



The Political Geography of the Intermountain West: The New Swing Region

By William H. Frey and Ruy Teixeira



This is the second in a series of reports on the demographic and political dynamics under way in key “battleground” states, deemed to be crucial in deciding the 2008 election. As part of the Metropolitan Policy Program’s Blueprint for American Prosperity, this series will provide an electoral component to the initiative’s analysis of and prescriptions for bolstering the health and vitality of America’s metropolitan areas, the engines of the U.S. economy. This report focuses on the Intermountain West and covers Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Arizona finding that:

A. One reason these states are increasingly “in play” is the rapid population growth among two key demographic segments—Hispanics and white college graduates—and the concomitant decline of the white working class. The growth of Hispanics and white college graduates is concentrated in these states’ major metropolitan areas, especially their very largest—Denver, Las Vegas, Albuquerque and Phoenix—and reflects the attraction of these groups to new economy growth generated by the Intermountain West’s “megapolitan” regions (agglomerations of economically-linked metros and counties).

B. In Colorado, these trends could have their strongest impact in the “battle of the suburbs” within the Denver metro (50 percent of state population), where Democrats need to expand their 2004 margin and the GOP needs to hold the line, and in the “battle of the metros” elsewhere, which pits the Democratic-trending Fort Collins metro, now the fourth largest in the state against the smaller GOP-trending metros of Grand Junction and fast-growing Greeley. Overall, the GOP will be looking to maintain their strong support among the declining white working class, the key to their electoral prospects. The Democrats will be relying on white college graduates, who are rapidly growing and have been moving toward the Democrats, especially since 2000 and Hispanics, who have been driving the growth of the minority vote and vote heavily Democratic.

C. In Nevada, these trends will determine whether the fast growing Las Vegas metro (72 percent of the statewide population), as well as Reno, continues trending toward

the Democrats. The GOP will be seeking to stem eroding support among the rapidly shrinking white working class. The Democrats will hope for the continuation of a pro-Democratic trend among the growing white college graduate group, as well as strong turnout among the burgeoning minority population, especially Hispanics.

D. In New Mexico, trends among these key groups will likely determine whether the relatively fast-growing Albuquerque metro (42 percent of the state population) and Northwest region (which includes Santa Fe) continue to shift Democratic, an outcome that would seriously compromise the GOP’s ability to hold the state. The GOP needs to, at minimum, stabilize its support among the white working class, whose ranks are declining, while encouraging a recent trend toward the GOP among Hispanic voters, the key growth constituency in the state. Democrats will be looking for continuation of a trend in their direction among white college graduates, who could tip from Republican to Democratic in this election.

E. In Arizona, these trends will likely determine whether and to what the very fast-growing Phoenix metro, along with Tucson (together they are 81 percent of the statewide population) continue to move toward the Democrats and cut into the GOP’s statewide lead. Republicans will be seeking to maintain their very strong support among the white working class. Democrats will try to move the growing white college graduate group into their camp, as well as reverse a recent pro-GOP trend among the even faster growing Hispanic population.

Overall, the Intermountain West has become the new swing region in the United States, moving from an average 14 point-GOP advantage in 1988 to a mere 5 point average advantage for the GOP in 2004.

Introduction

This report on the political demography and geography of four Intermountain West states—Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Arizona—is part of a series of reports on “purple” states in the 2008 elections. Purple states are states where the current balance of political forces does not decisively favor one party or the other, as it does in the solid red (Republican) and blue (Democratic) states. But demographic and geographic trends are constantly testing the balance in these purple states and may nudge them not just toward a particular party in this election but one party decisively over the longer term.

This report provides a guide to the trends currently reshaping these states, determining how they will lean in November 2008 and beyond.

Although a solid wall of Intermountain West states voted red (for George Bush) in 2004, the states of Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and, to a lesser degree, Arizona are considered to be “in play” for 2008. The reasons they are in play reflect some combination of the closeness of the last presidential election results and the turbulent demographic shifts among key voting bloc segments throughout the region.

Of course, demography will not be the only factor in the upcoming election. Presumptive GOP nominee John McCain is from this region and that may possibly help him. However, even in his home state of Arizona, his victory may not be a cakewalk, precisely because of the long-term trends that are nudging it toward purple status.

Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico comprise 19 Electoral College votes, enough to have changed the election in 2004, had they voted for Democrat John Kerry, over the Republican George Bush. With Arizona included the four states will award 29 electoral votes, two more than the highly prized state of Florida.

The dramatic growth of these states is shown in **Table 1**. Thus far this decade, Nevada and Arizona are the two fastest growing states in the nation, increasing their total populations by a quarter, and a fifth, respectively. Colorado ranks eighth and New Mexico, the slowest growing of the four, still grew faster than the nation as a whole. For the most part, this growth is fueled by the lure of new western economies, tied to growing “megapolitan regions” and industries such as information technology, financial services, energy, and tourism.¹

Their population growth comes from two migration sources: domestic in-movement from other US states, especially heavily Democratic California, and migration from abroad. **Figure 1** shows, for example, that Nevada’s migration gains from California are more than the total from the rest of the country. Compared to Nevada, there are even more California migrants destined for Arizona, though its gains from the rest of the US are even larger. Ex-Californians are also prominent among newcomers to Colorado and New Mexico.

**Table 1. 2000-2007 Growth by Race and Migration Components:
Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona**

	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Arizona
2007 Population (000s)	4,862	2,565	1,970	6,339
Growth Rate*				
Total	12.3	27.1	8.2	22.7
White**	7.3	12.5	1.8	13.2
Black**	14.4	38.6	34.0	41.2
Asian**	29.5	63.9	29.7	58.0
Hispanic	29.5	60.9	13.6	43.0
Migration Rate*				
Domestic Migration	2.8	17.4	1.5	12.3
Immigration	3.1	4.0	1.8	4.0

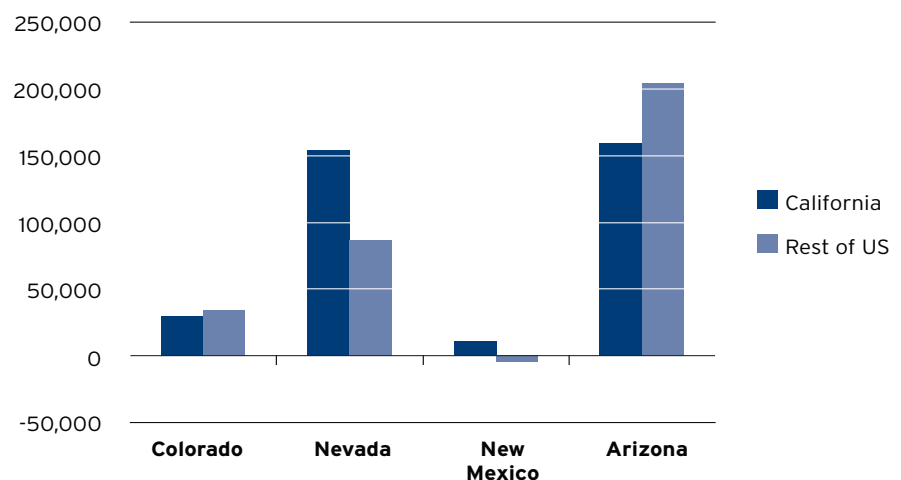
* growth rates per 100 population

**non Hispanic members of race

Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates,

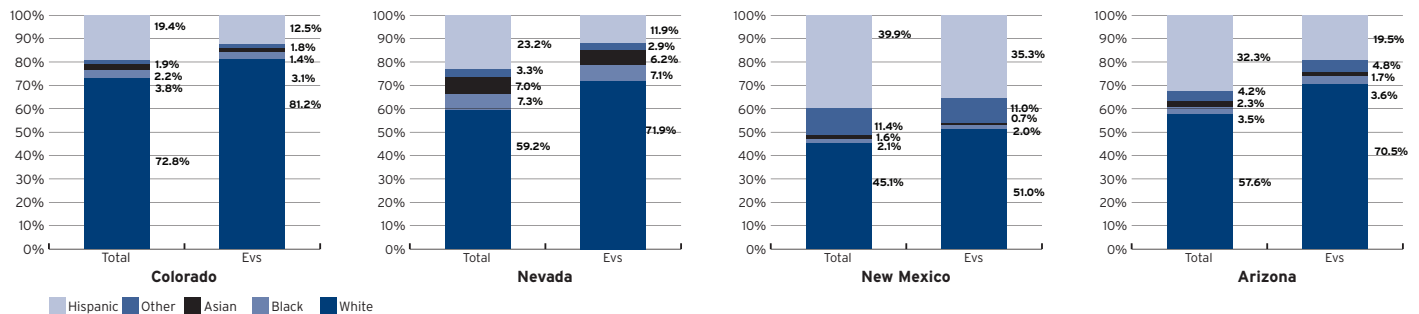
An increasingly important source of growth to the Intermountain West is immigration, especially from Mexico and Latin America. Hispanics in particular should loom large in the 2008 presidential election and beyond, as this group is younger and growing far more rapidly than native-born whites in each of the four states examined. While Hispanics are typically viewed as strongly favoring Democratic candidates, we show below that this support has varied considerably across these states in the past.²

Figure 1. Net Migration Exchanges with California and Rest of US, 2000-6



Source: Authors' analysis of Internal Revenue Service Migration Flow data

Figure 2: Race-Ethnic Profiles: Total Population vs Eligible Voters



Source: Author's analysis of 2007 Current Population Survey

However, it is important to stress that new immigrant minorities, both Hispanics and Asians, are less well represented among eligible voters than among the population as a whole. Among Hispanics, in particular, large shares of their total population are ineligible to vote due to their being under age 18, or having non citizenship status.³ In Nevada, for example, Hispanics constitute 23 percent of the total population but only about half that percentage of eligible voters (**Figure 2**). In New Mexico, however, where most Hispanics are native born and the product of generations of settlement, the disparity between total and eligible voter representation is quite small—over one third of New Mexican eligible voters are Hispanic. The Hispanic vote will likely be crucial in each of these states given the closeness of the previous election and potential for increase in Hispanic turnout.

Clearly the rising numbers of immigrants, Hispanics, and ex-Californians will be an important part of the story behind these states' 2008 election results. Still, these states differ from each other in several significant ways. For example, Colorado ranks fourth in the nation in the percentage with bachelors degrees—roughly one third of the state's adults—whereas Nevada ranks 46th, with barely one-fifth having achieved a college degree (**Table 2**). Nevada, on the other hand, fares well on household income, and well below the U.S. average on poverty levels. At the other extreme is New Mexico, which ranks 42nd on household income and has the fourth highest poverty rate. It does rank above the national average on the percentage of professionals in its workforce, and above Nevada in college graduates. These disparities reflect different mixes of in-migration of low skilled immigrants, high tech workers, and the compensation associated with industries prominent in these states.⁴

Similarly, these states have different political terrains, though a recent Democratic surge has lead to closer elections and more balanced party representations in state and national offices than has been the case in the past. It is the latter surge that has created interest in these previously red states and will be the focus of the state-specific analyses below.

Table 2: Demographic, Economic, and Political Indicators:US and four states

Indicator	U.S.	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Arizona
State Rank					
Demographic Indicators					
%White	<u>66.2</u>	<u>71.5</u>	<u>58.6</u>	<u>42.4</u>	<u>59.5</u>
		30	45	49	42
% Age 65+	<u>12.4</u>	<u>10.0</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>12.4</u>	<u>12.8</u>
		47	45	31	26
%Born in Same State#	<u>67.4</u>	<u>46.9</u>	<u>28.5</u>	<u>56.6</u>	<u>42.0</u>
		44	51	35	48
Economic Indicators 2006					
%College Grads*	<u>27.0</u>	<u>34.3</u>	<u>20.8</u>	<u>25.3</u>	<u>25.5</u>
		4	46	29	27
%Professionals**	<u>20.2</u>	<u>20.9</u>	<u>14.6</u>	<u>21.9</u>	<u>18.7</u>
		17	51	9	38
%Manufacturing**	<u>11.6</u>	<u>7.3</u>	<u>4.6</u>	<u>5.3</u>	<u>7.9</u>
		42	48	45	39
Median HH Income	<u>48,451</u>	<u>52,015</u>	<u>52,998</u>	<u>40,629</u>	<u>47,265</u>
		14	11	42	23
%Persons in Poverty	<u>13.3</u>	<u>12.0</u>	<u>10.3</u>	<u>18.5</u>	<u>14.2</u>
		31	41	4	15
State Political Indicators					
Dem/Rep House Members		4D/3R	1D/2R	2R/1D	4D/4R
Dem/Rep Senators		1D, 1R	1D, 1R	1D,1R	2R
Governor: Dem or Rep		D	R	D	D
Democratic Margin- 2006 Senate		n/a	-14	42	-10
Democratic Margin- 2004 President		-5	-2	-1	-11
# among native born residents					
*among persons age 25 and over					
** among civilian employed population age 16 and over					
Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey and state election results					

For each state, we start by delineating our regions of analysis and discussing population growth patterns for the state as whole and each individual region. We then provide demographic and growth profiles for the state and each region, focusing particularly on the key demographics of minorities, white working age college graduates, the working age white working class, and white seniors. We then describe the demographic voting patterns within the state, followed by an extensive discussion of how

different regions within the state have trended politically since 1988. We conclude the analysis of each state with an assessment of the key trends and groups to watch as the 2008 campaign unfolds.

Together these analyses will show how these states went from a heavily Republican bloc to a new swing region in U.S. politics. The results of the 2008 election will reflect the final balance struck in each state between the diverse demographic and geographic trends identified below.

Data Sources and Definitions

The demographic, polling and voting statistics presented in this report are the latest available from authoritative sources. The demographic profiles of states and their regions are drawn from U.S. Decennial Censuses through 2000, U.S. Census population estimates for states and counties through July 2007, and the Public Use Micro Sample (PUMS) of the Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey. Polling data are drawn from the CBS/New York Times (1988) and National Election Pool (2004) state exit polls. Presidential and congressional election data are drawn from official county level election returns for the four states.

Our analysis of eligible voters—citizens age 18 and above—draws from the 2006 American Community Survey and the 2000 census. We examine these voters according to several social and demographic attributes. Special emphasis is given to four key demographic segments of eligible voters: (1) *minorities*—all persons stating something other than non-Hispanic white as their race-ethnicity; (2) *white seniors*—non-Hispanic whites ages 65+; (3) *working age white college graduates*—non-Hispanic whites ages 18-64 with a four year college degree or more; and (4) *working age white working class*—non-college-educated non-Hispanic whites ages 18-64.

The sub state regional definitions that we employ will be discussed in Part A and displayed on maps in each state-specific section. They are typically based on counties or groups thereof, comprising metropolitan areas or other regions that are strategically important in terms of their recent demographic shifts or voting trends. These regions will be used to identify sub-state trends drawn from US census county population estimates and county level election returns. Regions delineated for the analyses of eligible voter demographics presented in Part B of each state-specific section, and in Appendix Tables will sometimes deviate slightly from the regional definitions presented in Part A. This is due to the geography limitations of data available with the 2006 American Community Survey Public Use Micro-Sample, which is used in these analyses. Details about these slight differences in regional definition are available from the authors.

Colorado

(See the full report on four Intermountain West states by William Frey and Ruy Teixeira at http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/08_intermountain_west_frey_teixeira.aspx)

A. Colorado's growing metropolitan areas, especially Denver's city and suburbs, but also including Colorado Springs, Boulder, Fort Collins, and Greeley in the Front Range megapolitan area are poised to play the key role in this year's election outcome.

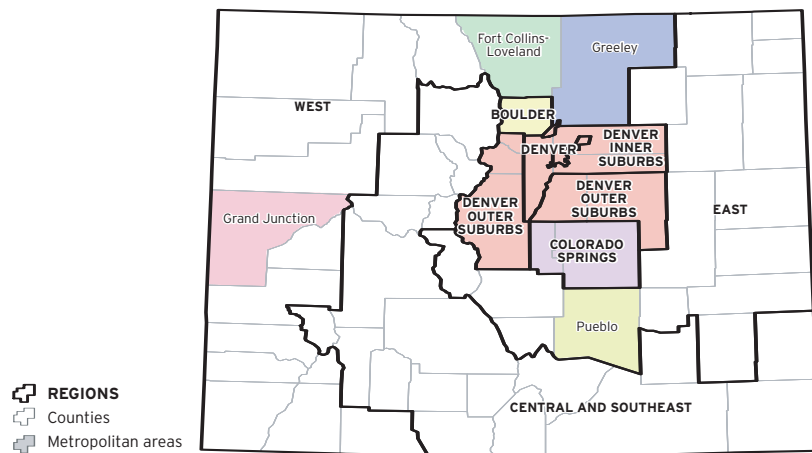
B. The greatest recent gains in Colorado's eligible voters are among white college graduates and Hispanic-dominated minorities. Growth of white college graduates has been fastest in Denver's outer suburbs, the as defined West region (including the Fort Collins and Greeley metros), and Colorado Springs. Growth of minority voters has outpaced other groups in all parts of the Denver metro, while also being very strong in the West and Colorado Springs.

C. Recent GOP victories in Colorado have featured strong support from the white working class. However, this group is declining as a share of voters, while Hispanics and increasingly Democratic white college grads are growing. Boulder, Denver, and the Denver inner suburbs show the weakest performances for the GOP among white working class voters.

D. Political shifts in Colorado since 1988 have moved most regions in Colorado toward the Democrats, with only the slow-growing East becoming significantly more Republican. However, some of the fastest-growing counties in the state are heavily Republican, so this is blunting the effect of these pro-Democratic shifts. Broadly speaking, the question for Colorado is whether a significant pro-Democratic shift in the Denver metro is a leading indicator of where the state as a whole is going (as might be suggested by the Democrats' 2004 Senate and 2006 gubernatorial victories) or whether continued population growth and GOP political strength in key counties outside of the Denver metro (and the Boulder and, increasingly, Fort Collins metros) can keep the state in Republican hands.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP needs to maintain its strong support; white college graduates, who are rapidly growing and have been moving toward the Democrats, especially since 2000; and Hispanics, who have been driving the growth of the minority vote and vote heavily Democratic. These trends could have their strongest impact in the "battle of the suburbs" in the Denver metro, where Democrats need to expand their 2004 margin and the GOP needs to hold the line, and in the "battle of the metros" in the West region, which pits the Democratic-trending Fort Collins metro, now the fourth largest in the state against the smaller GOP-trending metros of Grand Junction and fast-growing Greeley.

