1.3 million fewer votes counted (35,943,926) for the two major-party candidates in these twelve states than in the 2004 presidential election (37,255,609). The shortfall appears to be due to a lack of enthusiasm for John McCain and Sarah Palin, who have thus far received 2.4 million fewer votes (15,347,384) in these twelve states than George W. Bush and Dick Cheney received (17,782,992) in these same states in the 2004 presidential election, whereas Barack Obama and Joe Biden have already received 1.1 million more votes (20,596,542) in these twelve states than John Kerry and John Edwards (19,472,617).

In addition, there were five large states with relatively small increases in the popular vote. All of them were “blue states” in both elections. In each of the five states, Obama got more votes than Kerry, and McCain got fewer votes than Bush.

LARGE STATES WITH SMALL INCREASES IN POPULAR VOTE

	Obama	McCain	Kerry	Bush	Increase
Pennsylvania	3,192,316	2,586,496	2,938,095	2,793,847	0.82%
Illinois	3,319,237	1,981,158	2,891,550	2,345,946	1.20%
New Jersey	2,085,051	1,545,495	1,911,430	1,670,003	1.37%
Minnesota	1,573,323	1,275,400	1,445,014	1,346,695	2.04%
Michigan	2,867,680	2,044,405	2,479,183	2,313,746	2.49%

These, of course, are comparisons of turnout, to explain why the popular vote totals are not much higher, nationally, than in 2004. Some of the states with decreases (Maine and Wisconsin) still had relatively high turnout in 2008, even though it was lower than in 2004. To illustrate the point, the popular vote totals as a percentage of the total population are presented below, using population estimates for 2007, which are the most recent census figures available, and for 2003, rather than 2004, so that four-year increments are used for proper comparison.

STATES WITH HIGHEST POPULAR VOTE AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION

	-- 2008 Election --			-- 2004 Election --		
	Turnout	Population	Percent	Turnout	Population	Percent
Minnesota	2,848,723	5,197,261	54.81%	2,791,709	5,052,497	55.25%
Maine	717,679	1,317,207	54.48%	727,043	1,303,441	55.78%
New Hampshire	701,528	1,315,828	53.31%	671,748	1,282,844	52.36%
Wisconsin	2,928,655	5,601,640	52.28%	2,967,624	5,475,267	54.20%
Vermont	317,896	621,254	51.17%	305,247	617,101	49.46%
Iowa	1,495,748	2,988,046	50.06%	1,493,855	2,935,991	50.88%

Note that these are all “blue states,” and they are all in northern New England or the upper Midwest. One of them, Iowa, was a “battleground state.” By comparison, in seven states the popular vote totals as a percentage of the total population are less than 37%. With the exception of New York, they are all western states. One of them, Nevada, was a “battleground state.”

STATES WITH LOWEST POPULAR VOTE AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION

	-- 2008 Election --			-- 2004 Election --		
	Turnout	Population	Percent	Turnout	Population	Percent
Utah	857,268	2,645,330	32.41%	904,941	2,373,260	38.13%
California	11,996,101	36,553,215	32.82%	12,255,311	35,376,833	34.64%
Arizona	2,081,208	6,338,755	32.83%	1,997,818	5,579,307	35.81%
Texas	7,988,912	23,904,380	33.42%	7,359,621	22,085,973	33.32%
Hawaii	445,227	1,283,388	34.69%	425,899	1,240,325	34.34%
New York	6,939,746	19,297,729	35.96%	7,276,847	19,207,652	37.89%
Nevada	943,872	2,565,382	36.79%	815,880	2,238,336	36.45%

Some of these numbers are appallingly low. In 2004, Texas had the lowest popular vote as a percentage of the total population. In 2008 it may be surpassed by Utah, California and Arizona.

We turn now to the “battleground states,” the ones where the candidates campaigned, the ones where the money was spent, the ones where the election was decided. They can be divided into two categories: those that were “battleground states” in the 2004 election (Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Mexico and Ohio), and those that were not (Indiana, Missouri, North Carolina and Virginia). All ten of these states were awarded to Bush in 2004, but in 2008, nine of ten have been awarded to Obama, with Missouri, as of this writing, still too close to call.

