**BATTLE OF
THE BASES**

The Rhodes Cook Letter

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The Battle of the Bases

In the sum of its parts, the 2004 presidential election was another close one. But when broken down into its various components, both geographic and demographic, the balloting within many voting blocs was not that close at all. In short, last fall's balloting could be titled, "A Tale of Two Nations: The Sequel."

As in the razor tight election of 2000, Republicans dominated in the Republican 'L' (the South, the Mountain West, and the Plains states). The Democrats controlled the two coasts (the Northeast and the West), leaving only the industrial Midwest from Ohio west to Iowa as a prime regional battleground.

The basic demographics of the 2004 presidential contest also looked identical to 2000: Republicans ruled in rural America, Democrats in the cities, leaving only the suburbs to be hotly contested. In addition, Democrats continued to dominate in 2004 among minority groups (especially African-Americans), in academic communities, as well as liberal resort areas and artist colonies. Republicans maintained their hegemony in high-growth exurbs, areas with a military or aerospace presence, and places with large clusters of elderly voters – housed either in Sun Belt retirement communities or still living in their home towns back in the Frost Belt. (A look at the 2004 voting in religious terms is a subject for a separate issue.)

Yet while the 2004 election was indeed a case of "déjà vu all over again," what stayed the same may be of less long-term significance than what changed.

Republicans posted notable inroads in blue-collar America and among Hispanics. But Democrats solidified their Clinton-era gains in many suburban counties, especially in the vote-rich states of the Frost Belt.

What Stayed the Same

Still, when historians look back at this period, it is likely they will view the elections of 2000 and 2004 as a matched set. If anything, both parties last fall dug deeper into their bases of support than ever before and tied up some of the loose ends from four years earlier.

In 2000, George W. Bush won all but one state (New Mexico) in the Republican 'L'. This time Bush won New Mexico and swept all 232 electoral votes at stake within the 'L'.

In 2000, Al Gore won all but two states (New Hampshire and West Virginia) in the Democrats' bicoastal base. Last fall, John Kerry picked off New Hampshire, producing a nearly unanimous 194-to-5 electoral vote advantage in the Democratic part of the map.

That left the race to be settled in the array of Midwestern battleground states, where after all the effort and money that was spent, only one state (Iowa) switched party hands.

Although the final outcome produced an electoral map that was little changed from 2000, Republicans beefed up their totals in rural America and the fast-growing exurbs. Democrats

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The 2004 Presidential Election: The Republican 'L' Versus the Democratic Coasts

Won by Bush in 2004
Won by Kerry in 2004

While the 2004 presidential election was close nationally, it was not particularly close in any region of the country except the industrial Midwest, which has emerged as the prime battleground in presidential politics. The states which comprise the Republican 'L', the Democratic coasts, and the industrial Midwest are indicated in the map above. To be sure, not every state fits neatly into its geographic category. West Virginia, which in this publication is considered part of the Democratic Northeast, has voted Republican in the last two presidential elections. Indiana - a part of the Midwestern battleground - has voted Republican for an even longer period of time. Still, in 2004, all the other states in the industrial Midwest besides Indiana were competitive, all the other states that are part of the Democratic coasts besides West Virginia voted for Democrat John Kerry, and every state in the Republican 'L' voted for Republican George W. Bush.

	Total Vote	Bush (R)	Kerry (D)	Plurality (in votes)		Electoral Vote	
						Bush (R)	Kerry (D)
Republican 'L'							
South	38,370,136	57%	42%	5,851,698	R	168	0
Mountain West	8,261,568	57%	42%	1,257,531	R	47	0
Plains States	2,666,990	63%	36%	728,888	R	17	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>49,298,694</i>	<i>58%</i>	<i>42%</i>	<i>7,838,117</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>0</i>
Democratic Coasts							
Northeast	27,176,748	43%	55%	3,286,016	D	5	117
Pacific West	17,546,731	45%	54%	1,554,815	D	0	77
<i>Total</i>	<i>44,723,479</i>	<i>44%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>4,840,831</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>194</i>
Prime Battleground							
Industrial Midwest	28,273,150	50%	50%	14,885	R	49	57
NATIONAL TOTAL	122,295,323	51%	48%	3,012,171	R	286	251

Note: One Democratic elector in Minnesota cast his ballot for John Edwards for president rather than John Kerry.

Red States and Blue States: Bush Wins the Most Counties, But Kerry has Big Edge in the Most Populous Ones

The urban-rural split in the 2004 presidential election results was evident in the county returns. President Bush won more counties than Democrat John Kerry in 42 states (all except Hawaii and seven states in the Northeast). But Kerry won the most populous county in 34 states, a diverse group that included 16 states that Bush carried. Of these, nine were in the South, four in the industrial Midwest, and three in the Mountain West.

State	'04 Winner (and %)	Winner of Most Counties	Bush	Kerry	State	'04 Winner (and %)	Winner of Most Counties	Bush	Kerry
Alabama	Bush (63%)	Bush	58	11	Montana	Bush (59%)	Bush	50	6
Alaska	Bush (61%)	Bush	38	2	Nebraska	Bush (66%)	Bush	92	1
Arizona	Bush (55%)	Bush	11	4	Nevada	Bush (51%)	Bush	16	1
Arkansas	Bush (54%)	Bush	54	21	New Hampshire	Kerry (50%)	Kerry	4	6
California	Kerry (54%)	Bush	36	22	New Jersey	Kerry (53%)	Kerry	9	12
Colorado	Bush (52%)	Bush	45	19	New Mexico	Bush (50%)	Bush	21	12
Connecticut	Kerry (54%)	Kerry	1	7	New York	Kerry (58%)	Bush	41	21
Delaware	Kerry (53%)	Bush	2	1	North Carolina	Bush (56%)	Bush	80	20
Florida	Bush (52%)	Bush	56	11	North Dakota	Bush (63%)	Bush	49	4
Georgia	Bush (58%)	Bush	133	26	Ohio	Bush (51%)	Bush	72	16
Hawaii	Kerry (54%)	Kerry	0	4	Oklahoma	Bush (66%)	Bush	77	0
Idaho	Bush (68%)	Bush	43	1	Oregon	Kerry (51%)	Bush	28	8
Illinois	Kerry (55%)	Bush	87	15	Pennsylvania	Kerry (51%)	Bush	54	13
Indiana	Bush (60%)	Bush	88	4	Rhode Island	Kerry (59%)	Kerry	0	5
Iowa	Bush (50%)	Bush	67	32	South Carolina	Bush (58%)	Bush	31	15
Kansas	Bush (62%)	Bush	103	2	South Dakota	Bush (60%)	Bush	57	9
Kentucky	Bush (60%)	Bush	108	12	Tennessee	Bush (57%)	Bush	77	18
Louisiana	Bush (57%)	Bush	54	10	Texas	Bush (61%)	Bush	240	14
Maine	Kerry (54%)	Kerry	2	14	Utah	Bush (72%)	Bush	29	0
Maryland	Kerry (56%)	Bush	18	6	Vermont	Kerry (59%)	Kerry	1	13
Massachusetts	Kerry (62%)	Kerry	0	14	Virginia	Bush (54%)	Bush	102	32
Michigan	Kerry (51%)	Bush	68	15	Washington	Kerry (53%)	Bush	27	12
Minnesota	Kerry (51%)	Bush	63	24	West Virginia	Bush (56%)	Bush	46	9
Mississippi	Bush (59%)	Bush	58	24	Wisconsin	Kerry (50%)	Bush	45	27
Missouri	Bush (53%)	Bush	112	4	Wyoming	Bush (69%)	Bush	22	1
Total			2,575	580