Map 1. Colorado Metropolitan Areas and Regions



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

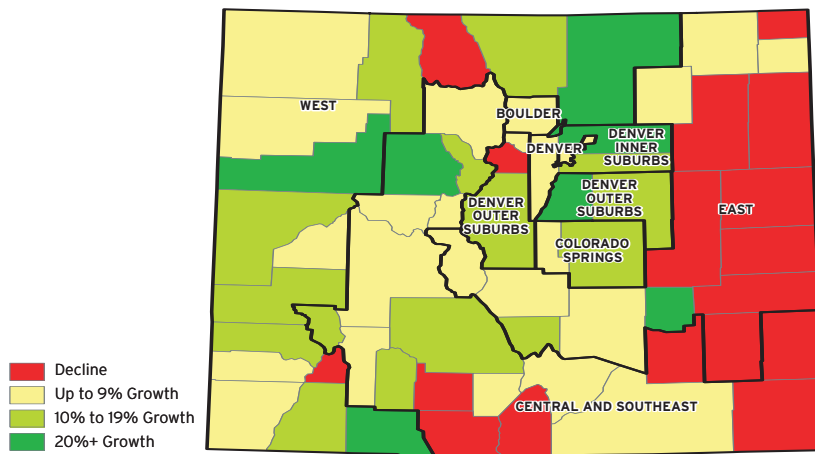
A. Colorado's growing metropolitan areas, especially Denver's city and suburbs, but also including Colorado Springs, Boulder, Fort Collins, and Greeley in the Front Range megapolitan area are poised to play the key role in this year's election outcome.

Colorado's demographic history is one of boom or bust, but typically the boom periods have prevailed. Its current Electoral College delegate count is nine, up one after the 2000 census. Previous boosts followed the prior two census as well. It was the 1990s tech boom that drew people to Colorado, adding a new vitality to the greater Denver region. In that decade, Colorado ranked third in growth among states. Partly due to the bursting tech bubble, that high level of growth has tailed off somewhat this decade, but the state still ranks eighth in population growth for 2000-2007

Colorado's regional scheme, for this analysis is depicted in **Map 1**, with relative size and growth patterns for regions shown in **Map 2** and **Figures 3 and 4**. These regions are defined as follows:

- 1. Denver** – Denver County, coterminous with the city of Denver
- 2. Denver Inner Suburbs** – Adams, Arapahoe, and Jefferson counties
- 3. Denver Outer Suburbs** – Douglas, Ebert, Park, Gilpin, Clear Creek, and Bloomfield counties

Map 2. Colorado Population Growth by County, 2000-2007

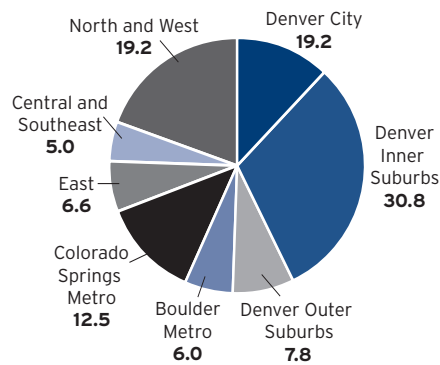


Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

Together these three regions comprise the Denver-Aurora metropolitan area, centered on Denver city, also the state's largest county with a population of 588,000. Inner suburban counties, Arapahoe, Jefferson, and Adams counties fall close behind at 545,000 and 529,000, and 422,000 respectively. The outer suburban counties have a combined population of 379,000. Led by rapidly growing Douglas with 272,000 people, Denver's outer suburbs are the most rapidly growing region of the state. Overall, metropolitan Denver is over half (51 percent) of the state's population, with 31 percent of Colorado residents living in Denver's inner suburbs, 8 percent in the outer suburbs and 12 percent residing in the city of Denver. Powered by rapid growth in its outer suburbs, the metropolitan area grew by a brisk 12% from 2000-2007.

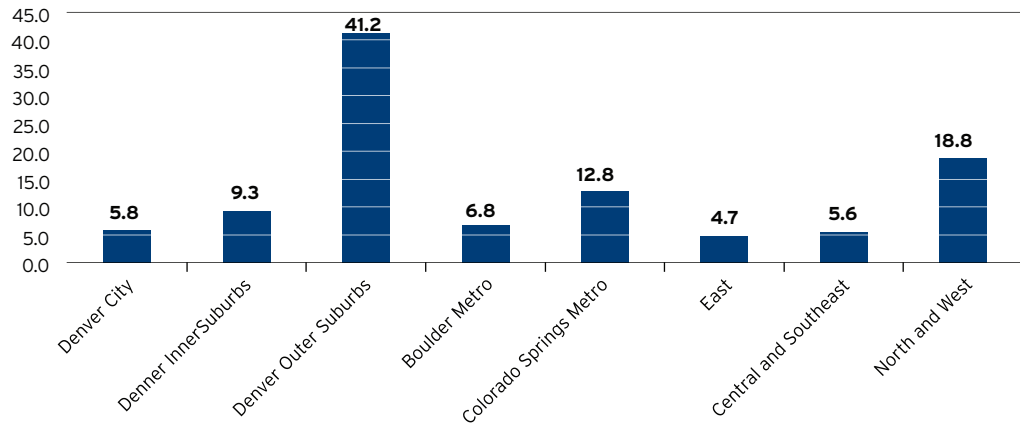
4. Boulder – Boulder County is coincident with the Boulder metropolitan area, the state's third largest

Figure 3. Share of 2007 Population in Colorado Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

Figure 4. 2000-2007 Population Growth in Colorado Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

metropolitan area, and home to the University of Colorado. It comprises 6 percent of the state's population. Its more controlled growth is more modest than its metropolitan neighbors.

5. Colorado Springs – the Colorado Springs metropolitan area, the state's second largest, is comprised of El Paso and Teller counties. At 587,000 people, El Paso will soon surpass Denver as the state's most populous county. The metro area comprises 12 percent of the state's population and has grown by 12.8 percent since 2000.

6. East – this region is comprised of 16 counties to the east and south of the Denver-Aurora and Colorado Springs metropolitan areas.⁵ One small metropolitan area, the Pueblo metropolitan area, consisting of Pueblo Co, lies within this spacious if not highly populated region, where 8 of its smaller counties on the eastern plains are registering population declines. This region contains less than 7 percent of the Colorado's population and is growing by a modest 4.7 percent

7 Central and Southeast – consists of 19 counties in southern and central Colorado, all small in size and showing at best a modest population growth.⁶ The region does not contain any metropolitan areas, and comprises 5 percent of the state's population.

8 West – consists of 16 counties in the western and northern part of Colorado.⁷ This sprawling region includes the Fort Collins-Loveland metropolitan area, which lies just above Boulder and is the state's

fourth largest metropolitan area, as well as the Greeley metropolitan area to its east, and the Grand Junction metropolitan area that abuts the western boundary of the state.⁸ These metropolitan areas are growing at a moderate to rapid pace, with the former two located on the northern end of the Colorado's Front Range megapolitan area. This briskly growing region contains approximately one fifth of the state's population.

Looking between and within these regions, it is Colorado's metropolitan area populations, including the suburbs of Denver, which are showing the most rapid growth this decade and within which demographic segments are changing the most rapidly.

B. The greatest recent gains in Colorado's eligible voters are among white college graduates and Hispanic-dominated minorities.

Growth of white college graduates has been fastest in Denver's outer suburbs, the West—including the Fort Collins and Greeley metros—and Colorado Springs. Growth of minority voters has outpaced other groups in all parts of the Denver metro, while also being very strong in the West and Colorado Springs.

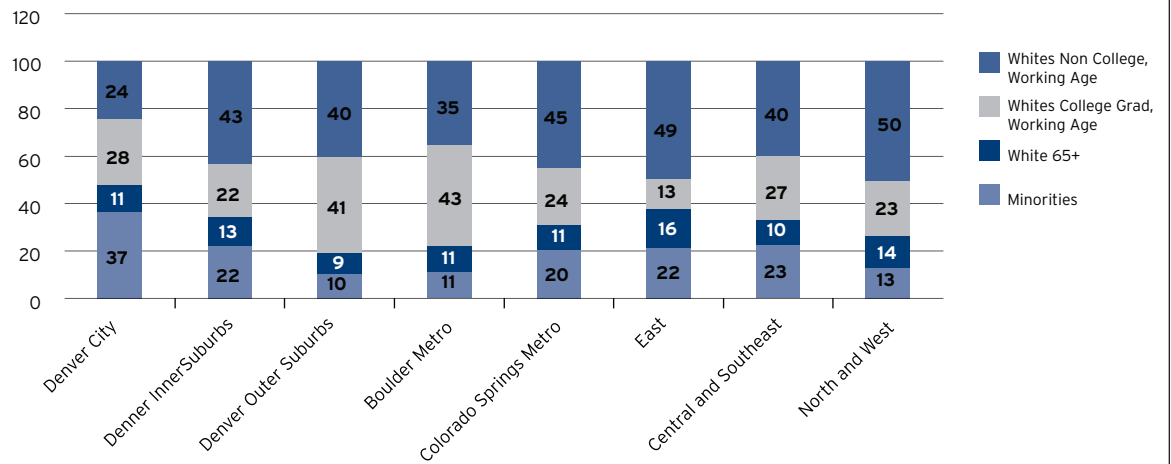
We focus on Colorado's eligible voter population—citizens ages 18 and above—as assessed from the 2006 American Community Survey and changes since the 2000 Census. A statewide picture of voters in key demographic segments is shown in **Appendices A and B**. Fully one quarter of Colorado's electorate is made up of white working age college graduates, well above their share in the other Intermountain West purple states. Moreover since 2000, along with minorities, this group is the fastest growing of Colorado's key demographic segments. As will be shown, white college graduates tend to be “on the fence” in their past voting preferences, compared with the more Republican-oriented white working class segment.

In Colorado, as in most other states, the working age white working class makes up the largest share, at 42 percent, of the key demographic segments. Yet, its growth since 2000 has been much smaller than the other key segments. This is consistent with Colorado's smaller gains on other eligible voter attributes, such as workers in the manufacturing and trade industries, and those with less than high school educations. Colorado groups which grew most rapidly included those with postgraduate degrees and those working in the education/health and information/financial/professional service industries.

Nearly two third's of Colorado's electorate was born out of state, especially in non-Western parts of the U.S. The greatest growth since 2000 has occurred among migrants born in California and those born abroad.

These eligible voter profiles and growth tendencies have played out quite differently across regions (**Figure 5, Table 3, and Appendix C**). White working age college graduates comprise substantial shares of eligible voters in Denver's outer suburbs, and in Boulder. It is only in these two regions, as well as the city of Denver, that the shares of white college graduates are higher than those of the white

Figure 5. Eligible Voters in Key Demographic Segments, Colorado Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

working class. In Colorado's remaining regions, the working age white working class comprises at least 40 percent of eligible voters.

It is in Denver's outer suburbs and Boulder that minorities make up the smallest segments of eligible voters. The highest minority share by far is seen in the city of Denver at 37 percent. About three fifths of these are Hispanics, a quarter are Blacks and the remainder consists of Asians and other groups. Indeed, the city of Denver is the most diverse of all our regions in terms of race-ethnic groups and other key demographic segments.

Table 3 shows 2000-2006 growth across Colorado regions for key demographic segments and other attributes. For white working age college graduates, the fastest growth is occurring in Denver's outer suburbs, the fast growing West region with its three growing metropolitan areas, and Colorado Springs. Within all parts of the Denver metro-city, inner suburbs, and outer suburbs--minorities show the fastest growth rates among our demographic segments, including 66 percent in Denver's outer suburbs. Additionally, in Colorado Springs and the West, growth rates among minority voters are just behind those of white college graduates, the growth leaders in those regions. In Colorado as a whole, as well as almost every region (the big exception is the East), both white college graduates and minorities are increasing as a share of eligible voters.

When focusing on changes in working class whites, we find that in the city of Denver, its inner suburbs, and the Boulder metro, there is an absolute decline in the numbers belonging to this group. Only in

Table 3. 2000-2006 Percent Change in Eligible Voters by Demographic Attributes: Colorado Regions

Attributes	Denver City	Denver Inner Suburbs	Denver Outer Suburbs	Boulder Metro	Colorado Springs Metro	East	Southeast and Central	West	Total State
Key Demographic Segments									
Minorities	9	22	66	14	19	-3	8	23	17
Whites Age 65+	-10	12	40	11	10	8	6	15	11
White, Working Age College Grads,	2	6	28	16	21	4	18	28	16
White Working Age Non College Grads	-11	-2	18	-11	9	10	0	13	5
Race-Ethnicity									
White	-5	2	24	3	13	8	7	17	9
Black	-2	19	29	20	14	4	34	1	9
Hispanic	15	24	61	11	16	0	7	27	18
Age									
18-29	-18	4	44	-4	15	19	8	23	10
30-44	-2	-13	6	-11	-2	-15	-8	2	-5
45-64	19	23	41	25	31	16	20	31	26
65+	-2	14	42	13	15	11	10	16	13
Education									
HS grad or less	-1	2	29	-10	9	2	10	19	7
Some College	-7	6	17	-4	9	8	-9	9	5
College Grads	6	11	35	16	27	12	20	29	19
Industry of Worker									
Manfg and Other Goods Production	-11	-4	6	-22	-2	-4	4	13	0
Trade	-2	1	28	-21	11	10	-6	21	7
Education and Health	9	15	24	16	6	3	17	20	14
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	-9	0	36	1	26	12	30	31	12
Other Services	-3	5	24	20	24	18	-2	18	11

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

Denver's outer suburbs, which is growing rapidly across all segments, and the rapidly growing West region, is there something approximating a healthy growth of this segment. But even there, growth rates among the white working class lag growth among eligible voters as a whole, so this group's share of eligible voters is declining. In fact, only in the stagnating East region are white working class eligible voters growing more rapidly than the other key segments. Reflecting this, the East is the only region where this group actually increased its share of voters. Everywhere else, its share declined.

Table 4. Colorado Voting by Selected Demographic Groups, 2004

Group	2004 President			2004 Senate		
	Democrat	Republican	Dem-Rep	Democrat	Republican	Dem-Rep
White	42	57	-15	46	52	-6
Black	87	13	74	84	15	69
Hispanic	68	30	38	72	25	47
Men	45	53	-8	46	52	-6
Women	48	51	-3	53	45	8
White Men	39	58	-19	42	57	-15
White Women	44	55	-11	49	49	0
Single Women	59	41	18	61	36	25
Married Women	41	59	-18	47	52	-5
HS Dropout	62	36	26	69	30	39
HS Graduate	39	60	-21	43	53	-10
Some College	41	58	-17	44	54	-10
College Grad	47	52	-5	50	48	2
Postgraduate	55	43	12	61	38	23
White Noncollege	35	64	-29	38	59	-21
White College	48	50	-2	53	46	7
18–29	51	47	4	53	45	8
30–39	49	49	0	52	45	7
40–49	47	52	-5	48	48	0
50–64	47	52	-5	52	47	5
65+	40	60	-20	44	55	-11
City over 500,000	62	37	25	62	35	27
City 50,000-500,000	46	53	-7	48	51	-3
Suburbs	45	53	-8	50	48	2
City 10,000-50,000	36	63	-27	41	55	-14
Rural	40	59	-19	45	51	-6
Total	47	52	-5	51	46	5

Source: Authors' analysis of 2004 Colorado exit poll

With respect to other demographic attributes, the aging of the baby boomers has increased the size of the 45-64 year old electorate in each one of the regions of Colorado. In only a few regions—Denver’s outer suburbs, the West region, and Colorado Springs and the East—is there a rapid growth in the young voter population. This could reflect the recent migration of younger families in these areas or the coming of age of large late teen populations. The youth boom in eligible voters is hardly apparent in either the city of Denver or its inner suburbs, or for that matter, in metropolitan Boulder.

In terms of industry, there is pervasive pattern of decline of those employed in manufacturing or trade with the exception of the West region, Denver’s outer suburbs, and the Southeast and Central regions. Growth of eligible voters working in information, financial and professional services is most apparent in Denver’s outer suburbs, Colorado Springs, and the fast-growing West region.

Overall, these shifts indicate that there are new voters from all segments in the fast gaining parts of Denver’s outer suburbs, the Colorado Springs metropolitan area, and the surging North and West regions, but that the strongest growth is from white college graduates and minorities. This means that these “outer” regions, while far more Republican than the city of Denver or its inner suburbs, are now gaining segments that are less predictably oriented toward the GOP.

C. Recent GOP victories in Colorado have featured strong support from the white working class. However, this group is declining as a share of voters, while Hispanics and increasingly Democratic white college grads are growing.

So far we have documented the basic demographic and geographic shifts that are reshaping Colorado and sketched a brief portrait of Colorado’s electorate. Now we turn to how Coloradans have been voting in recent elections which, as we shall see, is intimately bound up with these changes. The results and analysis not only illuminate how Colorado arrived at its current political coloration but provide some hints about how Colorado’s politics might change in the future as demographic and geographic shifts continue.

Table 4 displays some basic exit poll data from the 2004 presidential election and 2004 Senate election in Colorado. In 2004, Colorado voted Republican in the presidential election, just as it did in 2000, but by a smaller margin (5 points in 2004 vs. 9 points in 2000). The basic building blocks of Bush’s victory can be discerned from the data in the table. He received 57 percent to 42 percent support from white voters, 86 percent of all voters according to the exit polls. This was more than enough to make up for large deficits among blacks (87 percent Democratic and 4 percent of voters) and Hispanics (68 percent Democratic and 8 percent of voters).

He carried men by 8 points, but women by only 3 points; a somewhat larger gender gap can be seen when comparing white men and white women, which he carried by 19 and 11 points, respectively. And Bush carried married women by 18 points but lost single women by an identical 18 point margin.