COMPARISON OF POPULAR VOTE, BATTLEGROUND STATES

	Obama	McCain	Kerry	Bush	Change
Colorado	1,216,793	1,020,135	1,001,732	1,101,255	+ 6.37%
Florida	4,143,957	3,939,380	3,583,544	3,964,522	+ 7.09%
Indiana	1,367,503	1,341,667	969,011	1,479,438	+ 10.65%
Iowa	818,240	677,508	741,898	751,957	+ 0.13%
Missouri	1,439,940	1,444,720	1,259,171	1,455,713	+ 6.25%
Nevada	531,884	411,988	397,190	418,690	+ 15.69%
New Mexico	464,458	343,820	370,942	376,930	+ 8.08%
North Carolina	2,123,390	2,109,698	1,525,849	1,961,166	+ 21.40%
Ohio	2,784,532	2,582,297	2,741,167	2,859,768	- 4.18%
Virginia	1,958,370	1,726,053	1,454,742	1,716,959	+ 16.17%

POPULAR VOTE AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION, BATTLEGROUND STATES

	-- 2008 Election --			-- 2004 Election --		
	Turnout	Population	Percent	Turnout	Population	Percent
Colorado	2,236,928	4,861,515	46.01%	2,102,987	4,555,212	46.17%
Florida	8,083,337	18,251,243	44.29%	7,522,924	16,959,251	44.36%
Indiana	2,709,170	6,345,289	42.70%	2,448,449	6,184,519	39.59%
Iowa	1,495,748	2,988,046	50.06%	1,493,855	2,935,991	50.88%
Missouri	2,884,660	5,878,415	49.07%	2,714,884	5,705,971	47.58%
Nevada	943,872	2,565,382	36.79%	815,880	2,238,336	36.45%
New Mexico	808,278	1,969,915	41.03%	747,872	1,870,113	39.99%
North Carolina	4,233,088	9,061,032	46.72%	3,487,015	8,421,149	41.41%
Ohio	5,366,829	11,466,917	46.80%	5,600,935	11,435,980	48.98%
Virginia	3,684,423	7,712,091	47.77%	3,171,701	7,370,557	43.03%

In nine of ten “battleground states,” Obama has already captured far more votes than Kerry, with increases ranging from 10.29% in Iowa to 34.62% in Virginia, 39.16% in North Carolina, and 41.12% in Indiana. The exception is Ohio, where Obama has thus far received only 43,365 (1.58%) more votes than Kerry, with provisional ballots and late-arriving absentee ballots to be counted.

By comparison, McCain has captured far more votes than Bush in only one “battleground state,” that being North Carolina, where the increase thus far is 7.57%. McCain is slightly ahead of Bush in Virginia, slightly behind Bush in Florida, Missouri and Nevada, and far behind Bush in five of ten “battleground states” (Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, New Mexico and Ohio).

In eight of ten “battleground states,” the popular vote totals for the major-party candidates are up sharply, the exceptions being Iowa, where the increase is only 1,893 votes (0.13%), and Ohio, where the decrease is an astonishing 234,106 votes (4.18%). In Ohio, Obama has received only 43,365 (1.58%) more votes than Kerry, who lost the official count in 2004; and McCain has thus far received 277,471 (9.70%) fewer votes than Bush. There are 87,553 absentee ballots and 180,950 provisional ballots still to be examined in Ohio. If 234,106 (87.2%) of these are counted for

McCain or Obama, the vote totals for the major-party candidates will match the number for 2004. Third-party candidates have received 86,709 votes in Ohio (40,696 of them for Ralph Nader).

As might be expected, three of the four states that were not “battlegrounds” in the 2004 election are among the four with the largest percentage increases in the popular vote totals (Indiana, North Carolina and Virginia), the exceptions being the repeat “battleground” of Nevada, with a 15.69% increase, and the new battleground of Missouri, with only a 6.25% increase. The reason for these two exceptions is population demographics. Whereas the population of Nevada increased by 14.61% in four years, the population of Missouri increased by only 3.02%. When one looks at the popular vote as a percentage of the total population, the new battlegrounds were the ones with the largest increases, while four of the six repeat battlegrounds were essentially unchanged, the exceptions being New Mexico, where the percentage increased from 39.99% to 41.03%, and Ohio, where the percentage decreased from 48.98% to 46.80%, with provisional ballots and late-arriving absentee ballots still to be counted.