State	'04 Winner (and %)	Winner of Most Populous County (and %)	County (City)	State	'04 Winner (and %)	Winner of Most Populous County (and %)	County (City)
Alabama	Bush (63%)	Bush (54%)	Jefferson (Birmingham)	Montana	Bush (59%)	Bush (62%)	Yellowstone (Billings)
Alaska	Bush (61%)	-	-	Nebraska	Bush (66%)	Bush (58%)	Douglas (Omaha)
Arizona	Bush (55%)	Bush (57%)	Maricopa (Phoenix)	Nevada	Bush (51%)	Kerry (52%)	Clark (Las Vegas)
Arkansas	Bush (54%)	Kerry (55%)	Pulaski (Little Rock)	New Hampshire	Kerry (50%)	Bush (51%)	Hillsborough (Manchester)
California	Kerry (54%)	Kerry (63%)	Los Angeles	New Jersey	Kerry (53%)	Kerry (52%)	Bergen
Colorado	Bush (52%)	Kerry (70%)	Denver	New Mexico	Bush (50%)	Kerry (52%)	Bernalillo (Albuquerque)
Connecticut	Kerry (54%)	Kerry (51%)	Fairfield	New York	Kerry (58%)	Kerry (75%)	Kings (Brooklyn)
Delaware	Kerry (53%)	Kerry (61%)	New Castle (Wilmington)	North Carolina	Bush (56%)	Kerry (52%)	Mecklenburg (Charlotte)
Florida	Bush (52%)	Kerry (53%)	Miami-Dade	North Dakota	Bush (63%)	Bush (59%)	Cass (Fargo)
Georgia	Bush (58%)	Kerry (59%)	Fulton (Atlanta)	Ohio	Bush (51%)	Kerry (67%)	Cuyahoga (Cleveland)
Hawaii	Kerry (54%)	Kerry (51%)	Honolulu	Oklahoma	Bush (66%)	Bush (64%)	Oklahoma (Oklahoma City)
Idaho	Bush (68%)	Bush (61%)	Ada (Boise)	Oregon	Kerry (51%)	Kerry (72%)	Multnomah (Portland)
Illinois	Kerry (55%)	Kerry (70%)	Cook (Chicago)	Pennsylvania	Kerry (51%)	Kerry (80%)	Philadelphia
Indiana	Bush (60%)	Kerry (51%)	Marion (Indianapolis)	Rhode Island	Kerry (59%)	Kerry (63%)	Providence
Iowa	Bush (50%)	Kerry (52%)	Polk (Des Moines)	South Carolina	Bush (58%)	Bush (66%)	Greenville
Kansas	Bush (62%)	Bush (62%)	Sedgwick (Wichita)	South Dakota	Bush (60%)	Bush (57%)	Minnehaha (Sioux Falls)
Kentucky	Bush (60%)	Kerry (50%)	Jefferson (Louisville)	Tennessee	Bush (57%)	Kerry (58%)	Shelby (Memphis)
Louisiana	Bush (57%)	Kerry (77%)	Orleans (New Orleans)	Texas	Bush (61%)	Bush (55%)	Harris (Houston)
Maine	Kerry (54%)	Kerry (58%)	Cumberland (Portland)	Utah	Bush (72%)	Bush (60%)	Salt Lake (Salt Lake City)
Maryland	Kerry (56%)	Kerry (66%)	Montgomery	Vermont	Kerry (59%)	Kerry (64%)	Chittenden (Burlington)
Massachusetts	Kerry (62%)	Kerry (64%)	Middlesex	Virginia	Bush (54%)	Kerry (53%)	Fairfax
Michigan	Kerry (51%)	Kerry (69%)	Wayne (Detroit)	Washington	Kerry (53%)	Kerry (65%)	King (Seattle)
Minnesota	Kerry (51%)	Kerry (59%)	Hennepin (Minneapolis)	West Virginia	Bush (56%)	Bush (51%)	Kanawha (Charleston)
Mississippi	Bush (59%)	Kerry (59%)	Hinds (Jackson)	Wisconsin	Kerry (50%)	Kerry (62%)	Milwaukee
Missouri	Bush (53%)	Kerry (54%)	St. Louis Co.	Wyoming	Bush (69%)	Bush (65%)	Laramie (Cheyenne)

Note: The most populous county in each state is based on the 2000 Census. Percentages in the chart are based on the total vote. Results for New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island were compiled with the help of *Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*, a website devoted to election results. An expansive view of counties is taken in this and the previous chart to include the 40 state House districts in Alaska (where there are no counties), the 39 independent cities in Virginia, plus cities such as Baltimore, Md., and St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo., which report their votes separately from other counties in their states.

responded by pumping up already hefty majorities in a number of large urban centers and by tightening their grip on many once-Republican suburban counties across the Frost Belt.

Bush's dominance in rural America was shown in the nationwide tally of counties won. He carried more than 2,500 of the roughly 3,100 counties, a higher number than any president since 1960 with the exception of two landslide Republican winners – Richard Nixon in 1972, and Ronald Reagan in 1984. In 42 states, Bush won more counties than Kerry - usually many, many more.

Typical was Ohio, the central battleground of the 2004 presidential campaign. Bush won the state by the narrow margin of 2 percentage points, almost an exact reflection of the nationwide result. But he carried 72 of Ohio's 88 counties, most of them with more than 60% of the vote.

Two of the GOP's landslide counties were Delaware and Warren, exurban counties outside Columbus and Cincinnati, respectively, that were among the fastest-growing counties in the country between 2000 and 2004 (Delaware ranked number 11 with 30% population growth; Warren grew 19%). The inflated Republican numbers in these and other exurban counties around the state, combined with the GOP's rural strength, was enough to offset the Democrats' strong showing in most of Ohio's leading urban centers.

And the Democratic advantage in many large cities not just in Ohio, but across the country, was considerable. Of the 25 most populous counties in the country, Kerry took 16, winning them by the aggregate margin of 4 million votes. In vote-rich Los Angeles County alone, the Democratic margin exceeded 800,000 votes, larger than the Kerry or Bush margin of victory in all but three states.

In a number of states, the Democrats were successful in making their urban margins pay big dividends. Kerry won only 15 of 102 counties in Illinois, but with a 655,000-vote lead in Chicago, carried the state. Kerry won only 15 of 83 counties in Michigan, but with an edge of nearly 300,000 votes in Detroit, was able to pull Michigan into the Democratic column. And Kerry won only 13 of 67 counties in Pennsylvania, but with an advantage of more than 400,000 votes in Philadelphia, was able to carry this North-eastern battleground state as well.

Yet it was not the cities alone that enabled the Democrats to carry big electoral vote prizes such as these, but a continuation of the party's ability in recent years to turn the suburban vote from a liability into an asset.

Nowhere has that been more evident than in Pennsylvania. When Republicans last carried the Keystone State in 1988, George Bush swept the three

The Democratic Vote: Where Cities were Enough

Democrat John Kerry won a majority of counties in only a handful of states in 2004. But he still captured a number of key electoral vote prizes by rolling up big margins in major urban centers. Following are seven states where a major city or urban-oriented county provided the votes needed to put their state in the Democratic column in 2004.

State (City/County)	Dem. Margin in Major Urban Center	Dem. Deficit in Rest of State	Dem. Statewide Margin
ILL. - Chicago	655,258	- 109,654	545,604
MICH. -- Detroit	285,915	- 120,478	165,437
MINN. -- Hennepin Co. (Minneapolis)	128,708	- 30,389	98,319
ORE. -- Multnomah Co. (Portland)	161,146	- 84,814	76,332
PA.. -- Philadelphia	412,106	- 267,858	144,248
WASH. -- King Co. (Seattle)	279,335	- 74,028	205,307
WIS. - Milwaukee Co.	117,366	- 105,982	11,384

populous suburban counties adjacent to Philadelphia (Bucks, Delaware and Montgomery) by a combined margin of more than 150,000 votes, en route to a statewide victory of barely 100,000.

In 2004, Democrats swept those three suburban counties by nearly 100,000 votes and won the state by slightly less than 150,000. In the end, Democrats needed the vote in the Philadelphia suburbs, plus an expanded margin in Philadelphia itself – up more than 60,000 from four years earlier – to compensate for the party's declining advantage in more blue-collar western Pennsylvania.

There, in the old coal and steel country, where ethnic lodges, union halls, and loyalty to the Democratic Party once went hand in hand, the party of FDR and JFK no longer commands the allegiance it once did. Cambria County (Johnstown) fell to the Republican Party in 2004. So did Lawrence County on the Ohio line.

And in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), the heart of the region, the Kerry margin last November was down roughly 10,000 votes from Kennedy's victory margin in the county almost a half century earlier.

What Is Changing

The hemorrhaging of the blue-collar vote is not just a problem for the Democrats in Pennsylvania. Once reliable West Virginia, with its historic ties to heavy industry, has voted Republican in the last two presidential elections – with Bush carrying it in 2004 by the decisive margin of 13 percentage points.

Meanwhile, St. Joseph County, Ind., which includes the industrial city of South Bend (and is home to the nation's most prominent Catholic university, Notre Dame), slipped to the Republicans in 2004.

So did Macomb County outside Detroit. The quintessential home of blue-collar Reagan Democrats went Republican in a presidential election last November for the first time since 1992.

And Genesee County, Mich., which includes anti-Bush filmmaker Michael

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Gay Marriage Ban and the Bush Vote in 2004

Social issues were considered a major motivator of the Republican base in 2004, and no issue in that sphere generated more emotion than gay marriage. Measures to ban same-sex marriage were on the November ballot in 11 states. The measure passed handily in all 11; Bush carried nine of them.

But how much the measure really helped the Republican ticket is an open question. Bush lost two of the three battleground states where a gay marriage ban was on the ballot – Michigan and Oregon. And given the attention devoted to Ohio, it is doubtful that a vote on same-sex marriage was needed to boost Republican turnout. In fact, in only two states with a gay marriage ban on the ballot last fall did the increase in the Bush vote exceed his nationwide gain from 2000 of 3 percentage points. They were Oklahoma and Utah, two heavily Republican states where he needed no extra push.