By education, Bush's best groups were high school graduates, which he carried by 21 points and those with some college, which he carried by 17 points. But he carried college graduates by only 5 points and lost postgraduates by 12 points. Bush lost young (18-29) voters by 4 points and split 30-39 year olds evenly, but carried all age groups 40 and over, including seniors (65 and over) by 20 points. The exit poll also indicates he lost large cities, but won everywhere else, with heavy margins in small cities and rural areas.

The 2004 Senate election was a different story with Democrat Ken Salazar defeating Republican Pete Coors by 51-47 percent. Salazar's victory was consistent with other changes that have taken place in Colorado recently which suggest a purpling of the state in this decade. It has already been mentioned that Bush's margin in the state shrank from 9 to 5 points between 2000 and 2004. In addition, Democrats took control of both chambers of the state legislature in 2004. And in 2006, the Democrats expanded their control of the state legislature and elected Bill Ritter as governor by a 57-40 landslide.⁹ They also picked up a US House seat and carried the state Congressional vote by 54-41. They now control Colorado's House delegation by four to three.

In Salazar's 2004 Senate victory, exit polls indicate a far different coalition for Salazar than for Bush. He lost white voters by 6 points, a far smaller deficit than for Kerry who lost these voters by 15 points, and he actually split the vote of white women evenly, 49-49. And he carried the minority vote by wide margins, 84-15 among blacks and 72-25 among Hispanics. He lost married women by just 5 points and carried single women by 25 points. In terms of education, he did particularly well among voters with a postgraduate education, winning them by 61-38. He also carried college graduates by 50-48. And he lost high school graduates and those with some college by 10 points each, far smaller than Kerry's deficits among these voters.

Like Kerry, he also received solid support from young voters, carrying them by 8 points. He also carried 30-39 year olds by 7 points and 50-64 year olds by 5 points. The only age group he lost was seniors by 10 points. And unlike Kerry he did carry the suburbs (by 3 points), adding the support of these voters to his big margins in large cities.

Digging a little deeper into the exit poll data, it's instructive to focus on the white working class vote—the subject of much debate and discussion in this election season. In 2004, Colorado white working class voters (defined here as whites without a four year college degree) supported Bush over Kerry by 29 points. This is actually slightly worse than Kerry's nationwide deficit of 23 points among these voters. In contrast, Kerry lost Colorado's white college graduates by just 2 points, a distinct improvement over Gore's performance in 2000, which lost this group by 20 points.¹⁰

Kerry's support among white working class voters varied dramatically by region. Here we have to use the exit poll regions which are: Denver-Boulder, Arapahoe-Jefferson (roughly equivalent to the Denver inner suburbs), Central (roughly equivalent to our Central and Southeast regions) and East and West

(close to our East and West regions). Kerry's white working class deficit in the Denver-Boulder exit poll region was 11 points and in Arapahoe-Jefferson just 8 points. But in the other three exit poll regions, Central, East, and West, his deficits were respectively 42, 52, and 37 points.

Salazar did substantially better among white working class voters than Kerry, losing them by 21, as opposed to 29 points. And he actually carried white college graduates by 7 points. He also did better than Kerry among white working class voters in the Denver-Boulder, Arapahoe-Jefferson and the Central exit poll regions, losing them by 1, 4, and 19 points, respectively.

D. Political shifts in Colorado since 1988 have moved most regions in Colorado toward the Democrats, with only the slow-growing East becoming significantly more Republican. However, some of the fastest-growing counties in the state are heavily Republican, so this is blunting the effect of these pro-Democratic shifts.

How did these patterns of support play out geographically? **Maps 3A-3C** provide this information for 2004, 1996 and 1988 by color-coding each county by its margin for the victorious presidential candidate (deep blue for a Democratic victory of 10 points or more, light blue for a Democratic victory of under 10 points, deep red for a Republican victory of 10 points or more, light red for a Republican victory of under 10 points). In addition, our eight Colorado regions are shown on each map by heavy black lines.

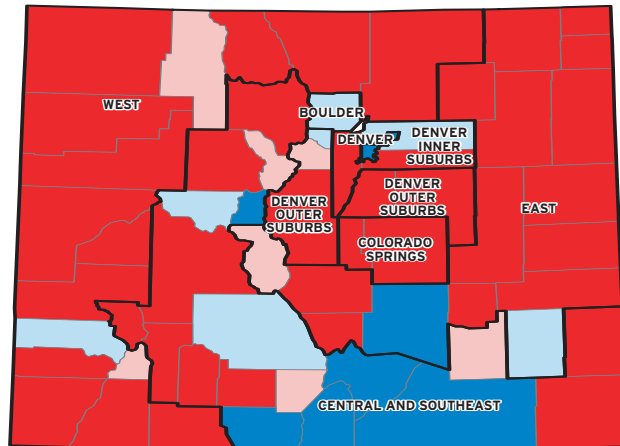
Looking at the 2004 map, it is striking how much of the map is not only colored red, but even bright red, indicating Bush carried the county by 10 points or more. How, then, did Bush wind up with just a 5 point margin? The answer lies in the distribution of voters. Denver, which is just one county on the map, and a small one, had 239,000 voters in 2004—that's 11 percent of the statewide total—and they went for Kerry by 40 points (**Table 5**). Then surrounding Denver are the three counties of its inner suburbs, Adams, Arapahoe, and Jefferson. These counties cast 640,000 votes (30 percent of the statewide total) and gave Bush only a 3 point margin. And just northwest of Jefferson County is Boulder, containing 7 percent of the statewide vote, which went for Kerry by 34 points. So, in this relatively small area—Denver, the Denver inner suburbs and Boulder—is about half the statewide vote which was either strongly Democratic or close to evenly-divided.

Kerry also did well in the Central-Southeast region, 5 percent of the statewide vote, which he carried by 4 points. Combined with Kerry's Denver-Denver inner suburbs-Boulder performance, that was enough to hold Bush to a 5 point victory despite the sea of red covering the rest of the state: Bush took the Denver outer suburbs by 28 points, the Colorado Springs metro by 35 points, West Colorado, which includes the Fort Collins, Greeley and Grand Junction metros, by 18 points and East Colorado by 17 points (only the Pueblo metro went Democratic in that whole vast area).

Maps 3A-3c. Colorado County Presidential Voting, 1988-2004

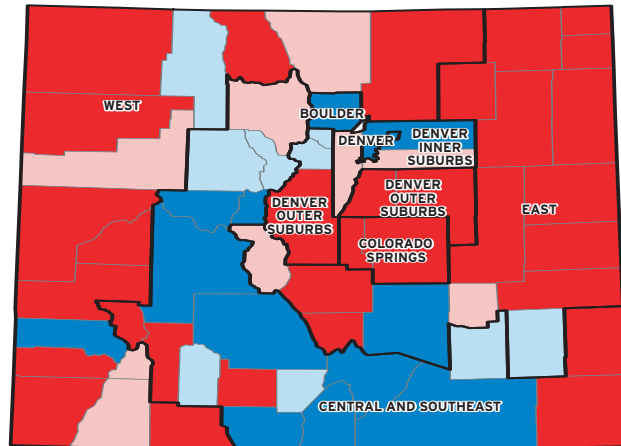
**Colorado County
Presidential Voting, 1988**

- Republican Margin 10%+
- Republican Margin up to 10%
- Democratic Margin up to 10%
- Democratic Margin 10%+



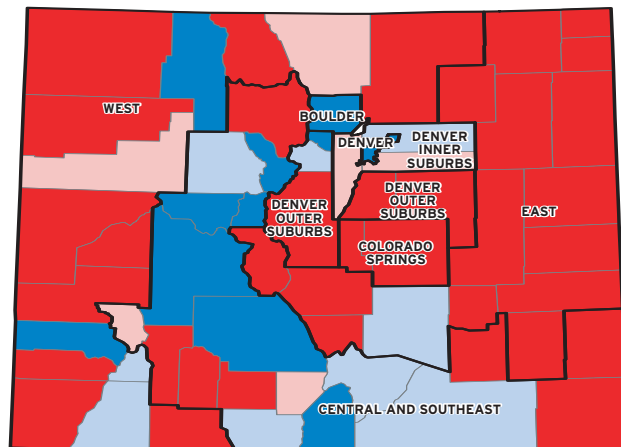
**Colorado County
Presidential Voting, 1996**

- Republican Margin 10%+
- Republican Margin up to 10%
- Democratic Margin up to 10%
- Democratic Margin 10%+



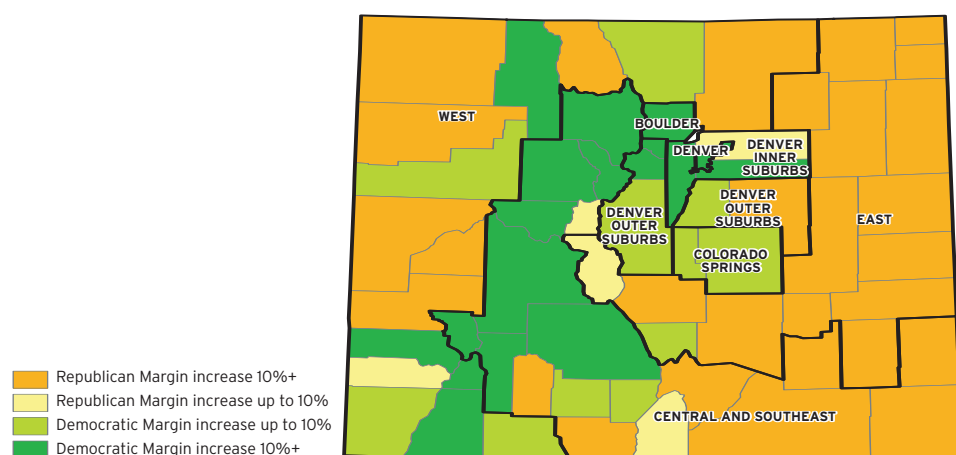
**Colorado County
Presidential Voting, 2004**

- Republican Margin 10%+
- Republican Margin up to 10%
- Democratic Margin up to 10%
- Democratic Margin 10%+



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

Map 4. Colorado County Presidential Voting Change, 1988-2004



Source: Authors' calculations of election data

Turning to the 1988 map—when Republicans carried the state by 8 points—the most obvious difference visually is that Democratic strength in the Central-Southeast region is concentrated in the central portion of that region rather than in the southeast part of that region as it was in 2004. But this whole region is very lightly populated so the significance of this difference is less than meets the eye. Far more consequential is that in the heavily populated center of the map, Arapahoe and Jefferson counties in the Denver inner suburbs were dark red—heavily Republican—in 1988, as opposed to light red in 2004 and that Boulder was light blue—weakly Democratic—in 1988 compared to dark blue in 2004. In addition, Larimer county (Fort Collins), adjacent to Boulder, which casts 7 percent of the statewide vote and is the fourth largest metro area in the state, was dark red in 1988 and changed to light red by 2004.

In 1996, Dole won the state for the Republicans, but by a comparatively modest 2 points. In this election, we see the emergence of Democratic strength in the central portion of the Central-Southeast and—more importantly—the shifting of Arapahoe, Jefferson and Larimer counties away from the Republicans and the deepening of Democratic dominance of Boulder. These shifts are still evident in 2004 though, as mentioned, the southeast portion of the Central-Southeast slips away from the Democrats.

Map 4 provides a visual representation of where political shifts took place over the 1988-2004 time period. Counties that are dark green had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or more, light green counties had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or less, orange counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or more and light yellow counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or less. The most striking thing is how much of the map is orange, indicating a margin shift of 10 points or more toward the Republicans, despite the fact that the state moved toward the Democrats over the time period. The orange parts of the map include essentially the entire

Table 5. Democratic Margins for Colorado Regions, 1988 and 2004

Region	Democratic Margins:		
	1988 President	2004 President	Change, 1988-2004
Denver	24	40	17
Denver Inner Suburbs	-13	-3	10
Denver Outer Suburbs	-32	-28	4
Boulder	8	34	26
Colorado Springs	-41	-35	6
East	2	-18	-20
Central and Southeast	-1	4	6
West	-16	-17	-2

Source: Authors' analysis of Colorado election returns

East region, except for two small counties, Custer and Chaffee. Reflecting this pattern, the East region of Colorado, as shown in **Table 5**, moved toward the GOP by 20 points over this time period.

The West region was more mixed, with Republican gains in the far west of the state, including Mesa (Grand Junction), and in Weld (Greeley) being counterbalanced by Democratic gains in the southwest corner and in Larimer (Fort Collins). The net result was a small 2 point gain for the Republicans (Table 5).

But every other region in the state moved toward the Democrats. This included a 6 point gain in the Central-Southeast, reflecting Democratic gains in the central part of that region; a 6 point gain in Colorado Springs, where Democrats made progress in heavily Republican El Paso county; and a 4 point gain in the Denver outer suburbs, where Democrats made significant progress (8 points) in populous, fast-growing Douglas county.

The big gains for the Democrats, however, came in the Denver inner suburbs (10 points, with a particularly sharp 18 point gain in Arapahoe), Denver itself (17 points) and Boulder (25 points). As mentioned earlier, these three areas by themselves account for about half the statewide vote.

Further insight into these patterns can be gained by comparing the political shifts in Map 4 to the population growth map (Map 2). One clear pattern is that a good chunk of the counties that gave the GOP big margin gains between 1988 and 2004 are also counties that are losing population (colored red in Map 2). In fact, every shrinking county, with a couple of minor exceptions, moved sharply toward the Republicans over this time period.

Better news for the GOP is that the other counties that gave the Republicans big margin gains—and there are quite a few of those—are growing and some quite sharply. Almost all Republican-shifting coun-

ties outside of the East region are colored dark green, indicating population growth of 20 percent or more, light green, indicating 2000-2007 population growth between 10 and 19 percent, or yellow, indicating positive growth rates under 10 percent. This includes relatively populous Mesa (light green) and Weld (dark green) counties.

For the Democrats, with only two exceptions, every Democratic-shifting county is also a growing county. This would appear to be very good news for the Democrats.

On the other hand, some of the most important Democratic-shifting counties, like Denver, Boulder and Jefferson, are in the slowest growth category (yellow). Moreover, while Arapahoe County in the Denver inner suburbs is growing fast, Adams, the lone county in that area to move Republican since 1988, is growing even faster. And Douglas county in the Denver outer suburbs, while it has moved Democratic since 1988, remains strongly Republican (by 34 points in 2004) and is growing phenomenally fast (by 51 percent since 2000). The same could be said of El Paso County in the Colorado Springs metro: Despite moving toward the Democrats, it is still strongly Republican (by 35 points) and growing fast (by 13 percent since 2000).

So ranged against general population growth in Democratic-shifting counties, some with very large populations, is even faster growth in some Republican-shifting counties plus strong growth in some Democratic-shifting counties that remain solidly Republican. How does this net out? Looking at the Denver metro as a whole shows that in half of the state the net clearly favors the Democrats. Despite trends in Adams and the spectacular growth in Douglas, the Denver metro went from three points Republican in 1988 to 3 points Democratic in 2004. Broadly speaking, the question for Colorado is whether this shift in the Denver metro is a leading indicator of where the state as a whole is going (as might be suggested by the Democrats' 2004 Senate and 2006 gubernatorial victories) or whether continued population growth and GOP political strength in key counties outside of the Denver, Boulder, and Fort Collins metros can keep the state in Republican hands.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP needs to maintain its strong support; white college graduates, who are rapidly growing and have been moving toward the Democrats; and Hispanics, who have been driving the growth of the minority vote and vote heavily Democratic.

Despite the shifts discussed above, the GOP has managed to win the last three presidential elections in Colorado. Whether the Republicans can keep their victory streak alive—and perhaps expand their margin—or whether the Democrats can add a presidential win to their recent successes in Senate, gubernatorial and state legislative contests will depend greatly on the demographic groups and trends we have reviewed in this report. Here are some things to watch out for in the 2008 election.

First, will the white working class maintain its level of support for the GOP? If it does not, and moves toward the Democrats (as some recent polls have suggested), this could be a crippling blow to the GOP's efforts to hold the state. Given other political trends in the state, their coalition is dependent on a super-majority of the white working class vote to win statewide.

Second, will white college-educated voters, who are steadily increasing their share of the electorate, continue their movement toward the Democrats? If so, that would significantly undercut the GOP's chances of holding the state.

Third, will minorities, particularly Hispanics whose share of voters is rapidly growing turn out for the Democrats? Given their very high levels of support for the Democrats in the 2004 election (which appear likely to continue in this election), the greater their turnout, the better for the Democrats. Ditto for single women who have also been recording very high support levels for the Democrats.

In terms of regions, there are several areas of interest. In the Denver metro, it could be the battle of the suburbs. In the Denver inner suburbs, will the pro-Democratic trends in Arapahoe and Jefferson continue to overwhelm the pro-Republican trend in Adams, moving that area further toward the Democrats? And will the fast-growing Denver outer suburbs (particularly Douglas) continue their modest move toward the Democrats or intensify their commitment to the GOP? This battle of the suburbs will be key to the outcome in the Denver metro as whole, where Democrats need to expand their 2004 margin and the GOP needs to hold the line.

The Boulder metro has shifted hugely to the Democrats since 1988 and now provides that party with lopsided majorities. Maintaining or increasing their advantage in 2008 would add significantly to any majority the Democrats might have coming out of the Denver metro.

The Colorado Springs metro is another area like the Denver outer suburbs where the GOP typically reports large margins but where some movement toward the Democrats has been evident. If the GOP can stop or reverse this trend, that will help their efforts to hold the state.

In the fast-growing West region, which contributes a healthy 20 percent of the Colorado vote, it could be the battle of the metros. On the one hand is the Fort Collins metro, now the fourth largest in the state and almost the size of the third-ranking Boulder metro, which has been moving sharply toward the Democrats, particularly since 2000. On the other are the smaller metros of Greeley, which is growing particularly fast, and Grand Junction which have been moving toward the GOP. If the Democrats can keep the Fort Collins trend going and halt or reverse the Greeley and Grand Junction trends, that could significantly reduce the GOP's advantage in the West region and, in a close election, potentially tip the state toward the Democrats. Conversely, if the GOP can push back in Fort Collins and intensify support in Greeley and Grand Junction, that would increase their margin in the West and provide a big boost to their efforts to keep the state red.