We turn now to a geographical and statistical analysis of how Barack Obama put together his victories in nine, and possibly ten, “battleground states.” The question to be answered, in each state, is not where Obama ran ahead of McCain. Some areas are reliably Democratic. For example, any Democratic presidential candidate will carry Cleveland and St. Louis. The question is where did the margins differ -- that is, where did the Democratic margin increase, or the Republican margin decrease, or a “red” county turn “blue.” The danger in such analysis is that, in some states, we do not know if the official numbers are reliable. This issue will be addressed in a forthcoming paper.

Indiana had not voted Democratic in a presidential election since 1964, when Lyndon B. Johnson carried the state against Barry Goldwater, and had voted Democratic only three other times in the twentieth century. In 1912, a divided Republican Party allowed Woodrow Wilson to carry the state; and in 1932 and 1936, Franklin D. Roosevelt carried Indiana, only to lose the state in 1940 and 1944. George W. Bush defeated John Kerry by 510,427 votes (20.69%) in 2004. Barack Obama contested the state in 2008, and won it narrowly, making gains across the boards. Unofficially, Obama carried Indiana by 25,836 votes (1,367,503 to 1,341,667). Obama did win most of the urban counties by very impressive margins, winning Marion County (Indianapolis) by 105,816 votes compared to 6,177 for Kerry, and winning Lake County (Gary) by 71,186 votes compared to 42,840 for Kerry. Obama won by 1,919 votes in Vanderburgh County (Evansville), which Kerry lost by 12,696 votes. Obama came within 6,585 votes of winning Allen County (Fort Wayne), which Kerry lost by 35,303 votes. Obama won by 20,249 votes in Monroe County (the home of Indiana University in Bloomington), which Kerry won by 4,131 votes; Obama won by 20,198 votes in St. Joseph County (the home of Notre Dame University in South Bend), which Kerry lost by 2,617 votes; and Obama won by 7,920 votes in Tippecanoe County (the home of Purdue University in Lafayette), which Kerry lost by 10,079 votes. But even these impressive gains, amounting to 228,250 votes, were nowhere near enough. To carry Indiana, Obama made gains in all 92 counties, in every single county in the state, a truly remarkable achievement.

Virginia had been reliably Democratic ever since Reconstruction, having voted for every Democratic presidential candidate from 1876 through 1948 except for Alfred E. Smith, the first Catholic nominee for President, in 1928. But Virginia voted for Dwight Eisenhower in 1952, and had been reliably Republican ever since, not having voted Democratic in a presidential election since 1964, when Lyndon B. Johnson carried the state against Barry Goldwater. Virginia was the only southern state that Jimmy Carter lost to Gerald Ford in 1976. George W. Bush defeated John Kerry by 262,217 votes (8.21%) in 2004. Barack Obama contested the state in 2008, and his victory was sweeping. Obama made net gains in all 40 incorporated cities in the state, and in all but 12 of 95 counties, the exceptions being eight contiguous counties in the southwestern tip of Virginia (Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Tazewell, Washington and Wise), and four rural

counties scattered across southern Virginia (Appomattox, Bedford, Floyd and Powhatan). Unofficially, Obama carried Virginia by 232,317 votes (1,958,370 to 1,726,053), with the lion’s share (32.18%) of his net gain of 494,534 votes coming along the Potomac River, in the city of

Alexandria and the counties of Loudoun, Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William, which Obama carried by a combined margin of 226,851 votes compared to 67,699 for Kerry.