Yet one thing can be said with certainty. Where the gay marriage ban drew more than 60% of the vote, Bush won. Where it drew less than 60%, he lost.

	Vote to Ban Gay Marriage	Bush Vote	Change in Bush % 2000 - 04
Mississippi	86%	59%	+1%
Georgia	76%	58%	+3%
Oklahoma	76%	66%	+5%
Kentucky	75%	60%	+3%
Arkansas	74%	54%	+3%
North Dakota	73%	63%	+2%
Montana	67%	59%	+1%
Utah	66%	72%	+5%
Ohio	61%	51%	+1%
Michigan	59%	48% (Lost)	+2%
Oregon	57%	47% (Lost)	+1%
NATIONAL	-	51%	+3%

The Archaeology of the Suburbs: The Northern Virginia Example

The populous suburbs of Northern Virginia sprawl westward from the Potomac River as a modern day example of political archaeology. They are basically stratified into three distinct layers that provide a microcosm of suburban development elsewhere.

The first layer is comprised of the inner suburbs of Arlington and Alexandria that lie across the river from Washington, D.C. Of the suburban jurisdictions, they are the most urban in nature, with large minority populations and Democratic voting habits that are becoming increasingly pronounced.

The middle layer is Fairfax County, which straddles the Washington Beltway and with about 1 million residents is the most populous jurisdiction in Virginia. As its population has expanded and grown more racially diverse, Fairfax County has gradually come loose from its Republican moorings. In 2004, it voted Democratic for the first time in a presidential election since 1964.

Beyond Fairfax County is the outer layer of suburbs. There, the neighborhoods are newer, the population is mushrooming, and the political terrain is more Republican. The two most populous of the outer suburban counties – Loudoun and Prince William – are among the fastest-growing in the nation. Loudoun was actually number 1 nationally in population growth between 2000 and 2004; Stafford was 20th.

The first wave of growth in the outer suburbs tended to swell the Republican advantage; George Bush swept both Loudoun and Prince William counties in 1988 with two-thirds of the vote. But GOP presidential candidates have drawn nowhere near that large a share of the vote since then. With population density and racial diversity steadily increasing in the outer suburbs, Democrats have begun to chip away at the Republican advantage.

Following is a summary of the 2004 presidential vote in the major jurisdictions in suburban Northern Virginia.

	White % of Population	Turnout	Bush	Kerry	Margin
Inner Suburbs					
Arlington Co.	69%	94,650	31%	68%	Kerry 34,352
Alexandria	60%	61,515	32%	67%	Kerry 21,272
"Traditional" Suburbs					
Fairfax Co.	70%	461,379	46%	53%	Kerry by 33,691
Outer Suburbs					
Prince William Co.	69%	132,063	53%	46%	Bush by 8,505
Loudoun Co.	83%	108,430	56%	44%	Bush by 13,111

Source: For figures on racial composition, *County and City Extra Special Decennial Census Edition* (Bernan Press, 2002).

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Moore's economically beleaguered home town of Flint, saw an increase in Bush's vote share from 35% in 2000 to 39% last fall.

Actually, losing rural America and winning big in the cities is not a new phenomenon for the Democrats. In 1960, Kennedy carried only nine counties in Illinois, 13 in Michigan, and 15 in Pennsylvania. Yet like Kerry, he swept all three states. But Kennedy drew strong support from the Johnstowns and South Bends of the world. It is an open question whether the recent Democratic upswing in white-collar suburbs will offset a continued decline in blue-collar factory towns.

It is also an open question as to what to make of the Hispanic vote, particularly in terms of how big a problem it is these days for the Democrats and how large an opportunity for the Republicans. The Hispanic vote data in Election Day exit polls last fall caught the eye of many political observers, as it showed a stunning upswing in support for Bush of roughly 10 percentage points from 2000. Basically, it was a gain so large it would turn the Hispanic vote from a loyal Democratic constituency into one that is up for grabs.

The Nation's 25 Most Populous Counties: A Democratic Building Block

The political map of the United States may be a sea of red these days, but the Democrats' dominance in many of the nation's most populous counties nearly offsets the Republicans' large territorial advantage. In both the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, Democrats carried 16 of the nation's 25 most populous counties, winning the group by about 4 million votes each year. Populous GOP strongholds are concentrated in the Sun Belt, primarily Southern California and President Bush's home state of Texas. The major Democratic population centers are more widely dispersed, ranging from the populous boroughs of New York City on the Atlantic coast to Los Angeles County on the Pacific. Republican victory margins are noted below in **BOLD**.

Rank	County (City)	2004 Population Estimate (in millions)	Victory Margins in Presidential Elections			
			2004		2000	
1	Los Angeles Co.	9.94	831,511	D	838,575	D
2	Cook Co. (Chicago), Ill.	5.33	842,319	D	746,005	D
3	Harris Co. (Houston), Texas	3.64	108,858	R	110,892	R
4	Maricopa Co. (Phoenix), Ariz.	3.50	174,606	R	93,284	R
5	Orange Co., Calif.	2.99	222,593	R	149,480	R
6	San Diego Co., Calif.	2.93	69,596	R	38,070	R
7	Kings Co. (Brooklyn), N.Y.	2.48	347,824	D	400,863	D
8	Miami-Dade Co., Fla.	2.36	48,637	D	39,275	D
9	Dallas Co., Texas	2.29	9,605	R	47,037	R
10	Queens Co., N.Y.	2.24	267,881	D	294,915	D
11	Wayne Co. (Detroit), Mich.	2.02	342,297	D	307,393	D
12	San Bernardino Co., Calif.	1.92	61,517	R	7,008	R
13	Riverside Co., Calif.	1.87	93,667	R	29,379	R
14	King Co. (Seattle), Wash.	1.78	279,335	D	203,529	D
15	Broward Co., Fla.	1.75	209,199	D	209,801	D
16	Santa Clara Co. (San Jose), Calif.	1.69	177,006	D	143,740	D
17	Clark Co. (Las Vegas), Nev.	1.65	26,430	D	25,168	D
18	Tarrant Co. (Fort Worth), Texas	1.59	142,176	R	113,163	R
19	New York Co. (Manhattan), N.Y.	1.56	419,360	D	369,379	D
20	Bexar Co. (San Antonio), Texas	1.49	49,722	R	30,455	R
21	Suffolk Co., N.Y.	1.48	5,960	D	65,314	D
22	Philadelphia Co., Pa.	1.47	412,106	D	348,223	D
23	Middlesex Co., Mass.	1.46	203,047	D	205,129	D
24	Alameda Co. (Oakland), Calif.	1.46	291,674	D	223,610	D
25	Bronx Co., N.Y.	1.37	227,293	D	229,556	D
Aggregate Total		62.26	3,999,539	D	4,031,707	D

Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 2004 population estimates.

But the methodology of the polling was quickly questioned and actual vote tallies from heavily Hispanic counties have shown a Republican gain of about 5 percentage points at best. And then there is the question of how much of the gain is attributable to the basic appeal of the Republican Party to Hispanics and how much is a personal tribute to President Bush, who speaks Spanish, has intensely courted the Hispanic vote, and is rooted in Texas, where a significant portion of the nation's Hispanic population currently lives.

Yet there is no question that the voting habits of Hispanics, blue-collar workers, and white-collar suburbanites speak to the future of American politics. For while both parties played to their strengths in 2004, they also displayed their weaknesses. And how successfully each party reaches out beyond its base to take advantage of the electoral opportunities that the other party offers will go a long way in determining which one will have the upper hand in the years immediately ahead.

The Nation's 25 Fastest-Growing Counties: A Republican Building Block

Most of the nation's 25 fastest-growing counties are in the Sun Belt. The vast majority could be considered exurbs, bustling new bedroom communities that lie beyond the dense inner ring of suburbs. All of the top 25 high-growth counties could be found in the Republican column in the 2004 presidential election (and all but two in 2000). While these fast-growing counties offer comparatively small number of votes in comparison to the nation's most populous counties, they are a growing GOP counterweight in many states to Democratic urban majorities. Republican victory margins are noted below in **BOLD**.