Nevada

(See the full report on four Intermountain West states by William Frey and Ruy Teixeira at http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/08_intermountain_west_frey_teixeira.aspx)

A. The rapidly growing Las Vegas metropolitan area is the driver of both demographic and electoral change in Nevada. The Reno metro is also having an impact, but it is distinctly secondary in magnitude. The relatively slow-growing Rural Heartland of the state lags far behind.

B. Among Nevada's eligible voters, minorities and white college graduates are growing rapidly, leading to sharp increases in their shares of voters. In contrast, white working class voters are growing very slowly and their share of Nevada's electorate is dropping precipitously.

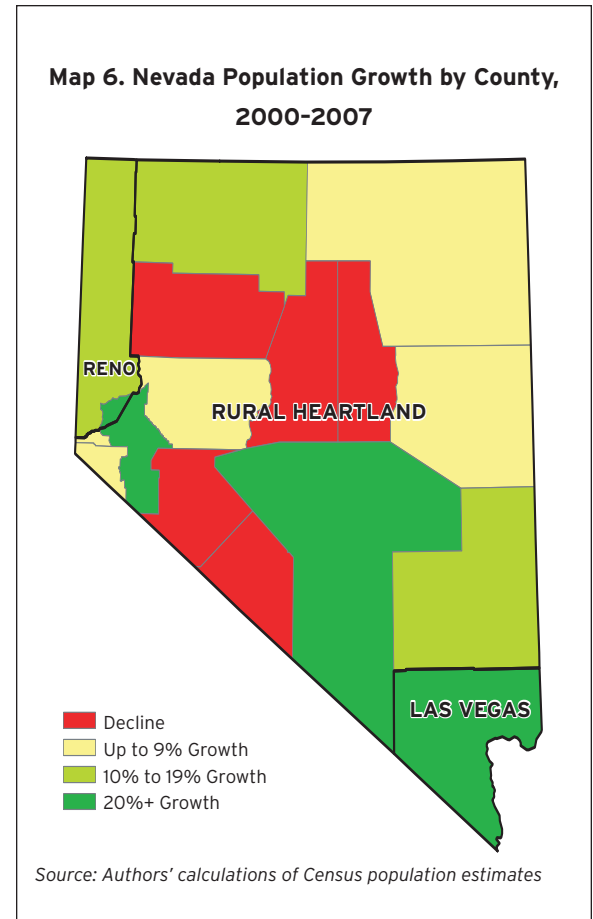
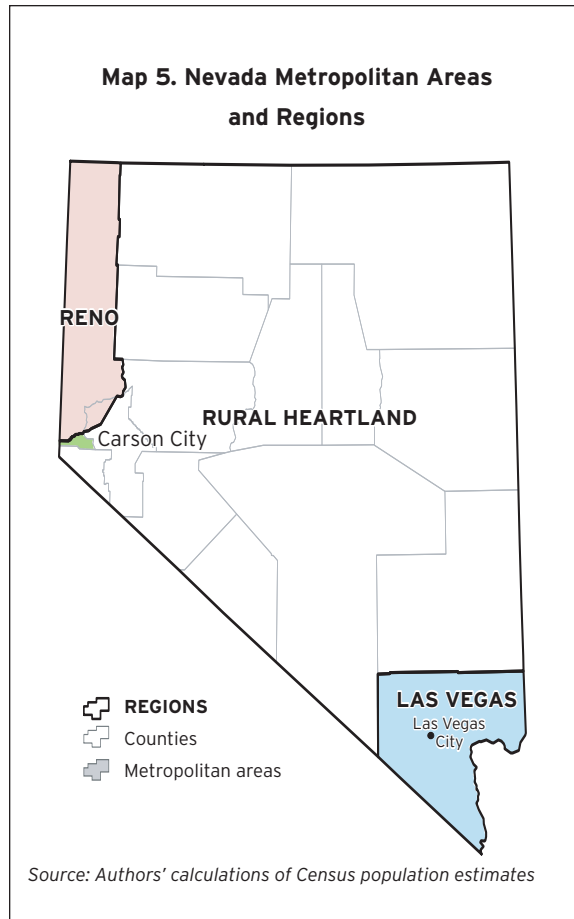
C. Recent GOP victories in Nevada have featured solid support from white working class voters. However, this group has been moving toward the Democrats as it continues to decline as a share of voters. White college graduate voters have also been supporting Republicans, but they too are moving toward the Democrats, as well as increasing as a share of voters. And the minority vote is increasing even faster, driven by its heavily Democratic Hispanic component.

D. Political shifts in Nevada since 1988 have moved the fast-growing Las Vegas and Reno metros, 85 percent of the statewide vote, sharply toward the Democrats. The relatively slow-growing Rural Heartland region, however, has remained overwhelmingly Republican. GOP plans to hold the state must center on stopping the pro-Democratic trends in Nevada's two big metros or bank on generating even larger supermajorities in the Rural Heartland.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP needs to stop the erosion of its support; white college graduates, who are rapidly growing and have been moving toward the Democrats; and Hispanics, who have been driving the growth of the minority vote and vote heavily Democratic. These trends will determine whether the Reno and, especially, Las Vegas metros continue their march toward the Democrats, a development which would almost certainly turn the state blue.

A. The rapidly growing Las Vegas metropolitan area is the driver of both demographic and electoral change in Nevada.

Nevada remains the fastest growing state despite experiencing a mini-slump in recent years as a consequence of the housing meltdown.¹¹ The Silver State grew 66% in the 1990s and another 27% this decade. It is a major magnet for tourists, retirees, in-migrating residents from other states, especially California, and immigrants from abroad. And while its number of electoral college votes, at five, is small – up from four after the 2000 census and up from the minimum three after the 1980 census – it is hotly contested. This is due to the thin margins of victory by George Bush in the 2004 election (+2) and in



2000 (+4), and its tendency to go for a winner.

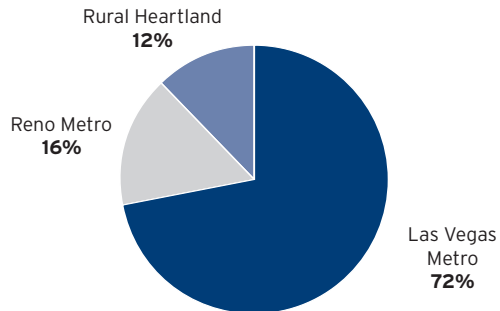
The analysis presented here based on the following regions designated in **Map 5**, along with population and growth statistics shown in **Map 6** and **Figures 6 and 7**.

1. Las Vegas –Clark County, which is coterminous with the Las Vegas- Paradise NV metropolitan area, and with a population of 1.8 million. It is the fastest growing major metropolitan area in the US, with 86 percent growth in the 1990s and another 32 percent in 2000-2007. Las Vegas comprises almost three-quarters (72 percent) Nevada's population, thus dominating the state's electorate.

2. Reno – Washoe and Storey counties, coincident with the Reno-Sparks NV, metropolitan area. At 414,000 the population of this area is less than a quarter of the size of Las Vegas and constitutes 16 percent of the state's population. It has grown at a robust rate of 19 percent since 2000.

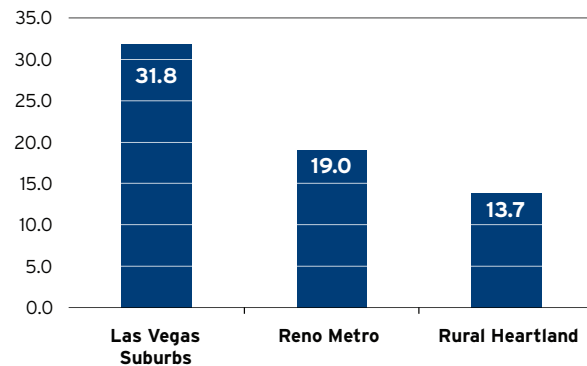
3. Rural Heartland – consists of the remaining 14 counties in Nevada.¹² One of these counties, Carson City County, represents the third, much smaller metropolitan area in the state, with a population of 53,000. Most of the additional counties are either declining in population or modestly growing with

Figure 6. Share of 2007 Population in Nevada Regions



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

Figure 7. 2000-2007 Population Growth in Nevada Regions



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

two exceptions: Nye County, which lies adjacent to Las Vegas and grew by 33 percent since 2000; and Lyon County which lies adjacent to the Reno and Carson City metros and has had a 50 percent growth rate this decade. The Rural Heartland comprises 12 percent of Nevada's population and registered an overall 2000-2007 growth of 13 percent.

The rapid growth of the entire state, especially Las Vegas and, to a lesser degree, Reno, suggests that a good deal of turnover has taken place in the electorate since the last presidential election.

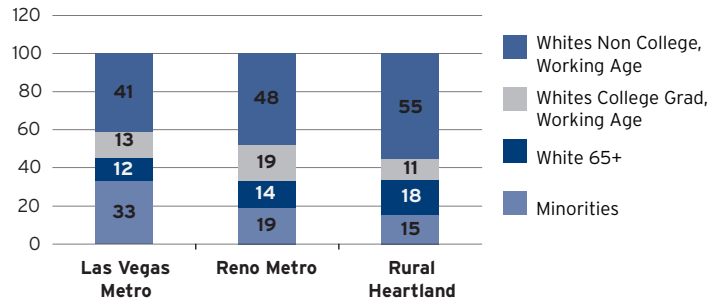
B. Among Nevada's eligible voters, minorities and white college graduates are growing rapidly, leading to sharp increases in their shares of voters.

A statewide perspective on Nevada's eligible voter population draws from statistics shown in **Appendix A and B**. Compared with the other Intermountain West purple states, Nevada has a higher ratio of white working class to white college graduate eligible voters, with the former outnumbering the latter by more than 3 to 1. Nearly three in 10 of its eligible voters are minorities, including 12 percent Hispanic, 7.5 percent black, 5.5 percent Asian and 3.2 percent other. Much of this "rainbow" includes spillover populations of Hispanics, blacks, and Asians from California as well as immigration to the state, heavily comprised of Mexicans and others from Latin America. Only about 12 percent of Nevada's eligible voters were born in the state; more than one fifth were born in California, 10 percent are foreign born, and 41 percent were born in a non Western state. Nevada has the most non-native electorate in the nation.

Compared with Colorado, Nevada's electorate is less well educated—45 percent have at most a high school education (compared with 34 percent in Colorado) and only 6.9 percent have postgraduate education (compared to 11.2 percent in Colorado). This is consistent with Nevada's employment make up which includes a high proportion of low skilled service industries.

The state's demographic profile shows a high level of working class whites. But 2000-2006 eligible voter

Figure 8. Eligible Voters in Key Demographic Segments, Nevada Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

gains are changing this profile. Among the key demographic segments of eligible voters, minorities showed the greatest 2000-2006 growth with 45 percent. This is followed by 36 percent for working age white college graduates, compared to just 7 percent for the working age white working class. These trends have dropped the share of white working class eligible voters in Nevada's electorate by 6 points, while minorities have increased by 5 points and white college graduates by 2 points.

Among more detailed demographic attributes,

Table 6. 2000-2006 Percent Change in Eligible Voters by Demographic Attributes: Nevada Regions

Attributes	Las Vegas Metro	Reno Metro	Rural Heartland	Total State
Key Demographic Segments				
Minorities	49	32	27	45
Whites Age 65+	13	18	30	17
White, Working Age College Grads,	44	26	15	36
White Working Age Non College Grads	7	4	10	7
Race-Ethnicity				
White	14	11	15	14
Black	39	7	16	36
Hispanic	58	39	26	52
Age				
18-29	24	17	42	25
30-44	13	-9	-7	6
45-64	34	32	19	31
65+	24	23	28	24
Education				
HS grad or less	15	8	20	14
Some College	23	12	10	19
Coll Grads	53	30	21	44
Industry of Worker				
Manfg and Other Goods Production	33	26	29	30
Trade	24	11	9	19
Education and Health	41	28	24	36
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	49	14	29	40
Other Services	18	7	1	14

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

the greatest gains were shown for post-graduates, who increased by 52 percent and the holders of bachelors degrees who grew by 40 percent. Among industrial categories, those working in information, financial, and professional services increased the most, followed by those working in education and health services. Not surprisingly, in light of Nevada's booming growth, there were also large increases in manufacturing jobs and other goods producing jobs.

Overall then, Nevada's eligible voter population, while skewed heavily toward working class whites, has shown recent growth in white college graduates along with minorities. By region, these trends are especially strong for Las Vegas (**Figure 8, Table 6 and Appendix D**). Here working class whites comprise more than two-fifths of the electorate, minorities one-third, and white college graduates only 13 percent. Yet, from 2000-2006, the white college graduate electorate grew by 44 percent, and minority voters grew by nearly one half, but white working class voters grew by only 7 percent.

This contrasts with the Rural Heartland where working class whites outnumber white college graduates by 5 to 1 and where the latter group is not gaining appreciably. In fact, the fastest growing key demographic segments there are white seniors, followed by Hispanic-dominated minorities. This region remains the whitest of the three.

Turning to Reno's key demographic segments, we see a noticeably higher share of white college graduates than in Las Vegas or the Rural Heartland, with strong continued growth since 2000. But the fastest-growing group, just as in Las Vegas, is minorities, many of California origin.

Clearly the most dynamic part of the state in terms of overall population growth and potential shifts in key voting blocs lies in the Las Vegas metropolitan area. These shifts and the preferences of its many new voters will have a great impact on Nevada's next election.

C. Recent GOP victories in Nevada have featured solid support from white working class voters. However, this group has been moving toward the Democrats as it continues to decline as a share of voters.

With these demographic trends in hand, we now turn to how Nevadans have been voting in recent elections. **Table 7** displays some basic exit poll data from the 2004 presidential election. In 2004, Nevada voted Republican in the presidential election, just as it did in 2000, but by a smaller margin (2 points in 2004 vs. 4 points in 2000). Bush eked out his victory with 55 percent to 43 percent support from white voters, 77 percent of all voters according to the exit polls. This made up for his large deficits among the 7 percent of voters who were black (86-13 Democratic) and the 10 percent who were Hispanic (60-39 Democratic) voters.

Of course, white voters have been shrinking as a proportion of Nevada's voters over time. According to exit polls, they declined from 88 to 77 percent between 1988 and 2004, while minority voters went up from 12 to 23 percent, including a doubling of Hispanic voters from 5 to 10 percent. Hispanic voters

Table 7. Nevada Voting by Selected Demographic Groups, 2004

Group	2004 President		
	Democrat	Republican	Dem-Rep
White	43	55	-12
Black	86	13	73
Hispanic	60	39	21
Men	44	54	-10
Women	52	47	5
White Men	39	59	-20
White Women	47	53	-6
Single Women	58	41	17
Married Women	48	51	-3
HS Dropout	60	39	21
HS Graduate	52	46	6
Some College	47	52	-5
College Grad	46	52	-6
Postgraduate	45	53	-8
White Noncollege	43	56	-13
White College	44	55	-11
18-29	56	42	14
30-39	48	51	-3
40-49	44	54	-10
50-64	47	53	-6
65+	50	50	0
City over 500,000	51	48	3
City 50,000-500,000	52	47	5
Suburbs	50	48	2
City 10,000-50,000	31	66	-35
Rural	28	71	-43
Total	50	48	-2

Source: Authors' analysis of 2004 Nevada exit poll

have also increased their support for the Democrats over the time period, going from a 9 point deficit to a 21 point advantage.

Bush carried men by 10 points, but lost women by 5 points; the same gender gap can be seen when comparing white men and white women, which Bush carried by 20 and 6 points, respectively. And Bush carried married women by 3 points but lost single women by 17 points.

Unusually, Bush's best education group were postgraduates, whom he carried by 8 points, followed by college graduates only (+6) and those with some college (+5). But he lost high school graduates by 5 points. By age, he lost young (18-29) voters by 14 points, while carrying all age groups between 30 and 64 and splitting seniors evenly. The exit poll also indicates he lost cities of 50,000 or more and the suburbs to Kerry, but ran far ahead in small cities and rural areas.

Turning to the white working class, Nevada white working class voters supported Bush over Kerry by 13 points. This is considerably less than Kerry's nationwide deficit of 23 points among these voters. Bush won white college graduates by a slightly smaller margin, 11 points, the same as Bush's nationwide margin among these voters.

Looking back to 1988, in that election Bush senior ran 29 points ahead of Dukakis among Nevada's white working class voters, so Kerry's 13 point deficit in 2004 represents a considerable swing to the Democrats among those voters. So does Kerry's 11 point deficit among white college graduates, as Dukakis lost those voters by 24 points in 1988. But white working class voters have also been shrinking as a proportion of voters, declining by 18 points as a share of voters, according to the exit polls, while white college graduates have increased their share by 7 points.

