

History in the Making: The Presidential Election of 2008

Andrew Rudalevige

Dickinson College
Pennsylvania, USA



A Wild Ride...



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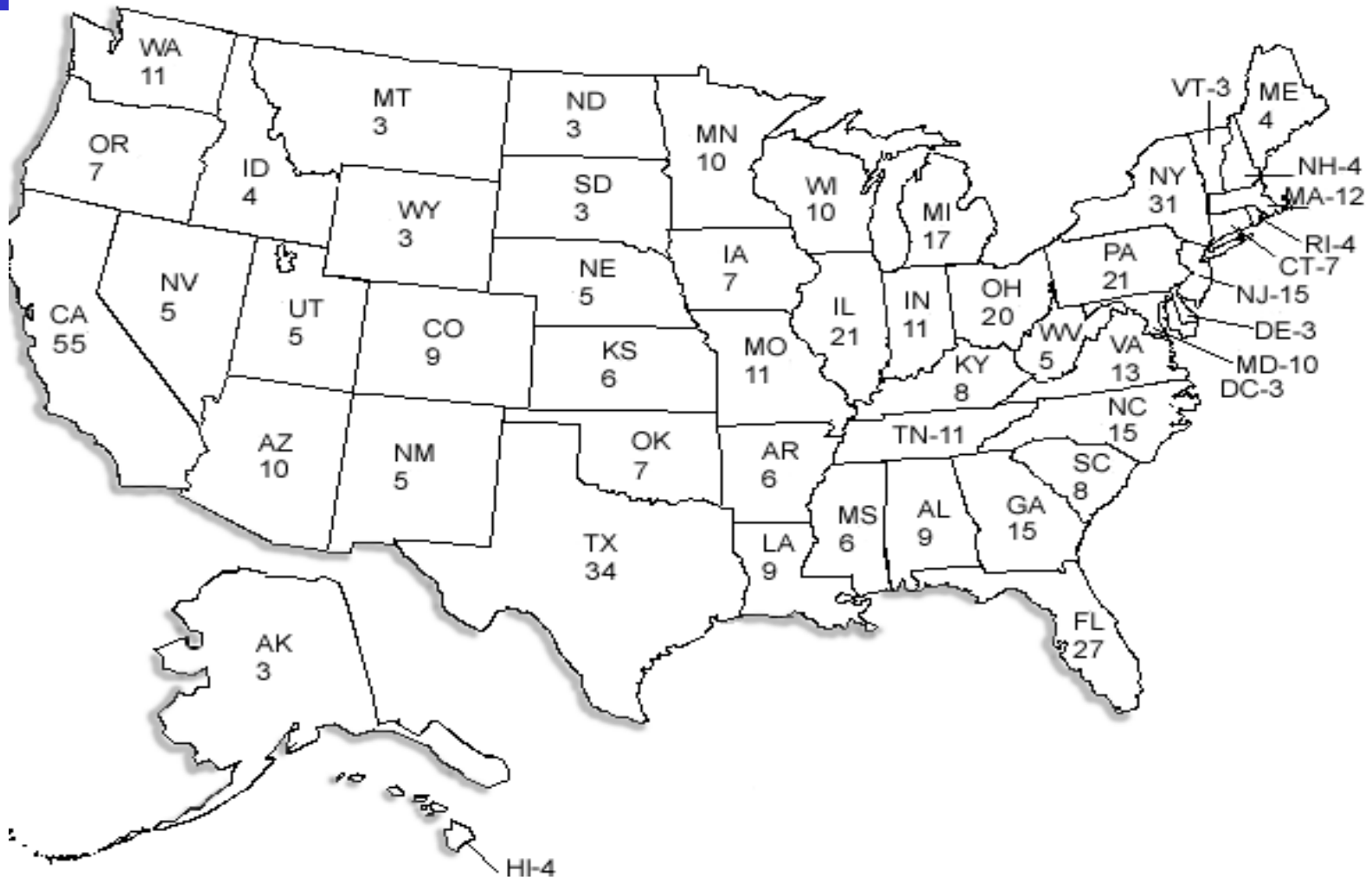
And then there were two...



- ...or maybe not...