Rank	County (Nearby City)	Estimated Pop. Gain, 2000-04	2004 Population Estimate	Victory Margins in Presidential Elections	
				2004	2000
1	Loudoun Co., Va. (Washington, D.C.)	+ 41.0%	239,156	13,111 R	11,515 R
2	Flagler Co., Fla. (Jacksonville)	+ 38.5%	69,005	1,055 R	1,284 D
3	Douglas Co., Colo. (Denver)	+ 35.4%	237,963	40,990 R	28,931 R
4	Rockwall, Texas (Dallas)	+ 35.2%	58,260	14,800 R	10,024 R
5	Forsyth, Ga. (Atlanta)	+ 34.0%	131,865	38,066 R	21,075 R
6	Henry Co., Ga. (Atlanta)	+ 33.6%	159,506	21,663 R	13,844 R
7	Kendall Co., Ill. (Chicago)	+ 33.0%	72,548	7,279 R	5,244 R
8	Newton Co., Ga. (Atlanta)	+ 31.5%	81,524	7,156 R	4,424 R
9	Lincoln Co., S.D. (Sioux Falls)	+ 30.2%	31,437	5,458 R	2,702 R
10	Paulding Co., Ga. (Atlanta)	+ 29.7%	105,936	21,423 R	10,138 R
11	Delaware Co., Ohio (Columbus)	+ 29.6%	142,503	26,095 R	19,505 R
12	Scott Co., Minn. (Minneapolis)	+ 28.3%	114,794	12,097 R	6,451 R
13	Collin Co., Texas (Dallas)	+ 27.7%	627,938	105,500 R	85,295 R
14	Osceola Co., Fla. (Orlando)	+ 27.3%	219,544	4,484 R	1,969 D
15	Williamson Co., Texas (Austin)	+ 27.2%	317,938	40,167 R	38,450 R
16	Hamilton Co., Ind. (Indianapolis)	+ 26.8%	231,760	51,499 R	38,370 R
17	Spencer Co., Ky. (Louisville)	+ 26.0%	14,822	2,846 R	1,596 R
18	Lyon Co., Nev. (Reno)	+ 25.3%	43,230	5,499 R	3,315 R
19	Fort Bend Co., Texas (Houston)	+ 24.9%	442,620	24,903 R	25,998 R
20	Stafford Co., Va. (Washington, D.C.)	+ 24.2%	114,781	11,292 R	8,135 R
21	Union Co., N.C. (Charlotte)	+ 24.1%	153,652	24,846 R	16,986 R
22	Lake Co., Fla. (Orlando)	+ 23.9%	260,788	26,168 R	13,439 R
23	St. Johns Co., Fla. (Jacksonville)	+ 23.8%	152,473	32,797 R	20,044 R
24	Spotsylvania Co., Va. (Washington, D.C.)	+ 23.7%	111,850	11,904 R	7,284 R
25	Placer Co., Calif. (Sacramento)	+ 23.6%	307,004	40,396 R	27,386 R
Aggregate Total			4,442,897	591,494 R	420,151 R

Source: U.S. Census Bureau for estimates of 2004 population and population growth from April 2000 to July 2004.

2004 Presidential Election Results from a Sampling of Counties, Cities and Towns

THE DEMOCRATIC BASE

MAJOR URBAN CENTERS

Cities comprise the cornerstone of the Democratic coalition, and in 2004 many trended more Democratic than ever. Across the Frost Belt and on the Pacific Coast, large urban counties frequently provided Democrats with their statewide margin of victory. In the South and Mountain West, Republicans made inroads in the urban counties. But where Democrats did win, it often gave the party a critical beach-head in Republican terrain. The following is a geographically diverse sampling of urban centers across the country listed according to the Democratic share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Frost Belt Urban Centers					
Detroit, Mich.*	6%	94%	+ 1%	0%	<i>Detroit more D than D.C.</i>
Washington, D.C.*	9%	89%	0%	+ 4%	<i>Dem. margin grows by 40,000 votes from '00</i>
Baltimore, Md.*	17%	82%	+ 3%	- 1%	
Chicago, Ill.	18%	81%	+ 1%	+ 1%	<i>Dem. margin up 50,000</i>
Philadelphia, Pa.	19%	80%	+ 1%	0%	<i>Reps. flee this city, as others</i>
St. Louis, Mo.*	19%	80%	- 1%	+ 3%	
Boston, Mass.	21%	77%	+ 2%	+ 6%	<i>Dem. share up in Kerry's home town</i>
New York City, N.Y.	24%	75%	+ 6%	- 3%	<i>Reps. gain a bit in prime site of 9/11 attacks</i>
Cuyahoga Co. (Cleveland), Ohio	33%	67%	- 1%	+ 4%	<i>Dem. margin grows by 60,000</i>
Milwaukee Co., Wis.	37%	62%	0%	+ 4%	
Hennepin Co. (Minneapolis), Minn.	39%	59%	0%	+ 6%	<i>Dem. margin up nearly 50,000</i>
Allegheny Co. (Pittsburgh), Pa.	42%	57%	+ 2%	+ 1%	<i>Dems. losing some ground in western PA</i>
Erie Co. (Buffalo), N.Y.	41%	56%	+ 4%	0%	
Franklin Co. (Columbus), Ohio	45%	54%	- 3%	+ 6%	<i>once Rep., trending Dem. of late</i>
Marion Co. (Indianapolis), Ind.	49%	51%	- 1%	+ 3%	<i>switched to Dems. in '04</i>
Southern Urban Centers					
Orleans Parish (New Orleans), La.*	22%	77%	0%	+ 2%	
Fulton Co. (Atlanta), Ga.	40%	59%	0%	+ 2%	
Hinds Co. (Jackson), Miss.*	40%	59%	- 3%	+ 6%	<i>trending Dem. as black population grows</i>
Shelby Co. (Memphis), Tenn.	42%	58%	0%	+ 1%	
Pulaski Co. (Little Rock), Ark.	44%	55%	0%	+ 1%	<i>Clinton's home base stays in Dem. column</i>
Davidson Co. (Nashville), Tenn.	45%	55%	+ 4%	- 3%	<i>Dems. lose some ground without Gore on ballot</i>
Miami-Dade Co. (Miami), Fla.#	47%	53%	0%	0%	<i>tipped Dem. in recent years</i>
Mecklenburg Co. (Charlotte), N.C.	48%	52%	- 3%	+ 3%	<i>switched to Dems. in '04</i>
Jefferson Co. (Louisville), Ky.	49%	50%	+ 1%	+ 1%	
Orange Co. (Orlando), Fla.	50%	50%	+ 2%	0%	<i>a former Rep. stronghold now even-stein</i>
Dallas Co., Texas	50%	49%	- 2%	+ 4%	<i>Dems. gain some ground here</i>
Jefferson Co. (Birmingham), Ala.	54%	45%	+ 4%	- 2%	
Harris Co. (Houston), Texas	55%	45%	+ 1%	+ 2%	

The Democratic Base

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
Bexar County (San Antonio), Texas#	55%	44%	+ 3%	- 1%	
Oklahoma Co. (Oklahoma City), Okla.	64%	36%	+ 2%	- 1%	<i>growing more Rep.</i>
Western Urban Centers					
San Francisco, Calif.	15%	83%	- 1%	+ 8%	<i>apparently Reps. still haven't reached bottom</i>
Alameda Co. (Oakland), Calif.	23%	75%	- 1%	+ 6%	<i>Dem. trend in Bay Area continues</i>
Multnomah Co. (Portland), Ore.	27%	72%	- 1%	+ 8%	<i>Dem. margin exceeds 160,000 votes</i>
Denver, Colo.	29%	70%	- 2%	+ 8%	<i>Dem. margin approaches 100,000</i>
King Co. (Seattle), Wash.	34%	65%	- 1%	+ 5%	<i>Dem. margin almost 280,000 votes</i>
Los Angeles Co., Calif.	36%	63%	+ 3%	0%	<i>Dem. margin exceeds 800,000 votes</i>
Pima Co. (Tucson), Ariz.	47%	53%	+ 3%	+ 1%	
Clark Co. (Las Vegas), Nev.	47%	52%	+ 2%	0%	<i>over 160,000 more votes cast here than in '00</i>
Bernalillo Co. (Albuquerque), N.M.	47%	52%	+ 1%	+ 3%	<i>casts one-third of all NM ballots</i>
Honolulu Co, Hawaii	48%	51%	+ 9%	- 3%	<i>Rep. upsurge here one reason Hawaii tighter in '04</i>
San Diego Co., Calif.	53%	46%	+ 3%	+ 1%	<i>Reps. mounting a comeback in much of Southern Calif.</i>
Maricopa Co. (Phoenix), Ariz.	57%	42%	+ 4%	- 1%	<i>Reps. gaining ground in this fast-growing corner of Sun Belt</i>
Salt Lake Co. (Salt Lake City), Utah	60%	38%	+ 4%	+ 3%	<i>no Dem. trend here</i>

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates counties or cities with a black majority. A pound sign (#) indicates counties with an Hispanic majority; in both cases based on the 2000 Census.