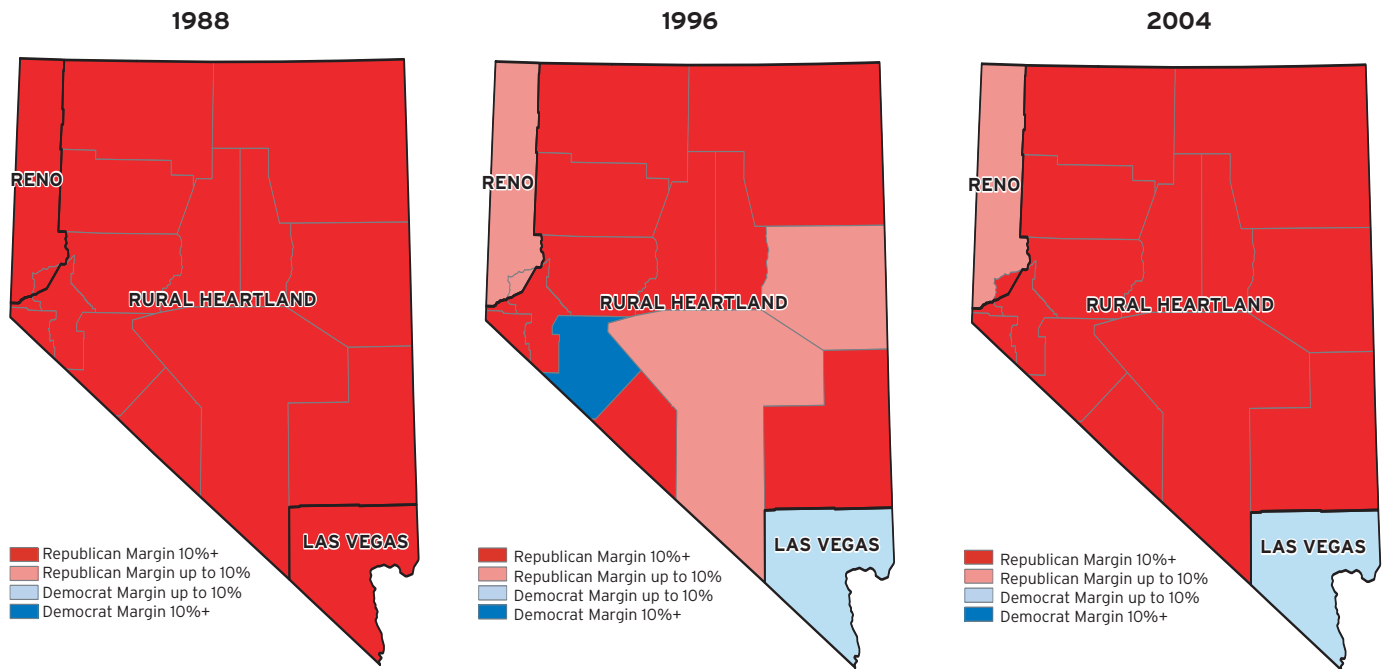
Bush's support among white working class voters varied dramatically by region of Nevada. Using the exit poll regions, which match up almost exactly with our Nevada regions (the Reno exit poll region doesn't include Storey County, which we include in our Reno region since it is part of the Reno metro), we find that Bush's white working class advantage in the Las Vegas and Reno regions was a fairly modest 7 points in each area. In the vast rural heartland of Nevada, however, his margin was an astronomical 38 points among these voters. It's worth noting that this margin is exactly the same as the GOP enjoyed in that region in 1988. In Las Vegas and Reno, however, the GOP's 2004 margins represent huge declines of 19 and 24 points, respectively, in white working class support.

D. Political shifts in Nevada since 1988 have moved the fast-growing Las Vegas and Reno metros, 85 percent of the statewide vote, sharply toward the Democrats. The relatively slow-growing Rural Heartland region, however, has remained overwhelmingly Republican.

Maps 7A-7C show how these patterns of support have played out geographically. For 2004, 1996, and 1988, they color-code each county by its margin for the victorious presidential candidate (deep blue for a Democratic victory of 10 points or more, light blue for a Democratic victory of less than 10 points, deep red for a Republican victory of 10 points or more, light red for a Republican victory of less than 10 points).

Looking at the 2004 map, it's almost all bright red, indicating Bush carried the county by 10 points or more. That's because Bush carried every county in the vast rural areas of Nevada by at least that margin. In fact, as shown in **Table 8**, he carried the Rural Heartland by a whopping 33 percentage points.

Maps 7A-C. Nevada County Presidential Voting, 1988-2004



Source: Authors' calculations of election data

Table 8. Democratic Margins for Nevada Regions, 1988 and 2004

Region	Democratic Margins		
	1988 President	2004 President	Change, 1988-2004
Las Vegas	-16	5	20
Reno	-22	-4	18
Rural Heartland	-34	-33	1

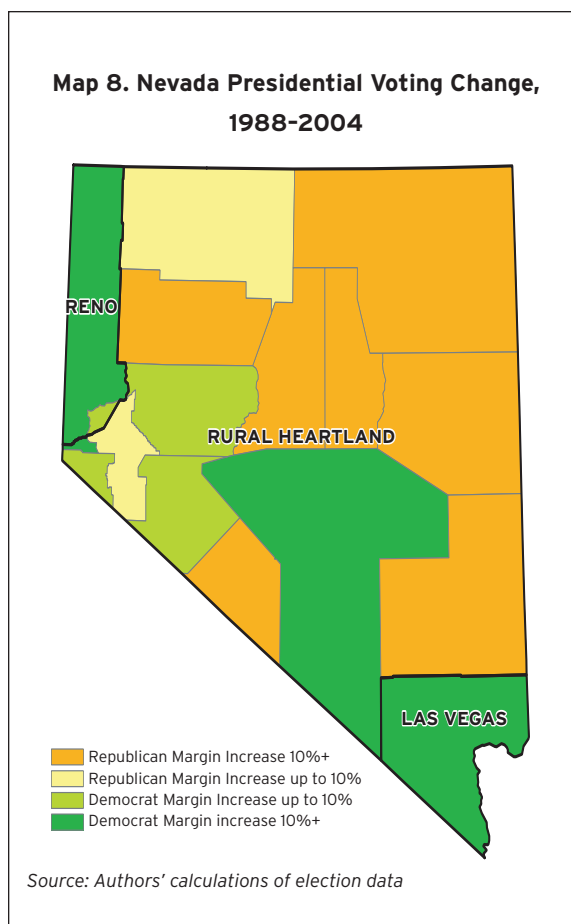
Source: Authors' analysis of Nevada election returns

But the other two regions are quite a different story. Bush carried the Reno region by a mere 5 points, including Washoe County by 4 points (hence its light red color). The Reno region accounted for 19 percent of the vote in 2004. And the Las Vegas region (Clark county), with 66 percent of the vote, went for Kerry by 5 points (hence its light blue color). Between them, these two relatively small regions cast 85 percent of Nevada's vote and made the state very close despite the sea of bright red that covers most of the map.

As shown in the 1988 map—when Republicans carried the state by 21 points—there was no county in that election, including Clark and Washoe, that did not give the GOP at least a 10 point margin. Hence, the map’s uniform bright red color. But in 1996, Clinton carried the state by a percentage point and broke down the monochrome color scheme. We see the emergence of Democratic strength in Clark (now light blue) and the decline of Republican strength in Washoe (now light red). In addition, Storey County, part of the Reno metro, and two counties in the Rural Heartland, became light red and one Rural Heartland county even became dark blue. The Rural Heartland counties slip back to bright red by 2004 but, as discussed, the hugely important shifts in Clark and Washoe remain in place.

Map 8 provides a visual representation of where political shifts in Nevada took place over the 1988-2004 time period. Counties that are dark green had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or more, light green counties had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or less, orange counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or more and light yellow counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or less.

The Rural Heartland counties present a mixed picture with Nye County, the mushroom-shaped county adjacent to Clark, showing a strong pro-Democratic trend and three other counties in western Nevada showing moderate pro-Democratic trends. But most of the rest of the Rural Heartland counties are orange, indicating a Republican margin gain of 10 points or more. The net of these trends was to leave the Rural Heartland region in 2004 (a 33 point GOP advantage) almost exactly where it was back in 1988 (a 34 point Republican advantage).



The Reno and Las Vegas regions were once again a different story, with Las Vegas shifting toward the Democrats by 20 points and the Reno area by 18 points. Given that these regions contribute 85 percent of the state’s vote, these shifts are clearly of great significance.

It’s also interesting to compare the political shifts in Map 8 to the population growth map (Map 6). The only declining (red) and relatively slow growth (yellow) counties in Nevada are located in the Rural Heartland where GOP strength has remained steady. Overall, this region’s growth rate is the slowest of the

three (14 percent since 2000). But Las Vegas, where the biggest Democratic shift has taken place, shows by far the highest growth rate of the three regions (32 percent). And Reno, which has seen almost as large a Democratic shift, is also growing strongly (19 percent).

Given these population growth patterns, it seems doubtful that the GOP can maintain its current hold on the state without pushing back the pro-Democratic trends in the state's two big metropolitan areas. The Rural Heartland's population is simply too small and growing too slowly to provide an adequate bulwark against Democratic advance.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP needs to stop the erosion of its support; white college graduates, who are rapidly growing and have been moving toward the Democrats; and Hispanics, who have been driving the growth of the minority vote and vote heavily Democratic.

Despite the shifts discussed above, the GOP has managed to win the last two presidential elections in Nevada. The Republicans' ability to keep the state in their column will depend greatly on the demographic groups and trends we have reviewed in this report. Here are some things to watch out for in the 2008 election.

One critical question is whether the white working class continues its trend toward the Democrats. If it does, this will be a serious blow to the GOP's efforts to hold the state. The blow would be especially serious if white college-educated voters, who are steadily increasing their share of the electorate, also continue their movement toward the Democrats. Such a double whammy would make GOP success in 2008 challenging.

Also critically important is whether Hispanics, whose numbers are growing so rapidly, translate their burgeoning numbers into an increasing share of Nevada's voters. Given their high levels of support for the Democrats in the 2004 election (which appears likely to continue in this election), the greater their turnout, the better for the Democrats. High turnout among single women and young voters would also benefit the Democrats.

In terms of regions, it's mostly about the Las Vegas and Reno metros. The rapidly growing Las Vegas metro was 5 points Democratic in 2004. Since the Las Vegas metro is two-thirds of the Nevada vote, a larger Democratic margin there in 2008 will give the GOP a very big hole to dig out of. As for the Reno metro, it contributes about a fifth of the Nevada vote and, despite the long-term pro-Democratic trend, still voted 5 points Republican in 2004. The GOP needs to keep that margin where it is and ideally increase it. But if the Reno metro should vote Democratic in 2008, that combined with Las Vegas' trends, would likely turn the state blue.

New Mexico

(See the full report on four Intermountain West states by William Frey and Ruy Teixeira at http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/08_intermountain_west_frey_teixeira.aspx)

A. Although relatively stagnant compared with the other purple Intermountain West states, New Mexico's growth still exceeds the national average. The relatively rapidly growing Albuquerque metro is likely to be the key influence on election results in this closely contested state.

B. Although New Mexico has the highest Hispanic concentration of all the states and Hispanics and other minorities continue to grow within the state, the next election could be influenced even more by the relative decline of working class whites and the growth of white college graduates. These trends could be particularly salient in the fast-growing Albuquerque metro.

C. The GOP's winning, but very thin, margin in New Mexico in 2004 can be attributed to strong support from white working class voters plus a relatively small deficit among Hispanic voters. However, white working class voters have been moving toward the Democrats as they continue to decline as a share of voters. White college graduate voters have also been moving toward the Democrats and their share of voters is actually increasing. The minority vote is also increasing, particularly Hispanics, but recently the latter group has been moving Republican.

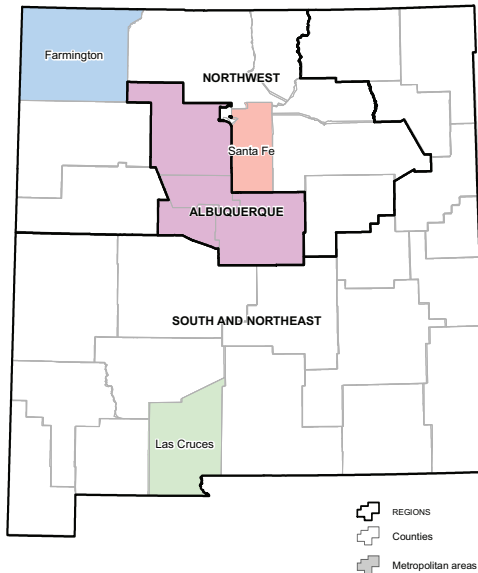
D. Political shifts in New Mexico since 1988 have moved the relatively fast-growing Albuquerque metro, 44 percent of the statewide vote, toward the Democrats. The Northwest region of the state has also shifted significantly toward the Democrats, led by the Santa Fe metro. However, the vast South-East region has shifted toward the GOP, partially counterbalancing these trends.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the declining white working class, where the GOP must, at minimum, stabilize its support; white college graduates, a growing constituency who could tip in this election from Republican to Democratic; and Hispanics, also a growing constituency, but one that has recently been moving Republican. These trends will likely determine whether the Albuquerque metro and Northwest region continue to shift Democratic, an outcome that would seriously hamper the GOP's ability to hold the state.

A. Although relatively stagnant compared with the other purple Intermountain West states, New Mexico's growth still exceeds the national average. The relatively rapidly growing Albuquerque metro is likely to be the key influence on election results in this closely contested state.

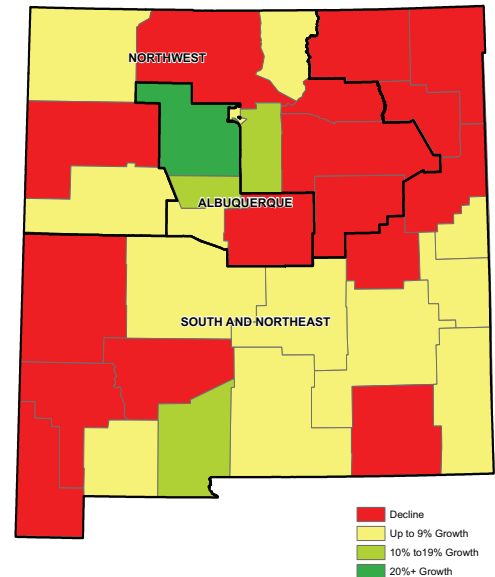
New Mexico is the smallest of the four Intermountain West states in this report and holds five Electoral

Map 9. New Mexico Metropolitan Areas and Regions



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

Map 10. New Mexico Population Growth by County, 2000-2007



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

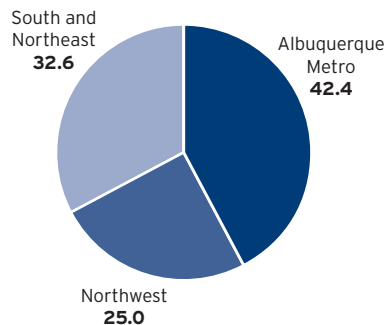
College votes. But it could be the most significant in the 2008 presidential election if this election becomes as close as the previous two. It was in New Mexico that Al Gore beat George Bush by only 365 votes in 2000 and that George Bush beat John Kerry by a margin of 1 percent in 2004. Its demographic shifts are not nearly as turbulent as in Nevada, Arizona, or even Colorado. However it is still growing faster than the U.S. as a whole and continues to attract migrants from other parts of the country as well as from abroad.

The regions for New Mexico are displayed in **Map 9**, with supporting information about their population size and growth in **Map 10** and **Figures 9 and 10**.

1. Albuquerque - Bernalillo (location of Albuquerque city), Sandoval, Valencia, and Torrance counties comprise the Albuquerque metropolitan area, which has a population of 835,000. It represents 42 percent of the state's population and, with 14 percent growth in 2000-2007, is by far the most rapidly growing region of the state. Suburban Sandoval County is, at 29 percent, the growth leader in this metro.

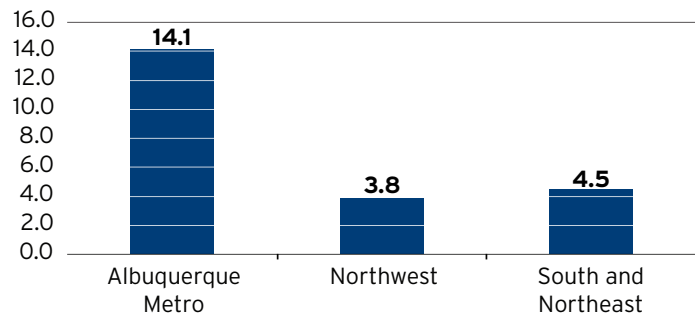
2. Northwest - consists of 10 counties in the Northwest part of the state, including Santa Fe Co, which is coincident with the Santa Fe NM metropolitan area, and San Juan Co, coincident with the Farmington NM metropolitan area. These small metropolitan areas are the fastest growing areas (at 10 percent and 7 percent since 2000) within the region, which includes five small counties that are declining in

Figure 9. Share of 2007 Population in New Mexico Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

Figure 10. 2000-2007 Population Growth in New Mexico Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

population. Overall the Northeast region comprises about one fourth of the state's population and registered a modest 3.8 percent growth in 2000-2007.

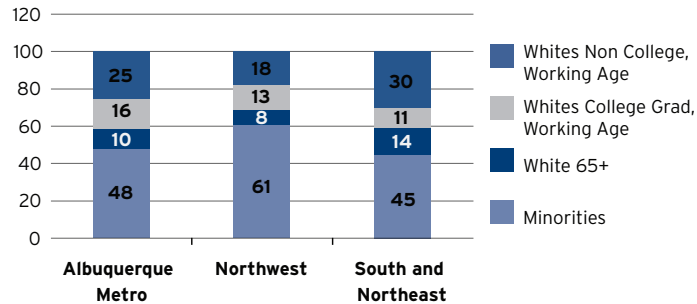
3. South and Northeast - consists of 15 counties in the southern and eastern part of the state, including Dona Ana County, coincident with the Las Cruces metropolitan area. The latter, with 13.6 percent growth in 2000-2007, is the fastest growing county in the region, which includes 10 counties declining in population. The South and Northeast region comprises about a third of the state's population and has grown a modest 4.5 percent since 2000.

Demographic shifts within the state are likely to have their greatest political impact in the relatively rapidly growing Albuquerque metropolitan area and its suburbs, and in the adjacent Santa Fe metropolitan area in the Northwest region. As shall be discussed, these metropolitan areas have been trending Democratic in a state that has been heavily contested in past presidential races.

B. Although New Mexico has the highest Hispanic concentration of any state and Hispanics and other minorities continue to grow within the state, the next election could be influenced even more by the relative decline of working class whites and the growth of white college graduates.

It can be argued that New Mexico is the most multiethnic of all states on the American mainland. Its total population is 45 percent white and its eligible voter population has a thin white majority with a minority population consisting of a rich mix that reflects its Spanish and Native American heritage. Its largely native-born Hispanic population constitutes 37 percent of New Mexico's eligible voters, and American Indians comprise nearly another 10 percent. The latter are heavily concentrated in the Northwest region. The state's much smaller Asian and black populations are concentrated in the Albuquerque metro (See New Mexico eligible voter statistics in Appendices A and B).