...And the Map to Know: The Electoral College, 2008

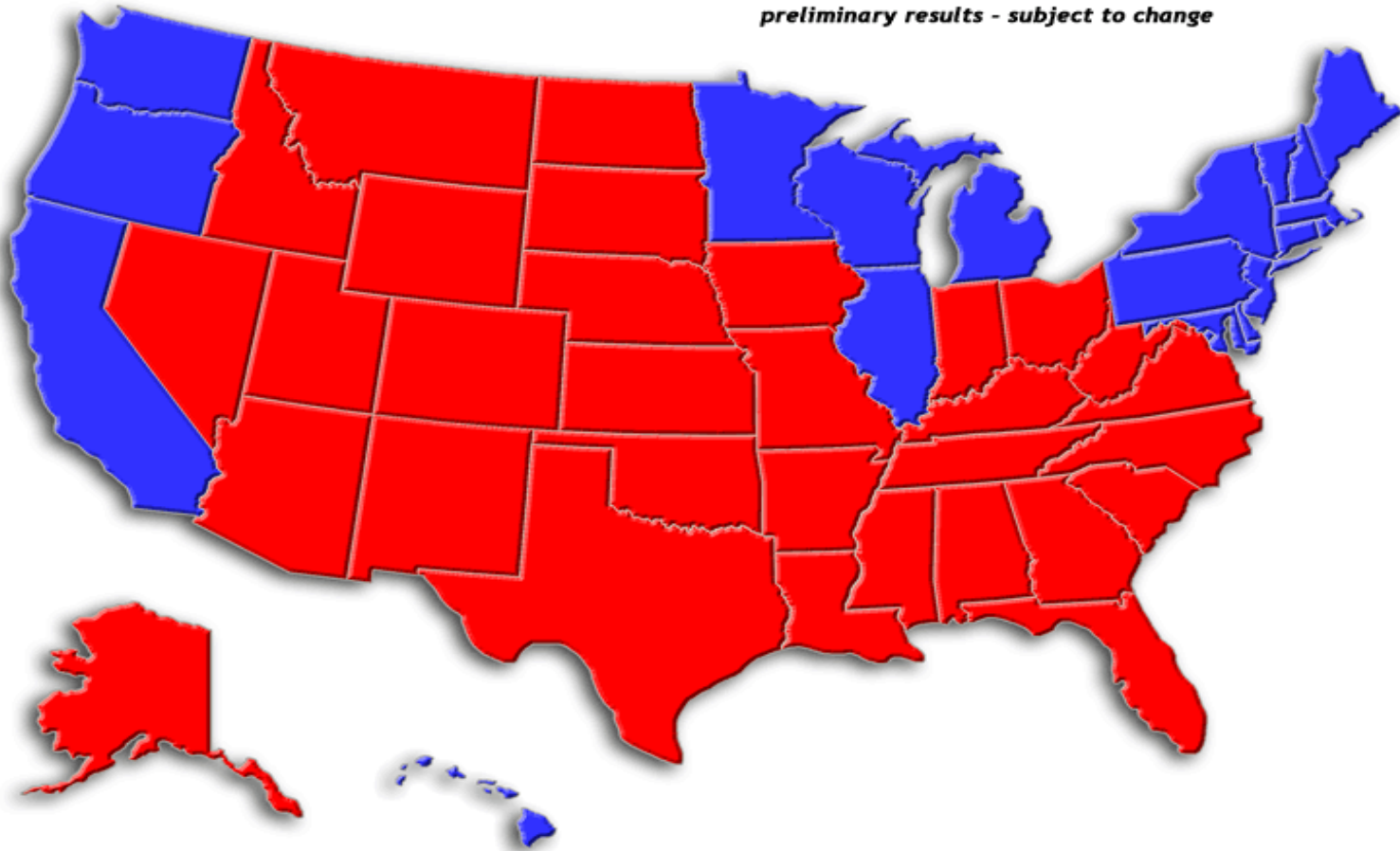


2004 State Results

Bush 286...Kerry 252

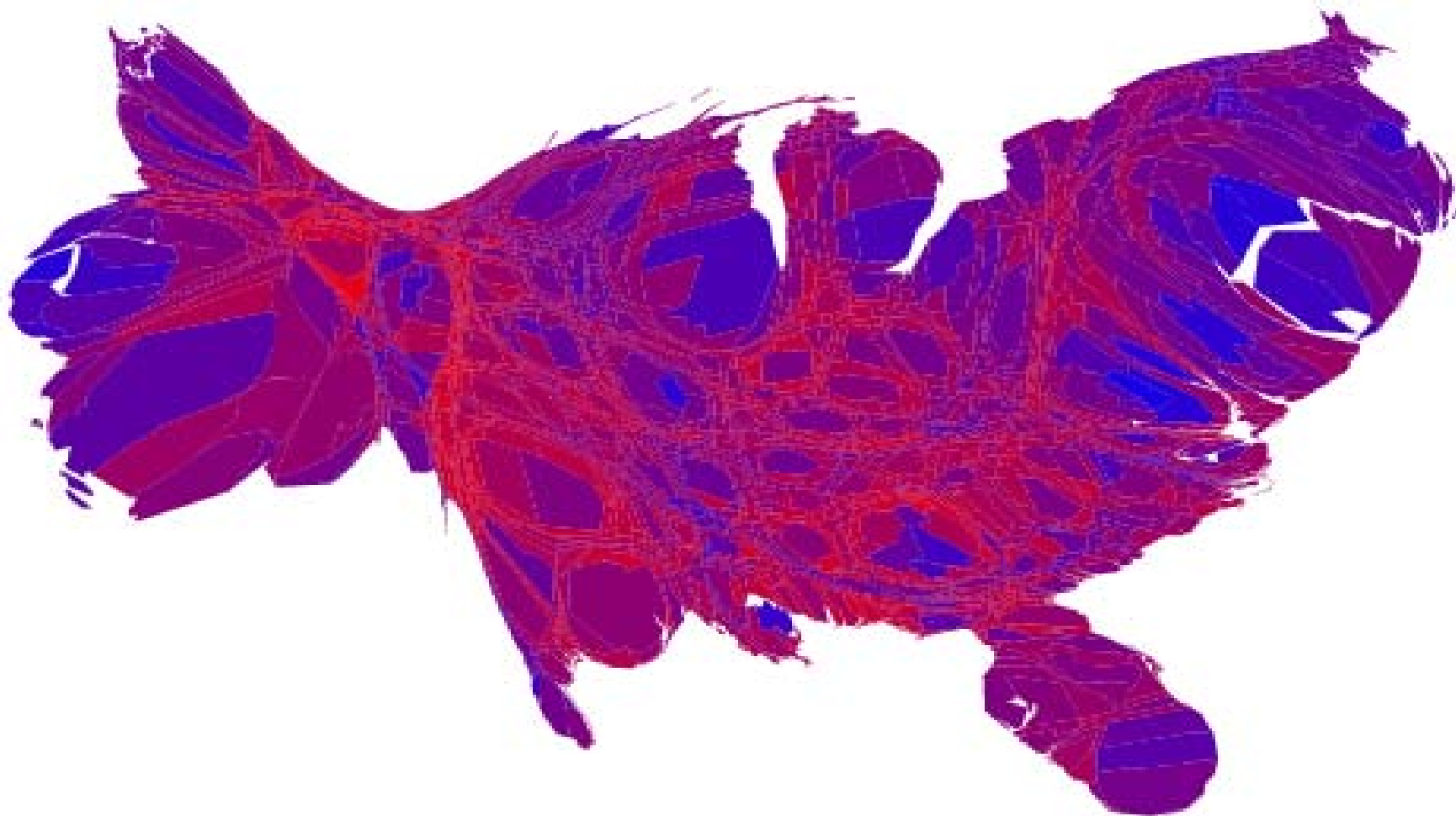
The 2004 Electoral College Vote

preliminary results - subject to change



2004 Results

(weighted by population and margin of victory)





Elections: What We Think We Know

- Combination of long and short term forces, centered on:
 - Parties
 - Candidates
 - Issues

- Hard to disentangle these: e.g., candidates and issues often viewed through the prism of party