MINORITIES

Minority groups - African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans - remain critical parts of the Democratic coalition, with African-Americans arguably the party's most loyal constituency. Bush, though, made inroads among all three groups in 2004, posting his most consistent gains among Hispanics. Admittedly, counties are not as accurate as exit polls in showing demographic trends in voting, since no county is comprised totally of one racial or ethnic group. Still, the sampling below paints a general picture of the voting proclivities of these three groups, with the counties listed according to the Democratic share of the total vote in last fall's election. Minority population figures are based on the 2000 Census, which showed that no county in the country yet had an Asian majority.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
African-American Majority					
Macon Co. (Tuskegee), Ala.	17%	83%	+ 4%	- 4%	<i>85% African American - 2nd highest share in nation</i>
Jefferson Co., Miss.	18%	81%	+ 1%	0%	<i>87% African American - highest percentage in nation</i>
Petersburg, Va.	19%	81%	0%	+ 2%	<i>79% African American - highest in Va.</i>
Hancock Co., Ga.	23%	77%	+ 2%	- 2%	<i>78 % African American - highest in Ga.</i>
Allendale Co., S.C.	27%	71%	- 2%	+ 1%	<i>71% African American - highest in S.C.</i>
Gadsden Co., Fla.	30%	70%	- 3%	+ 4%	<i>57% African American - highest in Fla.</i>
Phillips Co., Ark.	36%	64%	+ 2%	- 1%	<i>59% African American - highest in Ark.</i>
Bertie Co., N.C.	38%	62%	+ 3%	- 3%	<i>62% African American - highest in N.C.</i>
Washington Co. (Greenville), Miss.	39%	59%	- 1%	+ 2%	<i>65% African American - in heart of Miss. Delta</i>
East Carroll, La.	40%	58%	+ 1%	+ 1%	<i>67% African American - ties for highest in La.</i>

The Democratic Base

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
Hispanic Majority					
Starr Co., Texas	26%	74%	+ 4%	- 3%	98% Hispanic - highest percentage in nation
Costilla Co., Colo.	32%	67%	+ 2%	+ 3%	68% Hispanic - highest in Colo.
Mora Co., N.M.	33%	66%	+ 2%	0%	82% Hispanic - highest in N.M.
Rio Arriba Co., N.M.	34%	65%	+ 5%	- 3%	73% Hispanic
Santa Cruz, Ariz.	40%	59%	+ 2%	0%	81% Hispanic - highest in Ariz.
Webb Co. (Laredo), Texas#	43%	57%	+ 1%	- 1%	94% Hispanic - along Mexican border
El Paso Co., Texas#	43%	56%	+ 4%	- 2%	78% Hispanic - highest proportion for urban center its size
Imperial Co., Calif.	46%	52%	+ 3%	- 1%	72% Hispanic - highest in Calif.
Dona Ana (Las Cruces), N.M.#	48%	51%	+ 2%	0%	63% Hispanic - second most populous county in N.M.

Native American Majority					
Shannon Co., S.D.	13%	85%	0%	- 1%	94% Native American - highest percentage in nation
Menominee Co., Wis.	17%	83%	- 1%	+ 6%	87% Native American - highest in Wis.
Sioux Co., N.D.	28%	71%	+ 2%	+ 1%	85% Native American - highest in N.D.
Apache Co., Ariz.	35%	65%	+ 4%	- 2%	77% Native American - highest in Ariz.
McKinley Co., N.M.	36%	63%	+ 4%	- 1%	75% Native American - highest in N.M.
Big Horn Co., Mont.	47%	51%	+ 7%	- 5%	60% Native American - site of legendary battle
Thurston Co., Neb.	48%	51%	- 2%	+ 6%	52% Native American - highest in Neb.
San Juan Co., Utah	60%	39%	+ 3%	0%	56% Native American - highest in Utah

Note: A pound sign (#) indicates Hispanic-majority counties with significant urban centers.

ACADEMIC INFLUENCE

Over the last generation, academic communities have anchored the most liberal part of the Democratic coalition, particularly in places with a prestigious private college or a public university with a strong liberal arts emphasis. Kerry scored gains that reached double digits percentagewise in a number of these academic communities as Democrats effectively consolidated the 2000 Nader vote that had exceeded 10% in many of these places. Bush ran better in counties with state universities, many of which began with an agricultural emphasis. The sampling of counties below are listed according to the Democratic share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Private Colleges					
Cambridge, Mass. (Harvard, M.I.T.)	13%	85%	0%	+ 13%	Nader drew 14% in '00 ... not a factor this year
Northampton, Mass. (Smith)	18%	80%	- 1%	+ 18%	Nader 19% last time
Hanover, N.H. (Dartmouth)	22%	77%	- 8%	+ 13%	
Tompkins Co., N.Y. (Cornell)	33%	64%	0%	+ 10%	
Rice Co., Minn. (Carleton, St. Olaf)	45%	53%	+ 3%	+ 3%	
Public Universities					
Amherst, Mass. (U. of Massachusetts)+	13%	84%	- 1%	+ 24%	Nader drew 25% in '00, less than 1% in '04
Mansfield, Conn. (U. of Connecticut)	25%	72%	+ 1%	+ 9%	
Charlottesville, Va. (U. of Virginia)	27%	72%	- 4%	+ 13%	liberal beachhead in the Old Dominion

The Democratic Base

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
Durham, N.H. (U. of New Hampshire)	29%	70%	0%	+ 8%	
Boulder Co., Colo. (U. of Colorado)	32%	66%	- 4%	+ 16%	
Dane Co., Wis. (U. of Wisconsin)	33%	66%	0%	+ 5%	
Johnson Co., Iowa (U. of Iowa)	35%	64%	+ 1%	+ 5%	<i>Madison (Wis.) of the Plains?</i>
Washtenaw Co., Mich. (U. of Michigan)	36%	64%	- 1%	+ 4%	
Clarke Co., Ga. (U. of Georgia)	40%	58%	- 1%	+ 6%	
Lane Co., Ore. (U. of Oregon)	40%	58%	0%	+ 6%	
Douglas Co., Kan. (U. of Kansas)	41%	57%	- 2%	+ 11%	<i>one of lone Dem. beachheads these days in land of Aahs</i>
Travis Co., Texas (U. of Texas)	42%	56%	- 5%	+ 14%	<i>Bush's home while governor but switched to Dems. in '04</i>
Alachua Co., Fla. (U. of Florida)	43%	56%	+ 3%	+ 1%	
Monroe Co., Ind. (Indiana U.)	45%	53%	- 2%	+ 10%	<i>switched to Dems. in '04</i>
Missoula Co., Mont. (U. of Montana)	46%	51%	0%	+ 14%	<i>switched to Dems. in '04 after giving Nader 15% in '00</i>
Champaign Co., Ill. (U. of Illinois)	48%	50%	+ 2%	+ 3%	
Boone Co., Mo. (U. of Missouri)	50%	50%	+ 2%	+ 1%	<i>switched to Reps. in '04</i>
Centre Co., Pa. (Penn State U.)	52%	48%	- 1%	+ 5%	<i>legendary Joe Paterno a longtime friend of Bush family</i>
Whitman Co., Wash. (Washington State)	52%	46%	- 3%	+ 6%	
Albany Co., Wyo. (U. of Wyoming)	54%	43%	- 1%	+ 7%	
Oktibbeha Co., Miss. (Miss. State)	56%	43%	+ 2%	0%	
Lee Co., Ala. (Auburn)	63%	36%	+ 4%	- 2%	
Payne Co., Okla. (Oklahoma State)	66%	34%	+ 5%	- 3%	
Brazos Co., Texas (Texas A & M)	69%	30%	- 1%	+ 3%	

Note: A plus sign (+) indicates that Amherst, Mass., is also the home of Amherst College and Hampshire College.

LIBERAL RESORT/ARTIST COLONIES

Liberal resorts and artist colonies vote much like academic communities. They tended to give Nader a disproportionately large share of the vote in 2000, then consolidated that vote behind Kerry in 2004 to produce Democratic percentages that were often much loftier than four years earlier. The sampling of counties below is arranged according to the Democratic share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
San Miguel Co. (Telluride), Colo.	27%	72%	-5%	+23%	<i>Residents vote Dem. while waiting for new films</i>
Santa Fe Co., N.M.	28%	71%	0%	+6%	<i>Nader took 7% in '00</i>
Pitkin Co. (Aspen), Colo.	30%	68%	-3%	+15%	<i>Nader pulled 13% in '00</i>
Mendocino Co., Calif.	34%	64%	-2%	+15%	<i>Nader drew 15% in '00</i>
Blaine Co. (Sun Valley), Idaho	40%	59%	+5%	+ 12%	<i>lone Idaho county Dems. carry these days</i>
Teton Co. (Jackson), Wyo.	45%	53%	-7%	+14%	<i>switched to Dems. in '04 - lone Wyo. county to vote Dem.</i>
Monroe Co. (Key West), Fla.	49%	50%	+2%	+1%	<i>last Rep. it backed was Bush Sr. in '88</i>