Figure 11. Eligible Voters in Key Demographic Segments, New Mexico Regions



Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates

Despite the overriding importance of minorities in New Mexico, a quarter of its eligible voters are working class whites, versus only 13.8 percent white college graduates. The latter is symptomatic of generally low education levels in the state, high poverty, and few workers in skilled services. But over the 2000-2006 period, the state has shown an absolute decline in its white working class eligible voters and significant gains in its white college graduate eligible voters. In addition, there has been continued and fairly rapid growth of its minority electorate, led by Hispanics. Reflecting these trends, both white college graduates and, espe-

Table 9. 2000-2006 Percent Change in Eligible Voters by Demographic Attributes: New Mexico Regions

Attributes	Albuquerque Metro	Northwest	South and Northeast	Total State
Key Demographic Segments				
Minorities	18	12	13	15
Whites Age 65+	5	29	4	8
White, Working Age College Grads,	10	10	13	11
White Working Age Non College Grads	1	-1	-7	-3
Race-Ethnicity				
White	4	7	-1	3
Black	8	-5	7	7
Hispanic	19	9	14	15
Age				
18-29	19	24	11	17
30-44	-7	-12	-9	-9
45-64	21	17	12	17
65+	13	21	8	13
Education				
HS grad or less	3	9	-4	2
Some College	15	6	14	13
Coll Grads	17	19	15	17
Industry of Worker				
Manfg and Other Goods Production	9	19	0	8
Trade	2	6	-6	1
Education and Health	21	3	14	14
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	15	47	20	23
Other Services	13	-1	17	10

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

cially, minorities have been increasing their shares of New Mexico's electorate, while that of the white working class has been declining.

The above shifts are apparent to some degree in each region, with the growth in white college graduates most uniform across the regions (**Figure 11, Table 9, and Appendix E**). The highest growth of minority voters is the Albuquerque metro, while the highest growth of white seniors is in the Northwest region. The steepest decline in white working class voters is in the South and Northeast regions.

As will be discussed below, Albuquerque can be seen as a “swing region” in presidential elections as it lies between the more Democratic leaning Northwest and the more Republican leaning South and Northeast. So the shift away from working class whites, coupled with the relatively strong growth among minorities and white college graduates (Albuquerque is already the most highly educated of the state's three regions) may help push Albuquerque in a more Democratic direction.

The Northwest region has the largest share of minorities, especially Native Americans. Only 40 percent of the region's electorate is white. The fact that it contains upscale communities like Santa Fe and Taos intermingled with pueblos gives it a varied mix of key demographic segments: including 18 percent white working class and 13 percent white college graduates. Like the state as a whole, it has shown declines in the white working class and gains in minorities and white college graduates, which may make this already Democratic-leaning region even more so.

Similar trends are also at work in the South and Northeast region, especially the decline in the white working class. But because this region's white working class share is the highest in the state (30 percent) and its white college grad segment the lowest (11 percent), it will be a while before these trends make a serious dent in the pro-Republican proclivities of the region.

C. The GOP's winning, but very thin, margin in New Mexico in 2004 can be attributed to strong support from white working class voters plus a relatively small deficit among Hispanic voters.

We now turn to how New Mexicans have been voting in recent elections. **Table 10** displays some basic exit poll data from the 2004 presidential election. In 2004, New Mexico voted Republican in the presidential election by the tiniest of margins (under 6000 votes, about 0.8 percent of the New Mexico vote). Bush's razor-thin margin was based on 56 percent to 43 percent support from white voters, comprising 57 percent of all voters according to the exit polls. This made up (barely) for Bush's large deficit among the 9 percent of voters who were “other race” (65-33 Democratic) and his smaller deficit among the 32 percent of voters who were Hispanic (56-44 Democratic).

White voters have been shrinking modestly as a proportion of New Mexico's voters over time. According to exit polls, they declined from 61 to 57 percent between 1988 and 2004, while minority voters went up from 39 to 43 percent, driven by a 4 point increase in Hispanics and a 3 point increase in other

Table 10: New Mexico Voting by Selected Demographic Groups, 2004

Group	2004 President		
	Democrat	Republican	Dem-Rep
White	43	56	-13
Hispanic	56	44	-12
Other	65	33	32
Men	48	51	-3
Women	49	49	0
White Men	40	58	-18
White Women	44	54	-10
Single Women	59	39	20
Married Women	44	55	-11
HS Dropout	68	31	37
HS Graduate	48	51	-3
Some College	46	53	-7
College Grad	44	54	-10
Postgraduate	60	38	22
White Noncollege	38	61	-23
White College	48	50	-2
18–29	49	50	-1
30–39	40	57	-17
40–49	46	52	-6
50–64	53	46	7
65+	52	47	5
City 50,000-500,000	52	46	6
Suburbs	54	45	9
City 10,000-50,000	37	62	-25
Rural	53	46	7
Total	50	49	-1

Source: Authors' analysis of 2004 New Mexico exit poll

race (blacks declined slightly). However, Hispanic voters have decreased their support for the Democrats over the time period, especially since 2000, going from a 30 point advantage to a 12 point advantage.

Bush carried men by 3 points, but split women evenly. A somewhat larger gender gap can be seen when comparing white men and white women, which Bush carried by 18 and 10 points, respectively. And Bush carried married women by 11 points but lost single women by 20 points.

Unusually, Bush's best education group was college graduates, whom he carried by 10 points, followed by those with some college (+7) and high school graduates by 3 points. However he lost postgraduates by 22 points. He carried all age groups under 50 including, unusually, young voters (though by just a single point). But he lost all age groups 50 and over. The exit poll also indicates he lost cities of 50,000 to 500,000 people, the suburbs, and rural areas. He only carried small cities, though by a wide margin (25 points).

Turning to the white working class, New Mexican white working class voters supported Bush over Kerry by 23 points, exactly the national average. This was key to Bush's narrow victory along with his relatively small deficit among Hispanics (his 12 point deficit among New Mexico Hispanics was significantly below his 19 point deficit in the nation as a whole and far below typical GOP deficits of 30 points or more). But among white college graduates, Bush won by a slender 2 points, far below the nationwide average.

Looking back to 1988, in that election Bush senior ran 39 points ahead of Dukakis among New Mexico's white working class voters, so Kerry's 23 point deficit in 2004 actually represents a considerable swing to the Democrats among those voters. So does Kerry's 2 point deficit among white college graduates, since Dukakis lost those voters by 14 points in 1988. But white working class voters have also been shrinking as a proportion of voters, declining by 9 points as a share of voters, according to the exit polls, while white college graduates have increased their share by 4 points.

Bush's support among white working class voters varies strongly by region of New Mexico. Using the exit poll regions, which match up very closely with our New Mexico regions, we find that Bush's white working class advantage in the Albuquerque metro was a fairly modest 9 points. But in the Northwest region it was 28 points and in the South and East region it was an overwhelming 42 points. Compared to 1988, these figures represent a 3 point shift toward the Republicans in the South/East and a 15 shift toward the Democrats in the Northwest. But the really big shift took place in Albuquerque, where there has been a 26 point move toward the Democrats among white working class voters since 1988.

D. Political shifts in New Mexico since 1988 have moved the relatively fast-growing Albuquerque metro, 44 percent of the statewide vote, toward the Democrats.

Maps 11A-11C show how these patterns of support have played out geographically. For 2004, 1996 and 1988, they color-code each county by its margin for the victorious presidential candidate (deep blue for a Democratic victory of 10 points or more, light blue for a Democratic victory of less than 10 points, deep red for a Republican victory of 10 points or more, light red for a Republican victory of less than 10 points). In addition, our three New Mexico regions are shown on each map by heavy black lines.

Looking at the 2004 map, there is a great deal of bright red, indicating Bush carried the county by 10 points or more. Much of this is concentrated in the large South and Northeast region which Bush car-

Maps 11A-C. New Mexico Presidential Voting by County, 1988-2004

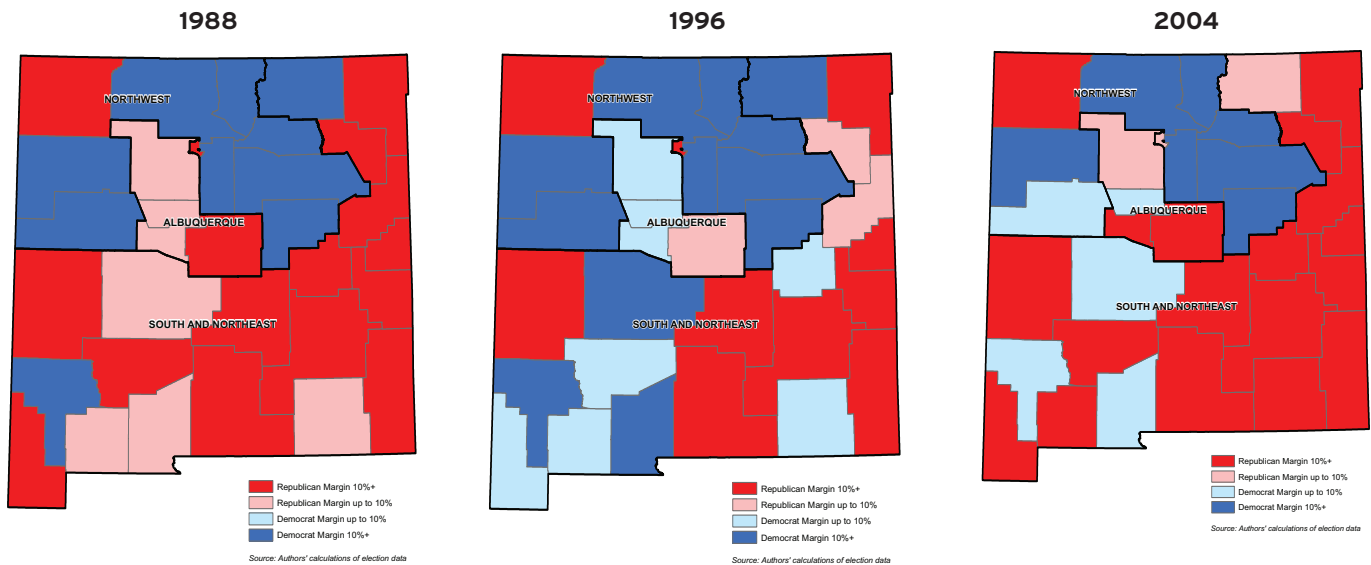


Table 11. Democratic Margins for New Mexico Regions, 1988 and 2004

Region	Democratic Margins		
	1988 President	2004 President	Change, 1988-2004
Albuquerque	-8	1	9
Northwest	13	19	5
South and Northeast	-12	-17	-5

Source: Authors' analysis of New Mexico election returns

ried by a healthy 17 points (**Table 11**). This region contributes about a third of New Mexico's vote, a share that is down 6 points since the 1988 election.

But the other two regions are quite a different story. Bush lost the Northwest region, which accounts for 22 percent of the vote and includes the Santa Fe and Farmington metros, by 19 points. And he lost the Albuquerque metro by a point, which contributes 44 percent of the statewide vote (up 3 points since the 1988 election).

Comparing the 2004 map to the 1988 map, there is a little more blue in the 2004 map, consistent with the pro-Democratic shift over the time period. But the most significant difference does not immediately stand out, so we flag it here: the shift of populous Bernalillo county in the Albuquerque metro from light red in 1988 to light blue in 2004. Since that county alone accounts for about a third of the New Mexico vote, this is an extremely important shift.

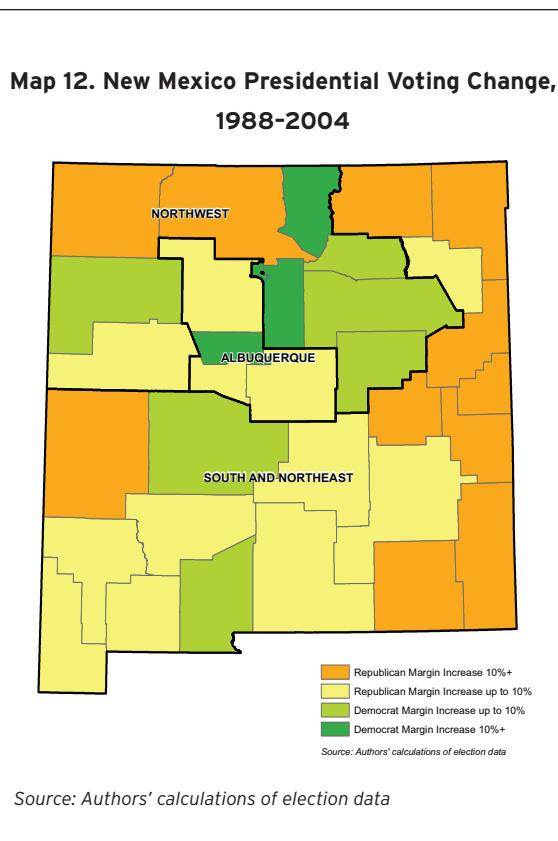
In 1996, Clinton carried the state by 7 percentage points and created a more blue South and Northeast region. However, by 2004, most of that blue had gone away, with the important exception of the Las Cruces metro, the only metro in the entire region. In addition, three of the four counties of the Albuquerque metro moved from light red to light blue in 1996. Two of these three counties moved back to red by 2004, but, as just discussed, Bernalillo County, by far the most important of the three, did not.

Map 12 provides a visual representation of where political shifts in New Mexico took place over the 1988-2004 time period. Counties that are dark green had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or more, light green counties had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or less, orange counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or more and light yellow counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or less.

With only two exceptions (though one of them is the Las Cruces metro), the South and Northeast region is all orange or light yellow indicating shifts toward the GOP. Reflecting this pattern, the region as a whole shows a 5 point shift toward the Republicans since 1988. The Northwest region, on the other hand, shows quite a bit of green, including dark green for the relatively populous Santa Fe metro (9 percent of the statewide vote, 14 points more Democratic since 1988) and for Taos (a 13 point Democratic shift). While the Farmington metro partly counterbalanced these shifts (6 percent of the statewide vote, 14 points more Republican since 1988), the net result in the Northwest was a 5 point shift toward the Democrats.

But the big shift was in the Albuquerque metro. As the map shows, only one county of the four in the Albuquerque metro shifted Democratic but it is colored dark green. This is populous Bernalillo county, which experienced a 13 point Democratic shift. This shift was enough to move the entire Albuquerque metro toward the Democrats by 9 points over the time period.

It's also interesting to compare the political shifts in Map 12 to the population growth map (Map 10). The Republican-shifting South and Northeast region is almost all declining (red) and relatively slow growth (yellow) counties, with the important exception of the Las Cruces metro, which is light green, reflecting its growth rate of 14 percent. Interestingly Las Cruces (8 percent of the statewide vote) is



also the only part of the vast South-East region that has shifted Democratic since 1988.

The Democratic-shifting Northwest region shows a similar pattern of declining or slow growth counties. But again there is an exception, the Santa Fe metro, colored light green and growing at 10 percent. Santa Fe is also the part of the Northwest region that has shifted most sharply to the Democrats since 1988.

The Albuquerque metro contains two of the four counties in New Mexico that have grown at a rate of over 10 percent since 2000. As a result, its overall growth rate (14 percent) is far higher than for the other two New Mexico regions (4 percent for the Northwest and 5 percent for the South-East). This means that the area that has shifted most sharply toward the Democrats since 1988 is also the area that is now growing fastest.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP must, at minimum, stabilize its support; white college graduates, a growing constituency who could tip in this election from Republican to Democratic; and Hispanics, also a growing constituency, but one that has recently been moving Republican.

Despite the shifts discussed above, the GOP did manage to win the last presidential election in New Mexico, albeit very narrowly. However, it did lose the previous three elections. The Republicans' ability to eke out a second straight victory in the state will depend on the demographic groups and trends we have reviewed in this report. Here are some things to watch out for in the 2008 election.

One critical question is whether the white working class continues its trend toward the Democrats. If it does, especially in the Albuquerque metro where the trend has been sharpest, this could be curtains for the GOP since they need a big margin among this group to offset losses elsewhere.

The GOP also needs to stop the pro-Democratic trend among the white college-educated voters, who in contrast to the white working class, are actually increasing their share of voters. Indeed, white college-educated voters, now very slightly pro-Republican, are on the verge of tipping from a Republican to Democratic group.

And hugely important to GOP changes is whether the growing Hispanic population can continue its pro-Republican trend or at least not move back toward the Democrats. The relatively modest 12 point deficit among this group in 2004 was a huge factor in enabling the GOP to take the state. If Hispanics move back toward the Democrats in this election, holding the state will be very, very difficult for the Republicans.

In terms of regions, the key area is the relatively fast-growing Albuquerque metro. If this area, 44 percent of the statewide vote, gives the Democrats a larger margin in 2008, the GOP's ability to keep the state red will be seriously compromised. The GOP also needs to worry about the pro-Democratic trend

in the Northwest, led by the Santa Fe metro; a larger margin here would force the Republicans to rely on big turnout and a wider margin in the pro-Republican, heavily rural South and Northeast region. And even in that region, a larger Democratic margin in the Las Cruces metro might make it hard to just hold the line, much less increase the GOP advantage.