I. Party: "Yellow Dogs"?

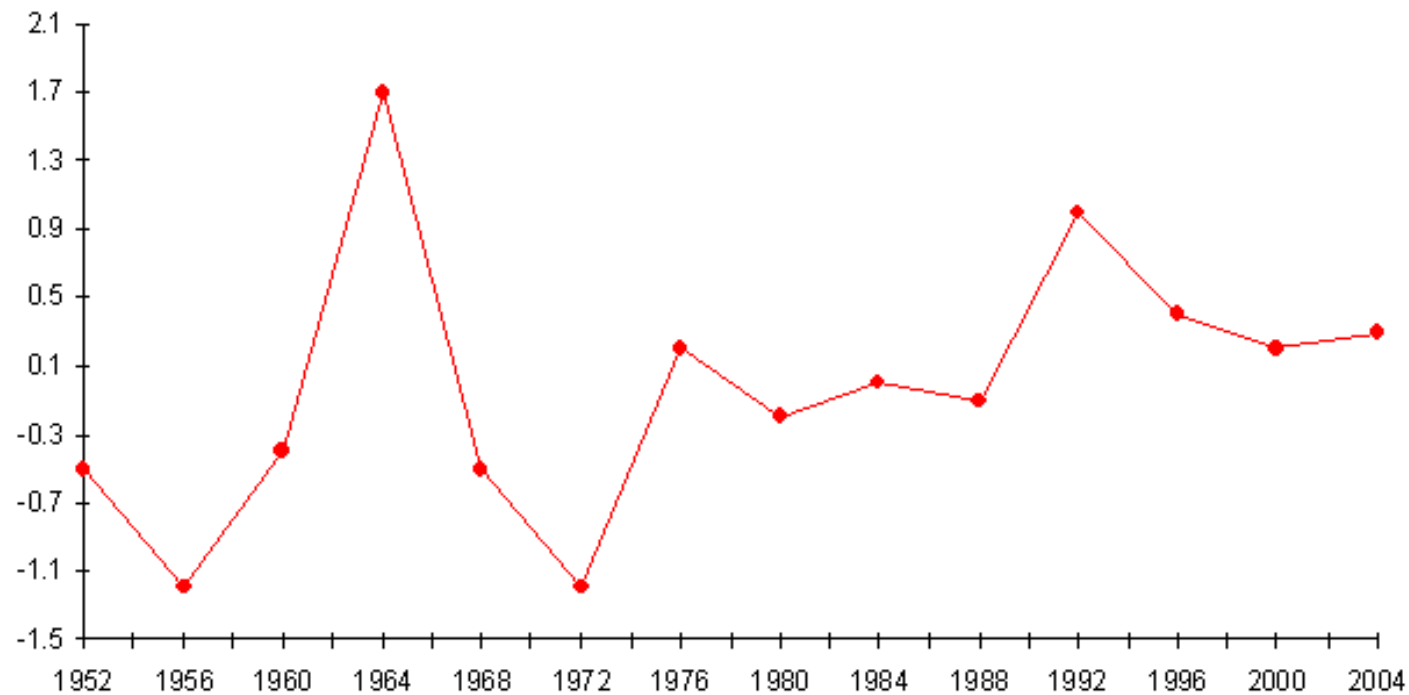
(% voting D; NES data)

	SD	WD	WR	SR
1956	85	63	7	<1
1964	94	81	40	9
1976	88	72	22	3
1980	87	59	5	4
1988	93	68	16	2
1992	96	80	18	2
1996	98	88	21	3
2000	96	81	16	1
2004	98	85	11	3

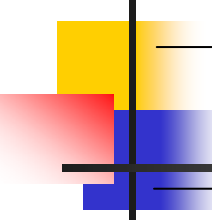
II. Candidates

Average Feelings Toward Presidential Candidates 1952-2004

—●— RESPONSE: NET PRO DEM. - PRO REP.