2004 Presidential Election Results from a Sampling of Counties, Cities and Towns

THE REPUBLICAN BASE

RURAL AND SMALL-TOWN AMERICA

Just as the cities are the basic building block for the Democrats, rural and small-town America is the starting point for Republicans in fashioning presidential election victories. Republicans swept roughly 80% of the nation's counties in 2004, a total that is not particularly unusual since the GOP has won more counties than the Democrats in every presidential election since 1980, usually many more. But the landslide majorities that President Bush posted in 2004 in hundreds and hundreds of these rural counties helped provide him with the votes needed to win a second term. "Mountain Republican" counties are broken out into a separate category, since in many cases they are historically Republican counties that have been in the GOP column long before it was fashionable in their states to vote Republican. Following is a geographically diverse sampling of rural counties listed in each category according to the Republican share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Rural Heartland					
Madison Co., Idaho	92%	7%	+ 3%	- 2%	<i>becoming more Rep., if that's possible</i>
Arthur Co., Neb.	90%	9%	+ 4%	- 1%	<i>4th straight election Dems. fail to draw 10% of the vote</i>
Fulton Co., Pa.	76%	24%	+ 5%	- 4%	<i>part of Pa.'s Republican 'T'</i>
Neshoba Co., Miss.	75%	25%	+ 4%	- 3%	<i>even national politicians appear at Neshoba's county fair</i>
Huntington Co., Ind.	74%	25%	+ 5%	- 3%	<i>Dan Quayle's roots here</i>
Cape Girardeau Co., Mo.	69%	31%	+ 3%	- 1%	<i>megadittos ... Rush Limbaugh from here</i>
Winn Parish, La.	67%	32%	+ 4%	- 3%	<i>Huey Long's home parish going more and more Rep.</i>
Green Lake Co., Wis.	64%	35%	+ 4%	- 1%	<i>near Ripon, one of places that claims to be birthplace of GOP</i>
Davison Co. (Mitchell), S.D.	62%	36%	+ 3%	- 3%	<i>home of the Corn Palace and George McGovern</i>
Lee Co. (Dixon), Ill.	59%	40%	+ 3%	- 1%	<i>part of Midwest heartland where Reagan raised</i>
Marion Co., Ohio	59%	41%	+ 4%	- 1%	<i>home of Warren Harding</i>
Madison Co., Iowa	57%	42%	+ 4%	- 2%	<i>trending back to Reps. after fling with Dems.</i>
Mountain Republican (Appalachian and Ozark)					
Jackson Co., Ky.	84%	15%	0%	+ 1%	<i>gave Reps. their highest vote share in Ky. in '04</i>
Grant Co., W.Va.	81%	19%	+ 2%	- 1%	
Winston Co., Ala.	78%	22%	+ 9%	- 7%	<i>only Ala. county to back Landon over FDR in '36</i>
Rockingham Co., Va.	74%	25%	+ 2%	+ 1%	
Garrett Co., Md.	73%	26%	+ 2%	- 1%	<i>posted top Rep. percentage in Md. in both '00 and '04</i>
Mitchell Co., N.C.	73%	27%	- 3%	+ 3%	<i>was top county in NC for Bush Sr. in '88 and '92</i>
Johnson Co., Tenn.	72%	28%	+ 5%	- 4%	
Fannin Co., Ga.	71%	28%	+ 6%	- 4%	<i>only county in Ga. to vote against FDR all 4 times he ran</i>
Benton Co., Ark.	68%	31%	+ 4%	- 2%	<i>voted against Clinton in both '92 and '96</i>
Special Places in Small-Town America (associated with recent presidential, vice-presidential nominees)					
Midland Co., Texas	82%	18%	+ 2%	- 1%	<i>Rep. stronghold even before W</i>
Russell Co., Kan.	76%	23%	+ 6%	- 2%	<i>birthplace of Bob Dole</i>
Oconee Co., S.C.	68%	31%	+ 3%	- 2%	<i>includes John Edwards' birthplace of Seneca</i>
Natrona Co. (Casper), Wyo.	67%	31%	+ 2%	0%	<i>Cheneys from here</i>
Hempstead Co. (Hope), Ark.	48%	51%	+ 3%	- 3%	<i>not so Dem. without Clinton on ballot</i>
Smith Co. (Carthage), Tenn.	48%	52%	+ 15%	- 15%	<i>Gore family's home base</i>

The Republican Base

HIGH-GROWTH EXURBS

The good news for Republicans is that they are the party of choice in the fast-growing exurbs, those newer 'burbs that are often separated by at least one county from a central city. A cause for pause, however, is that as these exurbs tend to fill in and become more racially diverse, the initial Republican advantage can tend to be muted. Following is a geographically diverse sampling of exurban counties listed according to the Republican share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Shelby Co., Ala.	80%	19%	+ 4%	- 2%	one of top Rep. counties in Ala.
Rockwall Co., Texas	79%	21%	+ 1%	0%	35% pop. growth since '00 as it draws spillover from Dallas
St. Tammany Parish, La.	75%	25%	+ 4%	- 3%	been in Rep. column from '72 on
Hamilton Co., Ind	74%	25%	0%	+ 2%	Reps. won by over 50,000 votes in '04, biggest margin in state
De Soto Co., Miss.	72%	27%	+ 1%	0%	across the line from Memphis
Warren Co., Ohio	72%	28%	+ 2%	0%	strong Rep. showing but Bush Sr. took 73% in '88
Douglas Co., Colo.	67%	33%	+ 2%	+ 1%	35% pop. growth since '00 - third highest county in nation
Gwinnett Co., Ga.	66%	34%	+ 2%	+ 1%	pop. growth of nearly 20% since '00
Delaware Co., Ohio	66%	34%	0%	+ 3%	Reps. expand number of GOP votes from '00 by nearly 50%
Berkeley Co., W.V.	63%	36%	+ 4%	- 2%	18% pop. growth since '00 - highest in Northeast
Sherburne Co., Minn.	61%	38%	+ 6%	- 1%	
McHenry Co., Ill.	60%	39%	+ 1%	+ 1%	Rep. trend has slowed ... Bush Sr. won 70% here in '88
Frederick Co., Md.	60%	39%	+ 2%	0%	last Dem. to win county was LBJ
St. Charles Co., Mo.	59%	41%	+ 3%	- 1%	same here
Pike Co., Pa.	58%	40%	+ 4%	- 2%	17% pop. growth since '00 but a long commute to NYC
Dallas Co., Iowa	58%	42%	+ 4%	- 3%	22% pop. growth since '00 ... voted Dem. from '84 through '96
Pinal Co., Ariz.	57%	42%	+ 9%	- 5%	fastest-growing county in Ariz. since '00
Loudoun Co., Va.	56%	44%	0%	+ 3%	41% pop. growth since '00 - highest in nation
Osceola Co., Fla.	53%	47%	+ 5%	- 4%	drawing overflow from Orlando ... switched to Reps. in '04

MILITARY/ AEROSPACE INFLUENCE

Long before 9/11, the latest war with Iraq, and President Bush's patriotic reelection campaign, most of the nation's counties strongly influenced by a military presence or aerospace center were reliable sources of Republican votes. If anything, GOP margins increased in many of these locales in 2004. Following is a geographically diverse sampling of counties strongly influenced by a military/aerospace presence. They are listed according to the Republican share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
El Paso Co. (Colorado Springs), Colo.	67%	32%	+ 3%	+ 1%	Reps. win big in evangelical, military stronghold
Escambia Co. (Pensacola), Fla.	65%	34%	+ 3%	- 1%	borders Ala., votes like Deep South
Madison Co. (Huntsville), Ala.	59%	40%	+ 4%	+ 2%	
Virginia Beach, Va.	59%	40%	+ 3%	- 1%	Dems. last carried in '64
Brevard Co. (Cape Canaveral), Fla.	58%	42%	+ 5%	- 3%	hasn't voted Dem. for president since '76
Cumberland Co. (Fort Bragg), N.C.	52%	48%	+ 2%	- 2%	switched to Reps. in '04
Groton, Conn.	44%	54%	+ 4%	+ 1%	

The Republican Base

HIGH ELDERLY POPULATION

Republicans tend to run well in counties with large clusters of elderly voters (age 65 and up), whether living in Sun Belt retirement communities or their homes in the rural heartland. Following is a sampling of counties with an elderly population among the top 40 in the country (according to the 2000 Census), as measured as a percentage of the county population. The counties are arranged according to the Republican share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Llano Co., Texas	76%	24%	+ 3%	- 1%	31% of county age 65 and up - highest in Sun Belt outside Fla. and Hawaii
McPherson Co., S.D.	75%	23%	- 1%	+ 3%	30% age 65 and up - in national top 10
McIntosh Co., N.D.	73%	25%	0%	+ 4%	34% age 65 and up - highest outside Fla.
La Paz Co., Ariz.	63%	37%	+ 6%	- 3%	26% age 65 and up - highest in Ariz.
Baxter Co., Ark.	60%	39%	+ 3%	- 1%	27% age 65 and up - highest in Ark.
Indian River Co., Fla.	60%	39%	+ 2%	- 1%	29% age 65 and up - highest on Atlantic coast
Lancaster Co., Va.	60%	40%	- 3%	+ 4%	on Chesapeake Bay - 29% age 65 or older, tops in Va.
Harding Co., N.M.	59%	40%	- 3%	+ 4%	28% age 65 and up - highest in N.M.
Charlotte Co., Fla.	56%	43%	+ 3%	- 1%	35% age 65 and up - highest in country
Sarasota Co., Fla.	54%	45%	+ 2%	0%	32% age 65 and up - Gulf Coast cornerstone of modern Fla. GOP