Arizona

(See the full report on four Intermountain West states by William Frey and Ruy Teixeira at http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/08_intermountain_west_frey_teixeira.aspx)

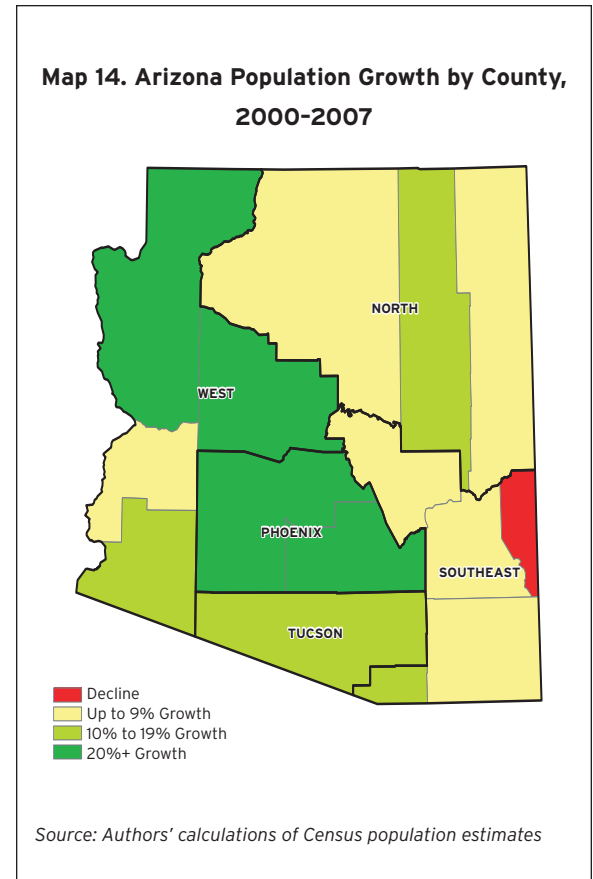
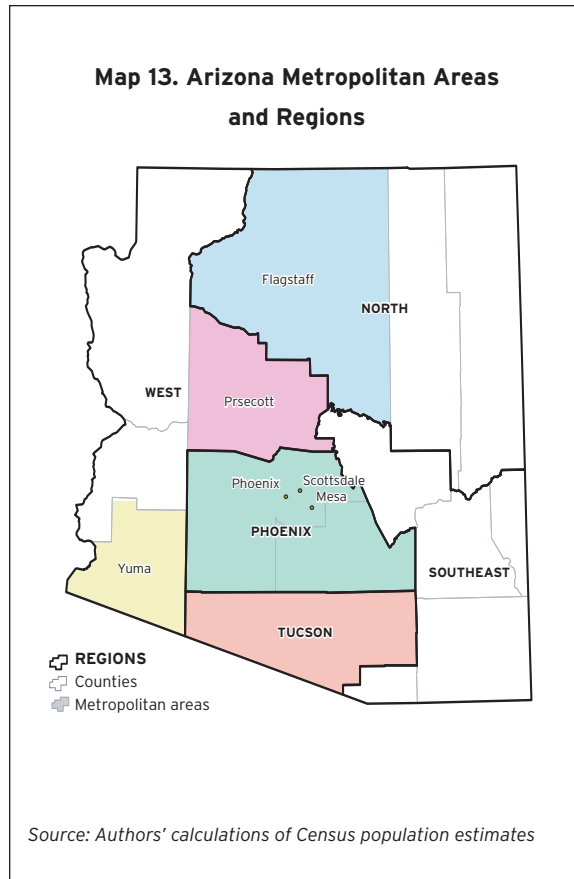
A. Arizona's fast growing population is highly concentrated in the Phoenix and, secondarily, Tucson metros. New voters there hold the potential for turning this long term Republican state if not blue, a much lighter shade of red.

B. Arizona's eligible voters population parallels Nevada's in some respects and, like its fast-growing cousin, shows strong increases in minorities and white college graduates. In contrast, white working class voters are growing very slowly and their share of Arizona's electorate is dropping sharply, especially in the Phoenix and Tucson metros.

C. The GOP's solid margin in Arizona in 2004 can be attributed to very strong support from white working class voters plus a relatively small deficit among Hispanic voters. However, the white working class is declining as a share of voters, while Hispanics and white college grads, far more Democratic than the white working class, are growing. The Tucson metro shows the weakest performances for the GOP among both white working class and white college grad voters.

D. Political shifts in Arizona since 1988 have moved the fast-growing Phoenix and Tucson metros, 80 percent of the statewide vote, toward the Democrats. The North region, led by the Flagstaff metro, has also moved strongly toward the Democrats. However, the Southeast region has shifted toward the GOP, partially counterbalancing these trends.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP needs to maintain its strong support; white college graduates, a growing constituency who could tip in this election from Republican to Democratic; and Hispanics, a growing, traditionally Democratic constituency, but one that has recently given relatively high levels of support to the GOP. These trends will likely determine whether and to what extent the Tucson and especially the Phoenix metro continue to move toward the Democrats and cut into the GOP's statewide lead.



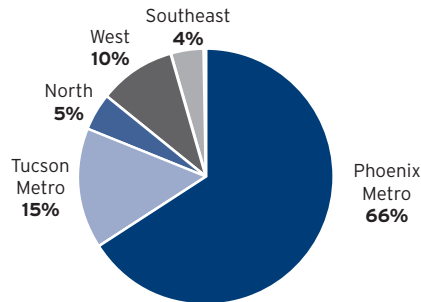
A. Arizona's fast growing population is highly concentrated in the Phoenix and, secondarily, Tucson metros. New voters there hold the potential for turning this long term Republican state if not blue, a much lighter shade of red.

After Nevada, Arizona is the second fastest growing state this decade, and one that has gobbled up Electoral College votes—adding one each after the successive censuses of 1960 through 1990, and two after 2000. Its current 10 electoral votes can now make a difference in a close election. Arizona is the home of Barry Goldwater and a conservative Republican tradition. Yet, its dramatically shifting demographics have prompted many observers to contend that it would be “in play” in 2008 had not Arizona Senator John McCain become the Republican presidential standard bearer.

The regions for Arizona are shown in **Map 13** with related population and growth statistics in **Map 14**, and **Figures 12 and 13**. The regions are as follows:

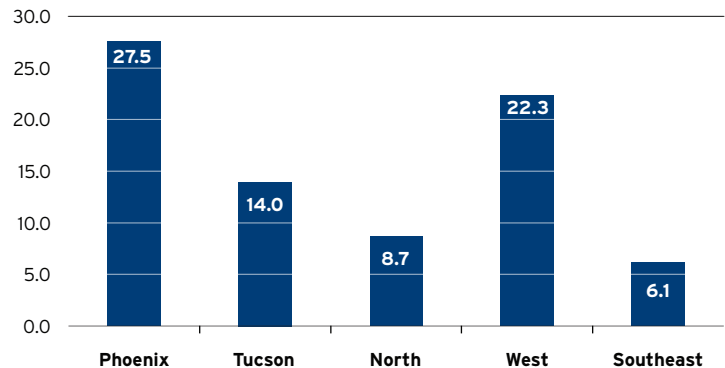
1. Phoenix – Maricopa and Pinal counties, coincident with the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan area. Metropolitan Phoenix, with a population of 4.1 million, constitutes 66 percent of the state population, and since 2000 has grown 27 percent, faster than the state as a whole and the second most rapidly growing large metropolitan area in the U.S. (after Las Vegas).

Figure 12. Share of 2007 Population in Arizona Regions



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

Figure 13. 2000-2007 Population Growth in Arizona Regions



Source: Authors' calculations of Census population estimates

2. Tucson - Pima County, commensurate with the Tucson metropolitan area, which is the state's second largest with a population of 967,000. It is the home of the University of Arizona and comprises 15 percent of the state's population. Its growth rate is 14 percent since 2000, lower than for Phoenix or the state as a whole, but it continues to attract both immigrants and domestic migrants.

3. North - includes Coconino County, commensurate with the Flagstaff metropolitan area, along with Apache and Navajo counties. It contains a substantial native American population. The North region comprises less than 5 percent of the state's population and grew a modest 8.7 percent from 2000-7

4. West - consists of rapidly growing Yavapai County, coincident with the Prescott metropolitan area, as well as equally fast growing Mohave County, La Paz County on the western border, and Yuma County, bordering Mexico and coincident with the Yuma metropolitan area. Due to the very rapid growth in the northwest part of this region that borders both Nevada and California, the West increased its population by 22 percent between 2000-2007. It constitutes 10 percent of the state's population.

5. Southeast - consists of Graham, Gila, Greenlee, Cochise and Santa Cruz counties all located in the southeastern part of the state, bordering New Mexico and Mexico. The region comprises just 4 percent of the state's population and grew at a modest 6 percent since 2000.

Overall, it's the rapidly growing metropolitan Phoenix region that has the greatest potential for affecting the next election's results, as well as longer term political trends in the state.

B. Arizona's eligible voters population parallels Nevada's in some respects and, like its fast-growing cousin, shows strong increases in minorities and white college graduates.

Arizona's profile is similar to Nevada's in its percentage of minority eligible voters (28 percent) and work-

Table 12. 2000-2006 Percent Change in Eligible Voters by Demographic Attributes: Arizona Regions

Attributes	Phoenix Metro	Tucson Metro	North	West	Southeast	Total State
Key Demographic Segments						
Minorities	38	17	14	33	4	29
Whites Age 65+	13	11	21	22	23	14
White, Working Age College Grads,	28	20	13	8	7	25
White Working Age Non College Grads	10	1	5	16	7	9
Race-Ethnicity						
White	14	8	9	17	11	13
Black	45	12	14	35	-6	37
Hispanic	40	18	10	41	5	31
Age						
18-29	19	8	16	38	7	18
30-44	8	-7	-4	5	-7	4
45-64	36	25	18	17	16	30
65+	17	16	25	26	19	18
Education						
HS grad or less	13	8	8	16	5	12
Some College	17	2	15	28	6	15
Coll Grads	35	26	16	17	24	31
Industry of Worker						
Manfg and Other Goods Production	8	10	26	23	21	10
Trade	19	7	11	14	-19	15
Education and Health	30	9	0	18	14	22
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	26	19	12	44	33	26
Other Services	25	10	30	28	4	22

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

ing age white working class voters (40 percent). (See Appendices A and B). Compared to Nevada, however, Arizona has higher percentages of white college graduates and of white seniors. Another similarity between the two states is that minorities are growing fastest and that both minorities and white college graduates are growing at rates far higher than for white working class or white senior voters. Still another similarity with Nevada is Arizona's high share of eligible voters who were born out state. This group has shown especially fast growth among those born in California and abroad.

But as in Nevada, statewide patterns do not hold in all regions and there is considerable divergence in the demographic profile of individual regions. For example, both the Phoenix and Tucson metros have significantly larger shares of white college graduates (**Figure 14, Table 12, and Appendix**).

The North region, on the other hand, is heavily minority, due to its very large Native American population; most of the remaining “minority white” population is comprised of working class whites and white seniors. The small Southeast region also shows a substantial minority shares, mostly comprised of Hispanics. In contrast, the West is the “whitest” of all regions, with white seniors comprising a quarter of eligible voters, and the white working class outnumbering white college graduates six to one.

In terms of growth profiles, the Phoenix and Tucson metros are quite consistent with statewide patterns (**Table 12**). Both Phoenix and Tucson show growth in their minority and white college graduate populations which is far higher than for working class whites or white seniors. This is not a growth pattern shared by any of the other regions.

In the fast growing West region, for example, white seniors rank second to minorities on growth and white college graduates are growing the least—a function perhaps of lower middle class movement to this region from California in search of affordable housing. And white working class voters are growing faster in this region than any other. As discussed below, this dynamic could help the GOP continue their dominance of the region, given the Republican leanings of the white working class.

In the Native American-dominated North region, white seniors show the highest growth rates in 2000-2006, with solid growth also among white college graduates and minorities. In the smaller Southeast region, the largest gains by far are among white seniors.

Overall, due to relatively slow growth rates, white working class voters are declining as a share of voters in the state as a whole and in every region (even the West because minorities and white seniors are growing so much faster there). The sharpest declines in white working class shares of the electorate are in the Phoenix and Tucson metros, which also have seen the sharpest increases in shares of minority and white college graduate voters. These trends are likely to make these areas more friendly territory for Democrats.

C. The GOP’s solid margin in Arizona in 2004 can be attributed to very strong support from white working class voters plus a relatively small deficit among Hispanic voters.

We now turn to how Arizonans have been voting in recent elections. **Table 13** displays some basic exit poll data from the 2004 presidential election. In 2004, Arizona voted solidly Republican by 10 points, an improvement over Bush’s margin of 6 points in the 2000 election. Bush’s victory was based on 59 percent to 41 percent support from white voters, 79 percent of all voters according to the exit polls. This more than made up for Bush’s deficit among the 5 percent of (predominantly Native American)

Table 13. Arizona Voting by Selected Demographic Groups, 2004

Group	2004 President		
	Democrat	Republican	Dem-Rep
White	41	59	-18
Hispanic	56	43	13
Other	56	42	14
Men	41	58	-17
Women	47	52	-5
White Men	36	63	-27
White Women	45	54	-9
HS Dropout	59	39	20
HS Graduate	44	55	-11
Some College	36	63	-27
College Grad	46	54	-8
Postgraduate	56	43	13
White Noncollege	34	65	-31
White College	48	52	-4
18–29	48	50	-2
30–39	41	58	-17
40–49	41	59	-18
50–64	47	52	-5
65+	44	56	-12
City over 500,000	50	49	1
City 50,000-500,000	53	47	6
Suburbs	39	59	-20
City 10,000-50,000	31	69	-38
Rural	44	56	-12
Total	55	44	-11

Source: Authors' analysis of 2004 Arizona exit poll

voters who were “other race” (56-42 Democratic) and among the 12 percent of voters who were Hispanic (56-43 Democratic).

Bush carried men by 17 points, but women by just 5 points. An even larger gender gap can be seen when comparing white men and white women, who Bush carried by 27 and 9 points, respectively.

Bush's best education group was followed by those with some college (+27), followed by high school graduates (+11) and college graduates (+8). However he lost postgraduates by 13 points. He carried all age groups, including young voters (though by just two points). The exit poll also indicates he lost large cities (Phoenix and Tucson) by 1 point and cities of 50,000-500,000 people by 6 points. However, he carried the suburbs by an impressive 20 points and small cities and rural areas by 38 and 12 points respectively.

Turning to the white working class, Arizona white working class voters supported Bush over Kerry by 31 points, considerably above the national average. This is the key to Bush's solid victory along with his relatively small deficit among Hispanics (his 13 point deficit among Arizona Hispanics was significantly below his 19 point deficit in the nation as a whole and far below typical GOP deficits of 30 points or more). But among white college graduates, Bush won by a slender 4 points, far below the nationwide average.

Bush's support among white working class voters varied by region of Arizona. Using the exit poll regions, which match up fairly closely with the Phoenix and Tucson metros, but have a third region that roughly combines our South, North and West regions ("Rest of State"), we find that Bush's white working class advantage is greatest in the Rest of State region (38 points), also very high in the Phoenix area (34 points) and significantly less in the Tucson area (17 points). The Tucson area also had unusually high support for the Democrats among white college graduates (30 points), while the other two regions showed GOP advantages among this group.

D. Political shifts in Arizona since 1988 have moved the fast-growing Phoenix and Tucson metros, 80 percent of the statewide vote, toward the Democrats.

Maps 15A-15C show how these patterns of support have played out geographically. For 2004, 1996 and 1988, they color-code each county by its margin for the victorious presidential candidate (deep blue for a Democratic victory of 10 points or more, light blue for a Democratic victory of less than 10 points, deep red for a Republican victory of 10 points or more, light red for a Republican victory of less than 10 points). Looking at the 2004 map, only two regions have any blue in them: the Tucson metro and the North region. As shown in **Table 14**, he carried both regions by 6 and 11 percentage points, respectively. These were the only regions Kerry carried in Arizona.

Bush carried the other three regions, including the Phoenix metro (bright red) by 15 points. Since the Phoenix metro contributes 62 percent of the statewide vote, this is obviously central to the GOP's victory. Bush also carried the Southeast (bright red, except for Santa Cruz County) by 17 points and the West (bright red) by 23 points.

As shown in the 1988 map—when Republicans carried the state by 21 points—there were only two blue counties in Arizona, located on the far eastern border and very lightly populated. But in 1996, Clinton carried the state by 3 points and diversified the color scheme, turning the entire North region and the

Maps 15A-C. Arizona County Voting for President, 1988-2004

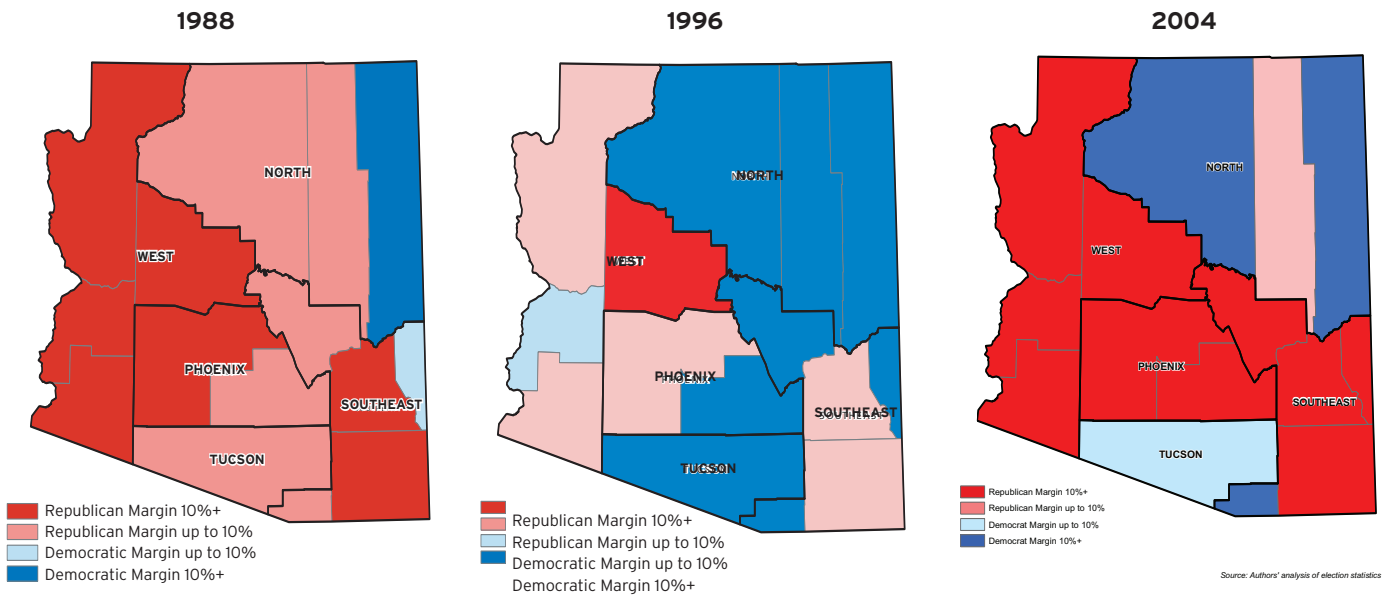


Table 14. Democratic Margins for Arizona Regions, 1988 and 2004

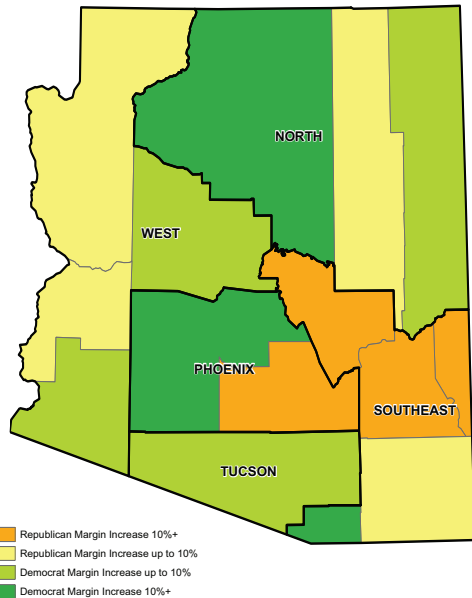
Region	Democratic Margins		
	1988 President	2004 President	Change, 1988-2004
Phoenix	-30	-15	15
Tucson	-2	6	8
North	0	11	10
West	-26	-23	3
Southeast	-10	-17	-7

Source: Authors' analysis of Arizona election returns

Tucson metro blue and Maricopa County in the Phoenix metro light red. Much of this blue recedes by 2004 but the Tucson metro remains blue, as does most of the North region, including the Flagstaff metro. And Maricopa County returns to bright red but, as we shall see, not quite as bright red as it was before.