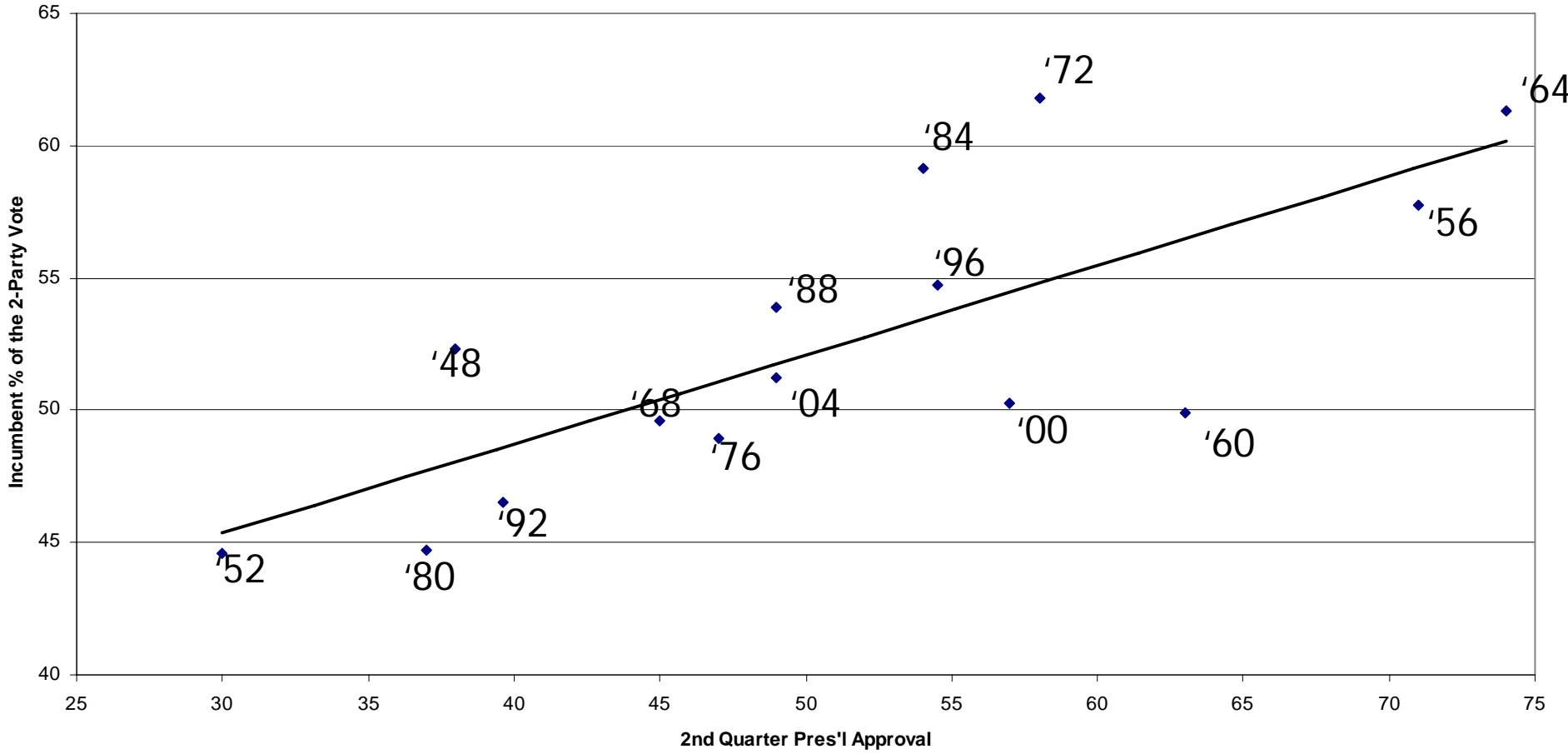


PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL AND VOTE FOR INCUMBENT PARTY



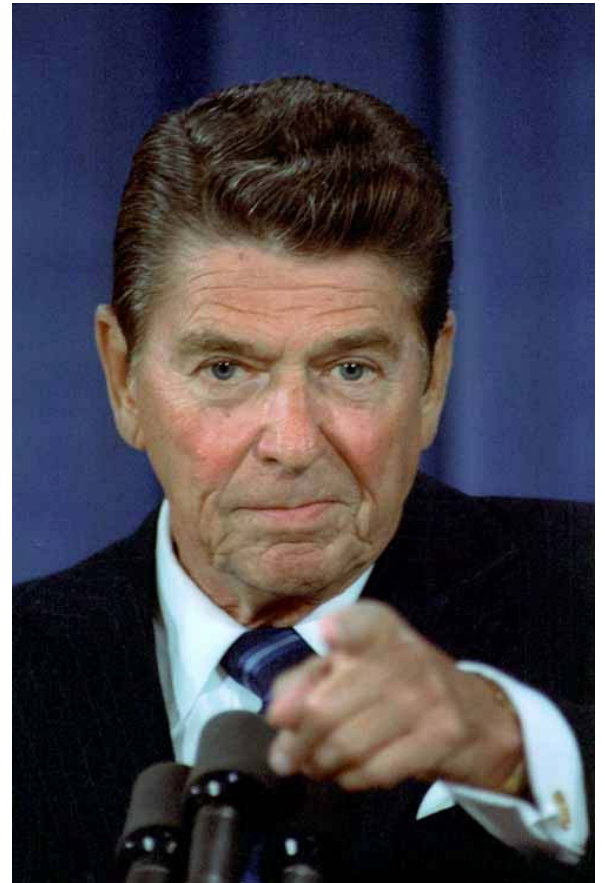
	Approve	Disapprove
1972	83	14
1976	74	9
1980	81	18
1984	87	7
1988	79	12
1992	81	11
1996	84	5
2000	77	9
2004	94	4