VENUES OF PROTEST

The two major independent/third party candidacies of the last half century - that of George Wallace in 1968 and Ross Perot in 1992 - had almost opposite impacts on the electorate. Wallace's Southern-based candidacy proved to be a transition stop for many white Democrats on their way to the Republican Party. Perot's independent candidacy 24 years later, however, does not appear to have had such a dramatic impact. Democrats have made some inroads in Perot strongholds. But many of his strongest counties were Republican before Perot ran and returned to their GOP moorings after Perot left the scene. Following are samplings of counties arranged in two sets - one, that Wallace dominated in 1968; the other, that Perot carried in 1992. In each case, counties are listed according to the Republican share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Perot Pockets					
Wabaunsee Co., Kan.	70%	28%	+ 6%	- 2%	Perot win here in '92 an interlude in Rep. dominance
Grayson Co., Texas	69%	30%	+ 5%	- 4%	one of handful of Texas counties that Perot won in '92
Storey Co., Nev.	58%	40%	+ 1%	+ 3%	lone Nev. county to vote for Perot in '92
Trinity Co., Calif.	55%	43%	- 3%	+ 9%	only Calif. county to back Perot in '92
Somerset Co., Maine	48%	50%	+ 3%	+ 2%	in Dem. column since Perot carried in '92
San Juan Co., Colo.	44%	52%	- 4%	+ 18%	40% for Perot in '92 ... switched to Dems. in '04
Wallace Country					
Geneva Co., Ala.	79%	20%	+ 10%	- 9%	92% for Wallace in '68 - tops in his home state
George Co., Miss.	78%	22%	+ 7%	- 6%	Wallace 91% in '68 - tops in Miss.
Holmes Co., Fla.	77%	22%	+ 10%	- 8%	Wallace 87% in '68 - tops in Fla.
Livingston Parish, La.	77%	22%	+ 9%	- 8%	Wallace 75% in '68 - tops in La.
Miller Co., Ga.	69%	30%	+ 7%	- 6%	Wallace 82% in '68 - tops in Ga.
Hickman Co., Ky.	60%	40%	+ 5%	- 5%	for Wallace in '68, but for Clinton twice before trending Rep.
Cleveland Co., Ark.	58%	42%	+ 5%	- 3%	71% for Wallace in '68 - tops in Ark.

2004 Presidential Election Results from a Sampling of Counties, Cities and Towns

UP FOR GRABS

MAJOR SUBURBAN COUNTIES

When Republicans dominated presidential voting in much of the 1970s and 1980s, their hegemony in the nation's suburbs was a key factor in their success. Yet while they still have the upper hand in much of Sun Belt suburbia, the balance of power has shifted to the Democrats in many of the vote-rich suburban counties of the Frost Belt. Following is a geographically diverse sampling of suburban counties across the country, listed according to the Democratic share of the total vote in the Frost Belt and according to the Republican share in the Sun Belt.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Frost Belt Suburbs					
Prince George's Co., Md.	17%	82%	- 1%	+ 3%	with changing racial mix, votes like adjoining DC
Montgomery Co., Md.	33%	66%	- 1%	+ 4%	used to be competitive, but Reps. haven't carried since '84
Westchester Co., N.Y.	40%	58%	+ 3%	- 1%	another Rep. suburb that slipped to Dems. during Clinton years
Delaware Co., Pa.	42%	57%	0%	+ 3%	one of the major Philly suburbs that used to be solidly GOP
Middlesex Co., N.J.	43%	56%	+ 7%	- 4%	9/11 boosted Reps. throughout NYC area
Montgomery Co., Pa.	44%	56%	0%	+ 2%	once the cornerstone of the Pa. GOP
St. Louis Co., Mo.	45%	54%	- 1%	+ 3%	Dems. traded strength in rural Mo. for beachhead in 'burbs
Baltimore Co., Md.	47%	52%	+ 3%	- 1%	Dems. have won since '92
Bergen Co., N.J.	47%	52%	+ 6%	- 3%	once a major component of GOP victories in NJ
Nassau Co., N.Y.	47%	52%	+ 8%	- 6%	Reps. making comeback in NY 'burbs post-9/11, especially on Long Island
Fairfield Co. Conn.	47%	51%	+ 4%	- 1%	was reliably Rep. until Clinton
Bucks Co., Pa.	48%	51%	+ 2%	+ 1%	another Philly 'burb Reps. can no longer rely on
Suffolk Co., N.Y.	49%	50%	+ 7%	- 4%	Bush Sr. won 61% here in '88
Oakland Co., Mich.	49%	50%	+ 1%	+ 1%	swung narrowly to Dems of late
Macomb Co., Mich.	50%	49%	+ 3%	- 1%	quintessential home of Reagan Dems... Rep. pick up in '04
Lake Co., Ill.	51%	49%	+ 1%	+ 1%	becoming a swing county ... Clinton carried in '96
Du Page Co., Ill	54%	45%	- 1%	+ 3%	still Rep. but tightening
Sun Belt Suburbs					
Rankin Co., Miss.	79%	20%	- 1%	+ 1%	just outside Jackson... turned Rep. in the '60s
Lexington Co., S.C.	72%	27%	+ 2%	0%	just outside Columbia.. started voting GOP in '52
Collin Co., Texas	71%	28%	- 2%	+ 4%	just outside Dallas
Cobb Co., Ga.	62%	37%	+ 2%	0%	Rep. county was Newt Gingrich's base
Jefferson Parish, La.	62%	38%	+ 3%	- 2%	almost as populous now as nearby New Orleans
Orange Co., Calif.	60%	39%	+ 4%	- 1%	GOP reascendant in early home of Sun Belt Republicanism
Riverside Co., Calif.	58%	41%	+ 6%	- 4%	voted for Clinton in '92
San Bernardino Co., Calif.	55%	44%	+ 7%	- 4%	voted for Clinton in both '92 and '96
Jefferson Co., Colo.	52%	47%	+ 1%	+ 4%	Dems. competitive of late
Arapahoe Co., Colo.	51%	48%	0%	+ 4%	same here
Washington Co., Ore.	46%	52%	0%	+ 4%	4th straight election in Dem. column
Fairfax Co., Va.	46%	53%	- 3%	+ 6%	switched to Dems. in '04 ... first time with Dems. since '64
Contra Costa Co., Calif.	37%	62%	- 1%	+ 4%	
De Kalb Co., Ga.	27%	73%	0%	+ 2%	turning very Dem. as pop. becomes more African American

THE OLD AND NEW ECONOMY

Places with heavy industry used to be a cornerstone of the Democratic coalition. But those days are fading, in many cases like the industries themselves. Democrats have been losing their grip in blue-collar strongholds. Some have already tipped to the Republicans. Others are poised to do so. Democrats have done well of late, however, in populous high-tech areas, such as California's Silicon Valley and North Carolina's Research Triangle. Following is a geographically diverse sampling of counties in both categories, listed according to the Democratic share of the total vote in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Heavy Industry Heritage					
Fall River, Mass.	23%	76%	+ 4%	0%	<i>Bush makes blue-collar inroads in Kerry's home state</i>
Lowell, Mass.	36%	63%	+ 8%	- 2%	<i>one of many old New England mill towns still in Dem. column</i>
Mahoning Co. (Youngstown), Ohio	37%	63%	+ 1%	+ 2%	<i>eastern anchor of Ohio's "Rust Belt"</i>
Lewiston, Maine	37%	62%	+ 3%	+ 1%	
Genesee Co. (Flint), Mich.	39%	60%	+ 4%	- 3%	<i>Michael Moore country but less anti-Bush in '04 than '00</i>
Silver Bow Co. (Butte), Mont.	40%	58%	+ 2%	+ 4%	<i>Reagan couldn't even win here</i>
Rock Island Co., Ill.	42%	57%	+ 4%	- 1%	<i>Reps. making inroads</i>
Wapello Co. (Ottumwa), Iowa	44%	55%	+ 3%	- 1%	<i>gave Dukakis 65%</i>
Pueblo Co., Colo.	46%	53%	+ 4%	- 1%	<i>Dems. steadily losing ground</i>
Beaver Co. (Aliquippa), Pa.	48%	51%	+ 4%	- 2%	<i>Dems. losing edge in "Deer Hunter" country</i>
Jefferson Co. (Beaumont), Texas	48%	51%	+ 2%	- 1%	
Waterbury, Conn.	49%	49%	+ 10%	- 7%	<i>JFK finished campaign here in '60</i>
St. Joseph (South Bend), Ind.	51%	49%	+ 2%	0%	<i>switched to Reps in '04 ... Notre Dame here</i>
Cambria Co. (Johnstown), Pa.	51%	49%	+ 4%	- 2%	<i>switched to Reps. in '04 ... Dukakis pulled 60% in '88</i>
Calcasieu Parish (Lake Charles), La.	58%	41%	+ 6%	- 5%	<i>once Dem., Rep. in last two elections</i>
High-Tech Areas					
Orange Co. (Research Triangle), N.C.	32%	67%	- 4%	+ 4%	<i>liberal beachhead becoming even more Dem.</i>
Santa Clara Co. (Silicon Valley), Calif.	35%	64%	0%	+ 3%	<i>hasn't backed a Rep. since Reagan</i>
Los Alamos, N.M.	52%	47%	- 3%	+ 6%	<i>not in Dem. column since '64</i>
Anderson Co. (Oak Ridge), Tenn.	58%	41%	+ 7%	- 6%	

TEST MARKETS

Election after election, the vote is close in the fabled test markets of America. Stark County, Ohio, is included here because it tends to be a bellwether county in a bellwether state, albeit not in 2004.