Map 16 provides a visual representation of where political shifts in Arizona took place over the 1988-2004 time period. Counties that are dark green had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or more, light green counties had margin shifts toward the Democrats of 10 points or less, orange coun-

**Map 16. Arizona Voting for President,
County Change 1988-2004**



Source: Authors' analysis of election statistics

ties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or more and light yellow counties had margin shifts toward the Republicans of 10 points or less.

The Southeast region, where three of four counties are yellow or orange, is the only region which moved toward the GOP over the time period (by 7 points). The West is split evenly between light yellow and light green (though the light green counties are the two metros in the region, Yuma and Prescott) and had a modest 3 point move toward the Democrats. The North region had a strong 10 point move toward the Democrats, led by the dark green Flagstaff metro.

Much more significant than these shifts though is what happened in the two big metros of Tucson and Phoenix. Tucson, colored light green and 18 percent of the Arizona vote, shifted toward the Democrats by 8 points. And the Phoenix metro, 62 percent of the statewide vote, led by Maricopa County (dark

green), shifted toward the Democrats by 15 points. Between these two metros, that's 80 percent of the statewide vote on the move.

It's interesting to compare the political shifts in Map 16 to the population growth map (Map 14). The slowest growing region, the Southeast (6 percent since 2000), containing the only declining (red) county in Arizona plus three slow growth (yellow) counties, is also the only region that has moved toward the GOP since 1988. And the fastest-growing region, the very populous Phoenix metro (27 percent since 2000) is also the region that has moved the most sharply toward the Democrats.

Better news for the GOP is that the pro-Republican West region is the second fastest-growing region (22 percent since 2000) and has exhibited only a modest shift toward the Democrats since 1988. But the West only provides 9 percent of the statewide vote compared to the pro-Democratic Tucson metro which is also growing fairly fast (14 percent), has had a sharper shift toward the Democrats and contributes 18 percent of the Arizona vote.

These population growth patterns appear, on net, to reinforce the general Democratic trend in the state. That said, it seems likely the GOP will continue their hold on the state in this election, given the relatively large deficit the Democrats have to make up and the fact that an Arizona favorite son will be the

GOP candidate. More long-term, however, the continuation of current trends, especially in the two big metros, could well put the state's red status in doubt.

E. Key trends and groups to watch in 2008 include the white working class, where the GOP needs to maintain its strong support; white college graduates, a growing constituency who could tip in this election from Republican to Democratic; and Hispanics, a growing, traditionally Democratic constituency, but one that has recently given relatively high levels of support to the GOP.

The GOP did manage to win the last presidential election in Arizona fairly solidly. But the Republicans' ability to hold the state, especially beyond 2008, will depend on the demographic groups and trends we have reviewed in this report. Here are some things to watch out for in the 2008 election.

One critical question is whether the declining white working class will continue its strong support for the Republicans. If they start moving toward the Democrats, especially in the Phoenix metro, where their share of voters is dropping fastest, this could cut substantially into the GOP's statewide lead.

Another trend to watch is whether white college grad voters, who are actually increasing their share of voters, especially in the Phoenix and Tucson metros, move further toward the Democrats.

Also very important is whether the growing Hispanic population continues its relatively high support levels for the GOP. The party's relatively modest 13 point deficit among this group in 2004 made a significant contribution to the GOP's election victory by keeping down the Democratic vote. If that deficit widens substantially in 2008—very possible given current polling—that could have a big impact, particularly in the Phoenix metro, where 40 percent of eligible voters are Hispanics and where their share of voters is growing most rapidly.

In terms of regions, the key areas are obviously the fast-growing Phoenix and Tucson metros, with special emphasis on the Phoenix metro which is both growing fastest and already has the largest share of the Arizona vote (62 percent). If Republican margins continue to decrease in Phoenix and Democratic margins increase in Tucson, that will inevitably make the state a great deal closer. Also interesting to watch is whether the Flagstaff metro in the North continues to move sharply Democratic and whether the two metros in the West, Prescott and Yuma, will continue their modest pro-Democratic trend and possibly weaken the GOP hold on that region.

Appendix A. Demographic Attributes of Eligible Voters in Intermountain West States

Share of Total	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Arizona
Key Demographic Segments				
Minorities	19.8	28.3	50.3	27.4
Whites Age 65+	12.1	13.4	10.9	16.5
White, Working Age College Grads,	25.8	13.9	13.8	17.0
White Working Age Non College Grads	42.3	44.4	24.9	39.2
Race-Ethnicity				
White	80.2	71.7	49.7	72.6
Black	3.5	7.5	1.7	3.4
Asian	2.1	5.5	0.8	1.7
Other	2.0	3.2	10.3	5.4
Hispanic	12.2	12.1	37.5	16.9
Age				
18-29	22.3	20.5	23.2	21.8
30-44	28.6	28.0	25.4	26.3
45-64	35.0	35.0	33.8	32.6
65+	14.0	16.5	17.6	19.3
Education				
Less than HS	10.0	12.1	15.0	12.7
HS grad	25.5	32.8	29.4	27.5
Some College	31.9	34.6	32.3	35.0
Bachelors Degree	21.4	13.7	13.9	16.2
PostGraduate	11.2	6.8	9.4	8.6
Industry of Worker				
Manfg and Other Goods Production	18.0	15.9	17.0	17.6
Trade	15.1	13.6	13.8	15.4
Education and Health	18.3	14.8	23.1	19.2
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	25.5	20.5	19.5	22.7
Other Services	23.2	35.2	26.6	25.1
Birthplace				
Same State	35.0	12.4	46.8	26.3
California	6.7	22.1	5.8	10.4
Other Western State	7.8	13.4	8.8	9.2
Non Western State	46.1	41.6	34.5	47.6
Abroad	4.3	10.5	4.1	6.51

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

**Appendix B. 2000-2006 Percent Change in Eligible Voters by Demographic Attributes
in Intermountain West States**

Attributes	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Arizona
Key Demographic Segments				
Minorities	17	45	15	29
Whites Age 65+	11	17	8	14
White Working Age College Grads	16	36	11	25
White Working Age Non College Grads	5	7	-3	9
Race-Ethnicity				
White	9	14	3	13
Black	9	36	7	37
Asian	55	74	18	59
Other	-2	11	15	12
Hispanic	18	52	15	31
Age				
18-29	10	25	17	18
30-44	-5	6	-9	4
45-64	26	31	17	30
65+	13	24	13	18
Education				
Less than HS	-10	-14	-17	-10
HS grad	16	30	16	27
Some College	5	19	13	15
Bachelors Degree	16	40	17	29
PostGraduate	26	52	18	34
Industry of Worker				
Manfg and Other Goods Production	0	30	8	10
Trade	7	19	1	15
Education and Health	14	36	14	22
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	12	40	23	26
Other Services	11	14	10	22
Birthplace				
Same State	16	33	12	27
California	20	32	26	33
Other Western State	12	22	9	21
Non Western State	4	8	1	7
Abroad	31	50	10	37

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

Appendix C. Demographic Attributes of Eligible Voters, Colorado Regions

Attributes	Denver City	Denver Inner Suburbs	Denver Outer Suburbs	Boulder Metro	Colorado Springs Metro	East	Southeast and Central	West	Total State
Race-Ethnicity									
White	63.4	78.0	89.6	88.7	79.7	78.5	77.3	87.2	80.2
Black	10.7	4.3	0.6	0.8	5.9	2.3	0.5	0.4	3.5
Asian	2.5	2.7	3.0	2.1	2.7	0.7	0.8	1.1	2.1
Other	2.4	2.1	1.4	2.1	2.7	1.2	2.0	2.0	2.0
Hispanic	21.1	13.0	5.4	6.3	9.0	17.3	19.5	9.4	12.2
Age									
18–29	20.6	20.6	19.4	28.2	24.2	20.8	23.0	25.3	22.3
30–44	32.1	28.1	33.5	25.8	29.5	25.0	27.5	26.3	28.6
45–64	31.5	37.2	38.1	34.1	33.7	34.8	35.1	33.7	35.0
65+	15.7	14.1	9.0	11.8	12.7	19.4	14.3	14.7	14.0
Education									
HS grad or less	36.5	36.9	22.5	19.4	32.9	48.0	39.0	39.5	35.5
Some College	26.0	34.1	29.6	30.6	35.7	33.9	27.8	32.1	31.9
Coll Grads	37.5	29.0	47.9	50.0	31.4	18.1	33.1	28.4	32.6
Gender/Marital Status									
Married Women	19.0	26.8	33.5	23.3	28.4	27.2	28.0	28.2	27.1
Unmarried Women	31.3	24.3	16.6	27.1	22.9	21.6	20.2	22.1	23.3
All Men	49.7	48.8	49.9	49.6	48.7	51.2	51.8	49.7	49.6
Industry of Worker									
Manfg and Other Goods Production	11.8	16.5	15.5	15.4	17.0	21.3	21.2	24.0	18.0
Trade	14.0	16.5	14.9	11.9	14.4	15.4	12.4	15.7	15.1
Education and Health	19.3	17.1	15.8	24.1	17.6	19.4	17.0	20.0	18.3
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	30.2	27.2	35.0	27.6	26.7	15.6	20.7	18.1	25.5
Other Services	24.7	22.7	18.8	20.9	24.3	28.2	28.7	22.3	23.2
Birthplace									
Same State	36.5	37.5	26.3	21.1	22.1	53.2	41.7	37.8	35.0
California	5.4	6.1	7.7	7.6	9.3	4.9	5.8	7.0	6.7
Other State	51.0	50.8	61.6	67.2	64.4	40.1	50.8	52.3	53.9
Abroad	7.0	5.6	4.3	4.0	4.1	1.8	1.7	2.9	4.3

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

Appendix D. Demographic Attributes of Eligible Voters, Nevada Regions

Attributes	Las Vegas Metro	Reno Metro	Rural Heartland	Total State
Race-Ethnicity				
White	66.8	81.0	84.6	71.7
Black	10.1	1.9	1.3	7.5
Asian	6.7	4.2	1.2	5.5
Other	2.7	3.2	5.5	3.2
Hispanic	13.6	9.7	7.4	12.1
Age				
18–29	20.6	20.5	19.9	20.5
30–44	29.3	25.5	24.6	28.0
45–64	34.2	37.5	36.0	35.0
65+	15.9	16.5	19.5	16.5
Education				
HS grad or less	45.3	38.1	50.7	44.9
Some College	34.3	36.4	34.0	34.6
Coll Grads	20.5	25.4	15.3	20.5
Gender/Marital Status				
Married Women	25.2	24.6	26.7	25.3
Unmarried Women	24.9	25.0	21.5	24.4
All Men	49.9	50.4	51.8	50.3
Industry of Worker				
Manfg and Other Goods Production	13.1	17.5	28.8	15.9
Trade	13.3	15.7	12.0	13.6
Education and Health	13.7	17.9	16.3	14.8
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	22.1	18.8	14.2	20.5
Other Services	37.7	30.2	28.6	35.2
Birthplace				
Same State	9.6	16.9	20.8	12.4
California	19.2	29.1	28.2	22.1
Other State	59.0	45.0	47.1	55.0
Abroad	12.2	9.0	3.8	10.5

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

Appendix E. Demographic Attributes of Eligible Voters, New Mexico Regions

Attributes	Albuquerque Metro	Northwest Metro	South and Heartland	Total State
Race-Ethnicity				
White	51.9	39.3	55.4	49.7
Black	2.3	0.4	1.9	1.7
Asian	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.8
Other	7.1	24.4	2.9	10.3
Hispanic	37.7	35.1	39.3	37.5
Age				
18-29	23.0	23.2	23.3	23.2
30-44	26.7	24.6	24.5	25.4
45-64	34.0	36.0	31.8	33.8
65+	16.3	16.1	20.4	17.6
Education				
HS grad or less	39.0	48.8	47.9	44.4
Some College	33.6	27.7	34.4	32.3
Coll Grads	27.4	23.5	17.8	23.3
Gender/Marital Status				
Married Women	24.2	24.9	26.0	25.0
Unmarried Women	28.2	26.6	25.7	26.9
All Men	47.7	48.5	48.3	48.1
Industry of Worker				
Manfg and Other Goods Production	15.2	17.3	19.3	17.0
Trade	14.5	13.8	12.9	13.8
Education and Health	22.6	21.7	25.1	23.1
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	23.3	19.2	14.3	19.5
Other Services	24.4	28.1	28.4	26.6
Birthplace				
Same State	44.8	55.5	42.1	46.8
California	6.7	4.5	5.8	5.8
Other State	44.1	37.9	46.8	43.4
Abroad	4.4	2.1	5.3	4.1

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

Appendix F. Demographic Attributes of Eligible Voters, Arizona Regions

Attributes	Phoenix Metro	Tucson Metro	North	West	Southeast	Total State
Race-Ethnicity						
White	74.7	69.2	47.7	81.3	62.2	72.6
Black	4.1	2.7	0.9	1.0	2.7	3.4
Asian	2.0	1.8	0.5	0.8	1.2	1.7
Other	3.0	3.9	44.3	2.7	4.4	5.4
Hispanic	16.1	22.4	6.6	14.3	29.5	16.9
Age						
18–29	21.8	22.1	27.4	18.2	21.0	21.8
30–44	28.1	23.6	26.3	20.4	23.7	26.3
45–64	32.5	33.3	32.6	31.8	33.5	32.6
65+	17.6	20.9	13.7	29.5	21.8	19.3
Education						
HS grad or less	37.9	37.9	49.5	50.2	48.3	40.2
Some College	35.4	33.8	33.0	36.1	34.0	35.0
Coll Grads	26.7	28.2	17.6	13.7	17.7	24.8
Gender/Marital Status						
Married Women	26.0	25.4	24.9	29.3	28.4	26.3
Unmarried Women	25.1	26.5	26.1	22.1	21.0	24.9
All Men	48.9	48.1	49.0	48.6	50.6	48.8
Industry of Worker						
Manfg and Other Goods Prod	17.4	17.6	17.5	18.5	20.6	17.6
Trade	15.9	14.2	13.1	15.4	12.6	15.4
Education and Health	18.2	22.6	24.5	17.3	21.0	19.2
Info, Financial and Prof. Services	25.3	20.2	9.7	15.6	16.8	22.7
Other Services	23.1	25.4	35.1	33.2	29.0	25.1
Birthplace						
Same State	24.4	28.9	56.9	15.7	34.9	26.3
California	9.6	9.5	5.5	20.1	7.1	10.4
Other State	59.1	55.2	36.5	58.3	48.3	56.8
Abroad	6.9	6.3	1.1	5.9	9.6	6.5

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

Endnotes

1. Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, 2008, *Mountain Megs: America's Newest Metropolitan Places and a Federal Partnership to Make Them Prosper*.
2. William H. Frey, 2008 "Race, Immigration and America's Changing Electorate" in Ruy Teixeira (ed), *Red, Blue and Purple America: The Future of Election Demographics*, Washington DC: Brookings Press, 2008
3. Frey, 2008 "Race, Immigration and America's Changing Electorate".
4. Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, 2008. *Mountain Megs*.
5. List of counties in Colorado's East Region (to be added).
6. List of counties in Colorado's South and East Region (to be added).
7. List of counties in Colorado's West Region (to be added).
8. Data limitations—the division of Colorado into "PUMA"s—Public Use Microdata Areas—in the American Community Survey would have it difficult for us to include these metros in any other region but the West. But it is also true that the Fort Collins and Greeley metros are typically put in a West region for Colorado by exit and other pollsters, due to traditional similarities in political culture and behavior between these metros and the rest of the West.
9. No exit poll data for Colorado are available from the 2006 election.
10. No exit poll data for Colorado are available from the 1988 election so no comparisons can be made to performance in the 1988 election.
11. William H. Frey, 2007 "Housing Bust Shatters State Migration Patterns" Brookings WebEd. December.
12. List of counties in Nevada's Rural Heartland Region (TBA).
13. List of counties in New Mexico's Northwest Region (TBA).
14. List of counties in New Mexico's South and Northeast Region (TBA).
15. No exit poll data for Arizona are available from the 1988 election so no comparisons can be made to performance in the 1988 election.

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