North Carolina was reliably Democratic from 1876 through 1964, even longer than Virginia, voting Republican only one time in 23 presidential elections, the exception being 1928 when North Carolina voted for Herbert Hoover against Alfred E. Smith, the first Catholic nominee for President. Richard Nixon broke the streak, carrying the state in both 1968 and 1972. North Carolina returned to the Democratic column in 1976, when Jimmy Carter carried every state in the old Confederacy except for Virginia. But North Carolina had voted Republican ever since, in seven straight presidential elections. George W. Bush defeated John Kerry by 435,317 votes (12.44%) in 2004, even with native son John Edwards on the ticket. Barack Obama contested the state in 2008, and won it narrowly, carrying 33 of 100 counties. McCain made net gains in 18 rural counties, including ten in the Appalachians (Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Cherokee, Clay, Cleveland, Graham, Polk, Rutherford and Yancey), two in the Piedmont (Richmond and Stanley), and six in the Coastal Plain (Brunswick, Camden, Carteret, Columbus, Currituck and Pender). But Obama made net gains in the other 82 counties, including all the urban counties: Mecklenburg (Charlotte) 87,941 votes, Wake (Raleigh) 72,038 votes, Guilford (Greensboro) 42,381 votes, Durham (Durham) 30,287 votes, Forsyth (Winston-Salem) 29,362 votes, Cumberland (Fayetteville) 25,681 votes, and Buncombe (Asheville) 17,802 votes. These seven counties accounted for a net gain of 305,492 votes for Barack Obama, or 70.18% of his net gains statewide.

Missouri has long been regarded as a bellwether state, having voted for the winner in 25 of the last 26 presidential elections, the lone exception being 1956, when Adlai E. Stevenson carried Missouri by 3,974 votes (0.22%) against Dwight D. Eisenhower. As of this writing, Missouri is still too close to call, with John McCain clinging to a lead of 4,780 votes (0.17%). Barack Obama leads in the city of St. Louis and in eight counties. McCain leads in 106 of 114 counties, but it may not be enough to win the state. George W. Bush defeated John Kerry by 196,542 votes (7.20%) in 2004. Obama made most of his net gains (129,262 of 191,556 votes, or 67.48%) in the two major metropolitan areas: 19,552 votes in St Louis City; 60,754 votes in St. Louis County; 10,596 votes in St. Charles County (suburban St. Louis); 32,611 votes in Jackson County (Kansas City); and 5,749 votes in Clay County (suburban Kansas City). Obama also made net gains of 10,213 votes in Boone County (Columbia), and 9,763 votes in Greene County (Springfield), and chipped away at the Republican margin in 89 smaller counties, with McCain managing net gains in only 19 of 114 counties scattered across the state of Missouri.

Colorado has historically tended to vote Republican in presidential elections, although certain Democratic candidates have been able to carry the state. William Jennings Bryan carried Colorado three times (1896, 1900, 1908). Woodrow Wilson carried Colorado twice (1912, 1916). Franklin D. Roosevelt carried Colorado twice (1932, 1936). But since then, Colorado had voted Republican in 14 of 17 presidential elections, the exceptions being Harry Truman in 1948, Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, and Bill Clinton in 1992. Colorado was considered a "battleground state" in 2004, when George W. Bush defeated John Kerry, officially, by 99,523 votes (4.67%). The exit polls had predicted a Bush victory by only 1.8%. Barack Obama won Colorado in 2008, unofficially, by 196,658 votes (8.79%), a net gain of 296,181 votes for the Democrats. As of this writing, McCain is 81,120 votes behind Bush, and Obama is 215,061 votes ahead of Kerry. Obama made net gains in all 64 counties in Colorado. His net gains in the Denver metropolitan area alone (Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties) amounted to 160,186 votes, more than enough to turn Colorado into a "blue state." Obama also made impressive net gains in

four other urban counties. Obama carried Boulder County by 73,695 votes, compared to a margin of 53,978 votes for Kerry, amounting to a net gain of 19,717 votes. Obama carried by 15,529 votes Larimer County (Fort Collins), which Kerry had lost by 7,618 votes, which amounts to a net gain of 23,147 votes. Also, Obama reduced the Republican margin in El Paso County

(Colorado Springs) from 83,713 to 51,244, a net gain of 32,469 votes, and in Weld County (Greeley) from 23,723 to 9,269, a net gain of 14,454 votes.