Presidential Approval and the 2-Party Vote

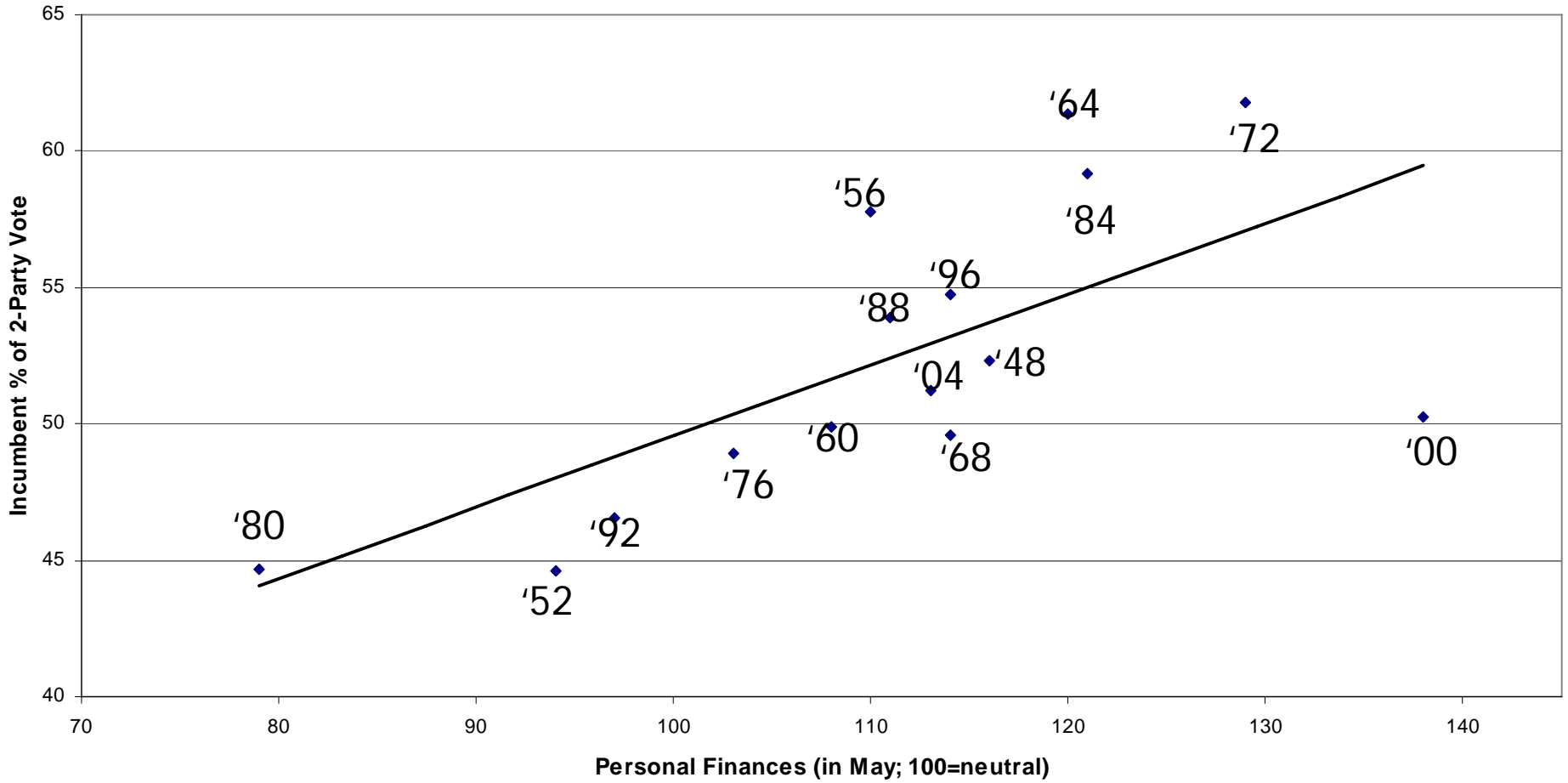


III. Issues

- Key role of the economy, especially in presidential elections
- “Retrospective voting” more prominent than prospective voting
 - ‘Are you better off today than you were four years ago?’