	2004 Presidential Vote		Change, 2000-04		Comments
	Bush	Kerry	Reps.	Dems.	
NATIONAL	51%	48%	+ 3%	0%	
Peoria Co., Ill.	50%	50%	+ 2%	- 1%	<i>closely divided...but Dems. have carried 4 straight times</i>
Montgomery Co. (Dayton), Ohio	49%	51%	+ 2%	+ 1%	<i>same here</i>
Stark Co. (Canton), Ohio	49%	51%	0%	+ 4%	<i>lone Ohio county to switch to Dems. in '04</i>

What's Up in 2006

A total of 36 governorships and 33 Senate seats will be up in 2006, plus all 435 House seats. Two other governorships will be decided this fall, in New Jersey and Virginia. The incumbents in those states are indicated with a pound sign (#). States are listed below from the most Republican to the most Democratic in last fall's presidential voting. Republican gubernatorial and Senate incumbents are indicated in **BOLD**; Democratic incumbents in regular type. Next to the names of the senators whose seats are up in 2006 are their votes earlier this year on the two most controversial Bush Cabinet nominations - Condoleezza Rice as secretary of state and Alberto Gonzales as attorney general. While there was no Republican opposition to either nomination, a total of 12 Democratic senators voted against Rice and 35 against Gonzales. Independent James Jeffords of Vermont also opposed both nominations. A dash (-) indicates that a senator did not vote.

State	04 Presidential Vote	House Seats			Seats Up		Senate Confirmation Votes	
		Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	Governors	Senators	Rice (State)	Gonzalez (Atty. Gen.)
Utah	Bush by 46%	2	1			Orrin Hatch (R)	Yes	Yes
Wyoming	Bush by 40%	1			Dave Freudenthal (D)	Craig Thomas (R)	Yes	Yes
Idaho	Bush by 38%	2			Dirk Kempthorne (R)			
Nebraska	Bush by 33%	3			Dave Heineman (R)	Ben Nelson (D)	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Bush by 31%	4	1		Brad Henry (D)			
North Dakota	Bush by 27%		1			Kent Conrad (D)	Yes	-
Alabama	Bush by 26%	5	2		Bob Riley (R)			
Alaska	Bush by 26%	1			Frank Murkowski (R)			
Kansas	Bush by 25%	3	1		Kathleen Sebelius (D)			
Texas	Bush by 23%	21	11		Rick Perry (R)	Kay Bailey Hutchison (R)	Yes	Yes
Indiana	Bush by 21%	7	2			Richard Lugar (R)	Yes	Yes
South Dakota	Bush by 21%		1		Mike Rounds (R)			
Kentucky	Bush by 20%	5	1					
Mississippi	Bush by 19%	2	2			Trent Lott (R)	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Bush by 17%	7	6		Sonny Perdue (R)			
South Carolina	Bush by 17%	4	2		Mark Sanford (R)			
Louisiana	Bush by 15%	5	2					
Tennessee	Bush by 14%	4	5		Phil Bredesen (D)	Bill Frist (R)	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	Bush by 13%	1	2			Robert Byrd (D)	NO	NO
North Carolina	Bush by 12%	7	6					
Arizona	Bush by 10%	6	2		Jane Napolitano (D)	Jon Kyl (R)	Yes	Yes
Arkansas	Bush by 10%	1	3		Mike Huckabee (R)			
Montana	Bush by 9%	1				Conrad Burns (R)	-	-
Virginia	Bush by 8%	8	3		Mark Warner (D)#	George Allen (R)	Yes	Yes
Missouri	Bush by 7%	5	4			Jim Talent (R)	Yes	Yes
Colorado	Bush by 5%	4	3		Bill Owens (R)			
Florida	Bush by 5%	18	7		Jeb Bush (R)	Bill Nelson (D)	Yes	Yes
Nevada	Bush by 3%	2	1		Kenny Guinn (R)	John Ensign (R)	Yes	Yes
Ohio	Bush by 2%	12	6		Bob Taft (R)	Mike DeWine (R)	Yes	Yes
New Mexico	Bush by 0.8%	2	1		Bill Richardson (D)	Jeff Bingaman (D)	Yes	NO
Iowa	Bush by 0.7%	4	1		Tom Vilsack (D)			

State	04 Presidential Vote	House Seats			Seats Up		Senate Confirmation Votes	
		Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	Governors	Senators	Rice (State)	Gonzalez (Atty. Gen.)
Wisconsin	Kerry by 0.4%	4	4		James Doyle (D)	Herb Kohl (D)	Yes	NO
New Hampshire	Kerry by 1%	2			John Lynch (D)			
Michigan	Kerry by 3%	9	6		Jennifer Granholm (D)	Debbie Stabenow (D)	Yes	NO
Minnesota	Kerry by 3%	4	4		Tim Pawlenty (R)	Mark Dayton (D)	NO	NO
Pennsylvania	Kerry by 3%	12	7		Ed Rendell (D)	Rick Santorum (R)	Yes	Yes
Oregon	Kerry by 4%	1	4		Ted Kulongoski (D)			
New Jersey	Kerry by 7%	6	7		Richard Codey (D)#	Jon Corzine (D)	Yes	NO
Washington	Kerry by 7%	3	6			Maria Cantwell (D)	Yes	NO
Delaware	Kerry by 8%	1				Thomas Carper (D)	Yes	NO
Hawaii	Kerry by 9%		2		Linda Lingle (R)	Daniel Akaka (D)	NO	NO
Maine	Kerry by 9%		2		John Baldacci (D)	Olympia Snowe (R)	Yes	Yes
California	Kerry by 10%	20	33		Arnold Schwarzenegger (R)	Dianne Feinstein (D)	Yes	NO
Connecticut	Kerry by 10%	3	2		M. Jodi Rell (R)	Joe Lieberman (D)	Yes	Yes
Illinois	Kerry by 10%	9	10		Rod Blagojevich (D)			
Maryland	Kerry by 13%	2	6		Robert Ehrlich (R)	Paul Sarbanes (D)	Yes	NO
New York	Kerry by 18%	9	20		George Pataki (R)	Hillary Rodham Clinton (D)	Yes	NO
Vermont	Kerry by 20%			1	Jim Douglas (R)	James Jeffords (Ind.)	NO	NO
Rhode Island	Kerry by 21%		2		Donald Carcieri (R)	Lincoln Chafee (R)	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts	Kerry by 25%		10		Mitt Romney (R)	Edward Kennedy (D)	NO	NO
At Stake in 2006		232	202	1	36 Up (22 R, 14 D)	33 Up (15 R, 17 D, 1 Ind.)		

The Changing Composition of the 109th Congress

There is currently one vacancy in the House of Representatives, with the resignation of Rep. Rob Portman (R-Ohio 2) on April 29 to become U.S. trade representative in the Bush administration. Portman was routinely confirmed by the U.S. Senate on April 28; no roll call vote was taken. The Ohio 2nd is a staunchly Republican district that stretches east from Cincinnati along the Ohio River. Primaries will be held in the district June 14, with the special election to fill the vacancy scheduled for August 2.

Date and Event	House of Representatives				Senate		
	Reps.	Dems.	Ind.	Vac.	Reps.	Dems.	Ind.
2004 ELECTION	232	202	1		55	44	1
Jan. 1, 2005 - Rep. Robert Matsui (D-Calif. 5) dies of pneumonia complicated by a rare blood disorder.	232	201	1	1			
March 8, 2005 - Doris Matsui wins special election in the California 5th to succeed her late husband.	232	202	1				
April 29, 2005 - Rep. Rob Portman (R-Ohio 2) resigns to become U.S. trade representative.	231	202	1	1			
... AND THE GOVERNORSHIPS							
	Reps.				Dems.		
2004 ELECTION	28				22		
Jan. 20, 2005 - Gov. Mike Johanns (R-Neb.) resigns to become secretary of agriculture. Lt. Gov. Dave Heineman is sworn in Jan. 21 to succeed him.	28				22		