Iowa for more than a century was a reliably Republican state, having voted Republican in all but five presidential elections since the founding of the Republican Party. Iowa did vote for Woodrow Wilson in 1912, for Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936, for Harry Truman in 1948, and for Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. But otherwise, Iowa had voted Republican in 23 of 28 presidential elections since 1856. This all changed in 1988, when Iowa was one of only ten states carried by Michael Dukakis against George H. W. Bush, and he won it by a solid margin of 125,202 votes (10.25%). Since then, Iowa was reliably Democratic, voting for Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996, and also for Al Gore in 2000, although by a very narrow margin of 4,144 votes (0.32%). In 2004, Iowa was one of only two states to turn from “blue” to “red,” when George W. Bush defeated John Kerry, officially, by 10,059 votes (0.67%). The exit polls had predicted a Kerry victory by 1.3%. Barack Obama won Iowa in 2008, unofficially, by 140,732 votes (9.41%), a net gain of 150,791 votes for the Democrats. Obama carried 52 of 99 counties (one was a tie). Obama made net gains in 98 of 99 counties, the lone exception being Clarke County, where McCain cut the Democratic margin from 123 votes to 102. Obama’s largest net gains were in four counties. In Polk County (Des Moines), which Kerry won by 9,390 votes, Obama won by 30,586 votes, a net gain of 21,196 votes. In Linn County (Cedar Rapids), which Kerry won by 11,000 votes exactly, Obama won by 24,092 votes, a net gain of 13,092 votes. In Johnson County (Iowa City), which Kerry won by 19,132 votes, Obama won by 30,069 votes, a net gain of 10,937 votes. And in Scott County (Davenport), which Kerry won by 2,164 votes, Obama won by 12,436 votes, a net gain of 10,272 votes. Any one of these four counties was enough to turn Iowa back into a “blue state.”

Nevada has often been an unpredictable state in presidential elections. In 1892, Nevada was one of four states to vote for the People’s Party candidate, James B. Weaver. Since then, more often than not, Nevada has voted Democratic. William Jennings Bryan carried Nevada three times (1896, 1900, 1908), Woodrow Wilson twice (1912, 1916), and Franklin D. Roosevelt four times (1932, 1936, 1940, 1944). Nevada voted for Harry Truman in 1948, John F. Kennedy in 1960, and for Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. But since then, Nevada had voted Republican eight times out of ten. Bill Clinton, in 1992 and 1996, had been the only Democrat to carry Nevada in forty years. Nevada was considered a “battleground state” in 2004, when George W. Bush defeated John Kerry, officially, by 21,500 votes (2.59%). The exit polls had predicted a Kerry victory by 1.3%. Barack Obama won Nevada in 2008, unofficially, by 119,896 votes (12.70%), a net gain of 141,396 votes for the Democrats. There are only 16 counties in Nevada. Carson City reports its election returns separately, so there are 17 jurisdictions. According to 2004 census estimates, the population of Nevada was 2,334,771, and of these, 1,650,671 (70.70%) lived in Clark County, and 534,847 of these lived in Las Vegas. Another 380,754 (16.31%) lived in Washoe County, and 197,963 of these lived in Reno. Thus, any serious analysis of Nevada elections must examine subdivisions of Clark and Washoe counties. To illustrate the point, in the 2000 election, Al Gore won Clark County by 25,168 votes, and lost the rest of Nevada by 46,675 votes. In the 2004 election, John Kerry won Clark County by 26,430 votes, and lost the rest of Nevada by 47,930 votes. Those numbers are almost identical. In the 2008 election, Barack Obama won Clark County by 122,803 votes, and lost the rest of Nevada by 2,907 votes. Thus, of Obama’s net gain of 141,396 votes statewide, 96,373 (68.16%) came in Clark County, and 29,356 (20.76%) came in Washoe County, which Kerry had lost by 6,704 votes, but which Obama won by 22,652 votes. Of Obama’s net gains statewide, only 15,667 votes (11.08%) came elsewhere in Nevada.