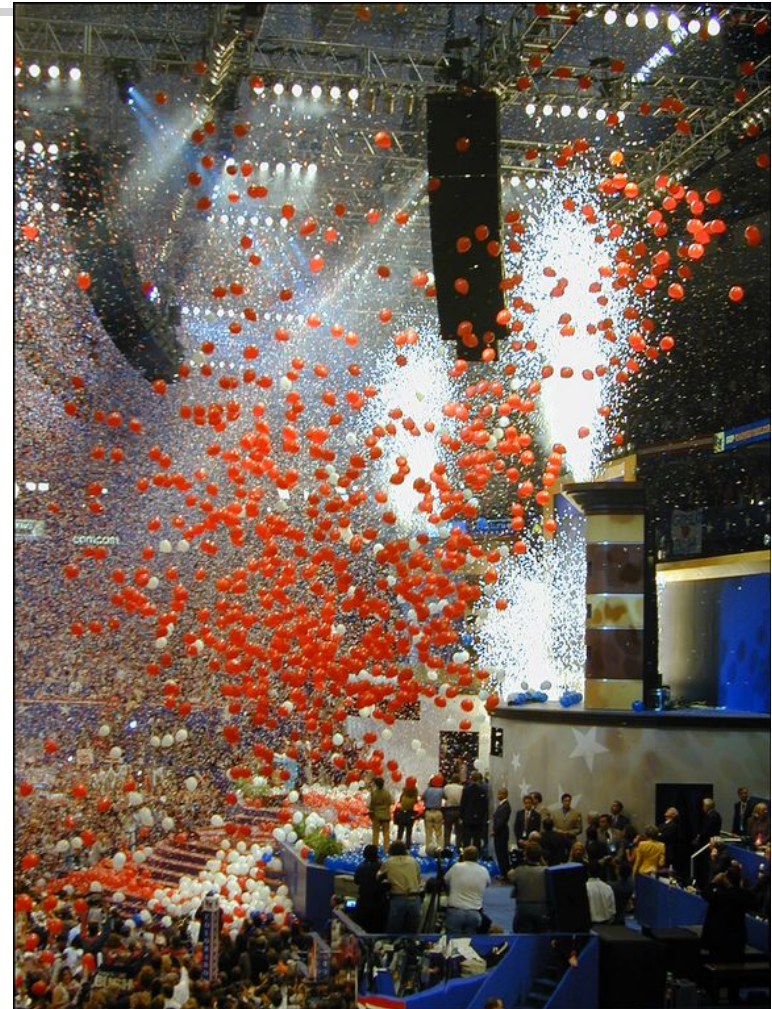


Consumer Sentiment and the Two-Party Vote



Do Campaigns Matter?

- Party ID, Presidential Approval, and the Economy seem to predict...
- But:
 - Information dissemination
 - Mobilization
 - Agenda setting, Priming, Framing





Campaign '80

Jimmy Carter



**"Let's Talk
Better
Mileage"**

Ronald Reagan



**"Kill the
Bastards"**

Which Message Will Resonate with Voters?

ANN ARBOR, Mich.—In a nationally televised debate Thursday night on the University of Michigan campus, President Carter and Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan outlined their positions on foreign and domestic policy issues.

Throughout the debate, two differing political agendas repeatedly surfaced—President Carter's "Let's Talk Better Mileage," a call for energy reform, and former California Governor Reagan's "Kill the Bastards" plan.

Responding to a question about America's reliance on fuel from OPEC nations, Carter said, "We have an opportunity to use American technology and know-how to develop our own alternate, renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, freeing us from our reliance on foreign oil. This is sound policy, not just for America, but for the Planet Earth."

Responding to the president's remarks, Reagan said,

"While much of what President Carter says is true, he is missing one very important point. That is, if America is to continue to prosper in the 1980s and beyond, we must join together and kill the bastards."

During the debate, Carter confronted the 69-year-old Reagan about his call for deregulation of numerous social programs, including his controversial proposal to give tax breaks to the wealthy.