New Mexico joined the Union in 1912, and was a perfect bellwether state for sixty years, voting for the winner in all 16 presidential elections from 1912 to 1972. The streak was broken in 1976 when Gerald Ford carried New Mexico (and every other western state except Texas and Hawaii) against Jimmy Carter. The margin was close, only 10,271 votes (2.47%), but the streak was broken. New Mexico then resumed its bellwether role, voting for Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984, for George H. W. Bush in 1988, and for Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996. New Mexico

voted for Al Gore in 2000, arguably the winner of that election, by the narrowest of margins, 366 out of 598,605 total votes (0.06%). In 2004, New Mexico was one of only two states to turn from “blue” to “red,” when George W. Bush defeated John Kerry, officially, by 5,988 of 756,304 total votes (0.79%). The exit polls had predicted a Kerry victory by 2.6%. Barack Obama won New Mexico in 2008, unofficially, by 120,638 votes (14.93%), a net gain of 126,626 votes for the Democrats. Obama made net gains in all 33 counties in New Mexico. Obama won Bernalillo County (Albuquerque) by 59,194 votes, compared to a margin of 10,798 votes for Kerry, a net gain of 48,396 votes. Obama also increased the Democratic margins in Santa Fe County from 28,608 to 38,359, a net gain of 9,751; and in Doña Ana County (Las Cruces) from 2,214 to 11,363 votes, a net gain of 9,149. Obama also outperformed Kerry in Hispanic counties in northern New Mexico often overlooked by presidential candidates, a direct result of his unprecedented visit to Española in Rio Arriba County. Obama carried Rio Arriba County by 7,597 votes, Sandoval County by 7,215 votes, and San Miguel County by 7,707 votes, for a net gain of 13,752 votes in these three counties. Obama also outperformed Kerry in the Navajo and Pueblo counties of northwestern New Mexico, winning McKinley County by 9,810 votes, compared to a margin of 5,700 for Kerry, and cutting the Republican margin in San Juan County from 14,682 votes to 9,773, for a net gain of 9,019 votes in these two counties.

Florida was part of the Democratic “solid South” from 1880 to 1948, voting Republican only once, for Herbert Hoover in 1928, when Alfred E. Smith was the first Catholic nominee for President. That all changed with Dwight Eisenhower in 1952. Florida, officially, had voted Republican in 11 of the last 14 elections, having voted Democratic only for Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, Jimmy Carter in 1976, and Bill Clinton in 1996. As the whole world knows, Florida was awarded to George W. Bush in the 2000 election when the United States Supreme Court stopped the counting of the ballots, thus freezing Bush’s lead at 537 votes out of 5,963,070, or 0.009% (nine one-thousandths of one percent). Florida was again a “battleground state” in 2004, when George W. Bush defeated John Kerry, officially, by 380,978 votes (5.01%). The exit polls showed Florida too close to call, with Bush ahead by one tenth of one percent. But in 2008, Barack Obama defeated John McCain in Florida, unofficially, by 236,450 votes (2.82%), a net gain of 617,428 votes for the Democrats. There are 67 counties in Florida. McCain actually made gains in 28 counties, most of them small and rural, winning them by greater margins than Bush had gotten in 2004 (Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Franklin, Gilchrist, Gulf, Hamilton, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Nassau, Okeechobee, Putnam, St. Johns, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington). But this was offset easily by huge gains for Obama in most of the urban counties. Obama increased the Democratic margins from 48,637 to 139,280 votes in Miami-Dade County, a net gain of 90,643 votes; from 209,199 to 254,911 votes in Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), a net gain of 45,712 votes; from 115,999 to 135,234 votes in Palm Beach County, a net gain of 19,235 votes; and from 815 to 86,177 votes in Orange County (Orlando), a net gain of 85,362 votes. Obama turned three large counties from “red” to “blue,” winning Hillsborough County (Tampa) by 36,608 votes, a net gain of 68,052; winning Pinellas County (St. Petersburg) by 38,233 votes, a net gain of 38,459; and winning Osceola County (south of Orlando) by 19,876 votes, a net gain of 24,360. Obama also cut deeply into Republican margins in Duval County (Jacksonville), from 61,580 to 7,919 votes, a net gain of 53,661; in Seminole County (north of Orlando) from 31,201 to 5,735 votes, a net gain of

9

25,466; and in Polk County (between Orlando and Tampa) from 37,550 to 15,013 votes, a net gain of 22,537 votes. These ten counties accounted for a net gain of 473,487 votes for the Democrats. Six counties alone (Miami-Dade, Orange, Hillsborough, Duval, Broward and Pinellas) were enough to offset John Kerry’s entire statewide margin of defeat.

Ohio is a bellwether state of sorts. It is true that no Republican has ever been elected President without carrying Ohio. But five times since the formation of the Republican Party, a Democrat has been elected without carrying Ohio: James Buchanan in 1856, Grover Cleveland in 1884 and 1892, Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, and John F. Kennedy in 1960. About one month prior to the

2000 election, Al Gore pulled out of Ohio to concentrate his efforts in Florida. Nonetheless, Ohio was closer than expected, with George W. Bush winning by 165,019 votes (3.51%). Ohio was a desperately contested “battleground state” in 2004, when George W. Bush defeated John Kerry, officially, by 118,601 votes (2.11%). The exit polls had predicted a Kerry victory by 4.2%. In 2008, Barack Obama defeated John McCain in Ohio, by 202,235 (3.77%) at last count, a net gain of 320,836 votes. Obama has already gotten 43,365 more votes than Kerry, and McCain has thus far received 277,471 fewer votes than Bush, with 268,503 ballots outstanding (87,553 absentees, and 180,950 provisionals). McCain made gains in seven small, rural counties along the Ohio River (Belmont, Columbiana, Gallia, Jefferson, Lawrence, Monroe and Scioto); in two larger, urban, reliably Democratic counties on the Pennsylvania border (Mahoning and Trumbull); and in two counties in southwestern Ohio (Clark and Preble). Obama made gains everywhere else, in 77 of 88 counties in Ohio. In Franklin County (Columbus), which Kerry won by 48,548 votes, Obama leads by 99,806, with 54,541 ballots still to be examined. In Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), which Kerry won by 226,903 votes, Obama leads by 242,772, with 29,283 ballots still to be examined. In Lucas County (Toledo), which Kerry won by 45,555 votes, Obama leads by 63,864, with 13,631 ballots still to be examined. And in Hamilton County (Cincinnati), which Kerry lost by 22,937 votes, Obama leads by 20,940 votes, with 21,032 ballots still to be examined. These four counties alone account for Obama’s victory over McCain. But it is also noteworthy that Obama gained 41,003 votes on McCain, when compared to Kerry’s showing against Bush, in the twelve “Connally anomaly” counties of southwestern Ohio. These are the counties where Kerry inexplicably received fewer votes (not just a smaller percentage, but fewer votes) than Ellen Connally, an underfunded African-American municipal judge from Cleveland who ran for Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court. Of these gains, 14,963 votes came in Butler County alone, and another 11,523 votes came in Clermont and Warren counties. These counties are in the vicinity of Clark and Preble, which McCain managed to win by more votes than Bush. In addition, Obama gained 8,273 votes in Delaware County, where thousands of ballots in 2004 were inexplicably punched for gay marriage and for George W. Bush, and where the Board of Elections could not account for thousands of allegedly registered voters. Delaware and Warren are the two fastest-growing counties in Ohio, and both are solidly Republican. One would have expected sheer demographics to result in a net gain for the Republicans, unless Bush did not really earn all the votes that were awarded to him in 2004. These and other questions are deserving of closer scrutiny, and will be covered in a forthcoming paper.

Richard Hayes Phillips, Ph.D., is the author of “Witness to a Crime: A Citizens’ Audit of an American Election.” This is the document of record for the fraudulent 2004 presidential election in Ohio, the state that decided the election. It is based upon 30,000 photographs of actual forensic evidence – ballots, poll books, voter signature books, ballot accounting charts, and other election records. The book is 448 pages, hardcover, and comes with a CD containing more than 1,200 of these photographs. “Witness to a Crime” is not sold in stores. Autographed copies are still available by mail order or through PayPal at <http://www.witnesstoacrime.com>