Responding to the charges, Reagan said, "With these attacks, my opponent is trying to sidestep the real issue here, and that is the tremendous importance of killing the bastards." The Hill Auditorium crowd erupted into thunderous applause.

In an effort to win back the audience, Carter turned to the topic of urban renewal. "Next year, I will propose to Congress a sweeping revitalization program, with increased funding for the development of mass-transit systems, infrastructure re-

building, and low-cost housing and job-training programs for disadvantaged minorities," Carter said.

"Kill the bastards, kill the bastards," repeated Reagan throughout his allotted one-minute rebuttal.




Public-opinion polls show a 75 percent approval rating for Reagan's "Kill the Bastards" plan, compared to only 11 percent for Carter's "Better Mileage" platform. The "Kill the Bastards" plan rates even higher in polls than Reagan's highly popular policies while governor of California, including his "Nuke the Bastards" plan, his "Kill the Foreigners" plan and his recent "Just Kill 'Em All" plan.

'80 Extra:

John Anderson
launches 'No Chance
'80' Campaign

ANALYSIS, PAGE 6A

Issue Priorities and the 2004 Presidential Vote

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE		BUSH		KERRY		NADER
	TOTAL	2004	2000	2004	2004	2004
Taxes (5%)	57%	n/a	43%	0%		
Education (4%)	26%	n/a	73%	*		
Iraq (15%)	26%	n/a	73%	0%		
Terrorism (19%)	86%	n/a	14%	0%		
Economy/Jobs (20%)	18%	n/a	80%	0%		
Moral Values (22%)	80%	n/a	18%	1%		
Health Care (8%)	23%	n/a	77%	*		



Issue Priorities and the 1992 Presidential Vote

	<i>Clinton</i>	<i>Bush</i>	<i>Perot</i>
Health care (19%)	67	19	13
Education (9%)	60	25	15
Economy (28%)	52	25	24
Environment(4%)	72	15	13
Deficit (14%)	36	27	38
Abortion(8%)	36	56	8
Taxes (9%)	26	57	17
Foreign Policy (8%)	8	87	5
Family Values (10%)	23	66	11



Framing the Campaign

Framing a Party Appeal

George McGovern, 1972 ("Voting Booth")

Framing a Candidate Appeal

Dwight Eisenhower, 1952 ("Ike for President")

Jimmy Carter, 1976 ("South")

George W. Bush, 2000 ("Hopeful")

Framing an Issue Appeal

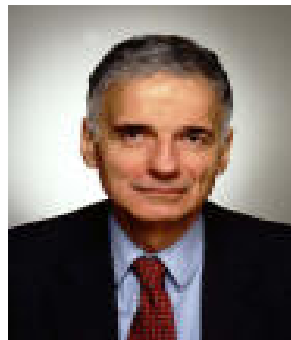
Richard Nixon, 1972 ("Passport")

Ronald Reagan, 1984 ("Morning in America")

Bill Clinton, 1992 ("Morning")

George H.W. Bush, 1992 ("Crisis")

The 2008 Campaign





Party Identification

- Do you consider yourself a...

	<i>2008</i>	<i>2004</i>
■ Republican	27 (+10 leaners)	33 (+11)
■ Democrat	36 (+15)	35 (+12)
■ Independent	37 (-25)	32 (-23)

- Source: Pew Research Center



2008's "Most Important Problem"

(*LA Times*, May 1-8; CNN, April 28-30)

■ Economy /Jobs	56%	49%
■ War/Iraq	34%	19%
■ Health Care	11%	14%
■ Immigration	11%	8%
■ Education	8%	--
■ Terrorism	7%	9%

Issue Matchups

Washington Post Poll, May 8-11, 2008

	McCain	Obama
Terrorism	55	34
Iraq	45	46
Economy	38	48
Immigration	37	42
Health care	31	55
Energy/gas prices	28	48
Overall	44	51

Framing the Campaign: Sen. McCain

- Surge on, Iraq!
- But he's not Bush
 - "Maverick" – e.g., believes in global warming...
- War hero
 - "the American president Americans have been waiting for"
 - (While Obama hates America and makes Mike Dukakis look tough)



Framing the Campaign: Sen. Obama

- Change, change, change
- It's the economy, stupid... and don't forget health care
- Iraq = Vietnam
 - "slam dunk"? Try "air ball"
- McCain = Bush 3rd Term
 - 80%+ report country heading "in wrong direction"
 - Did I say "change"?

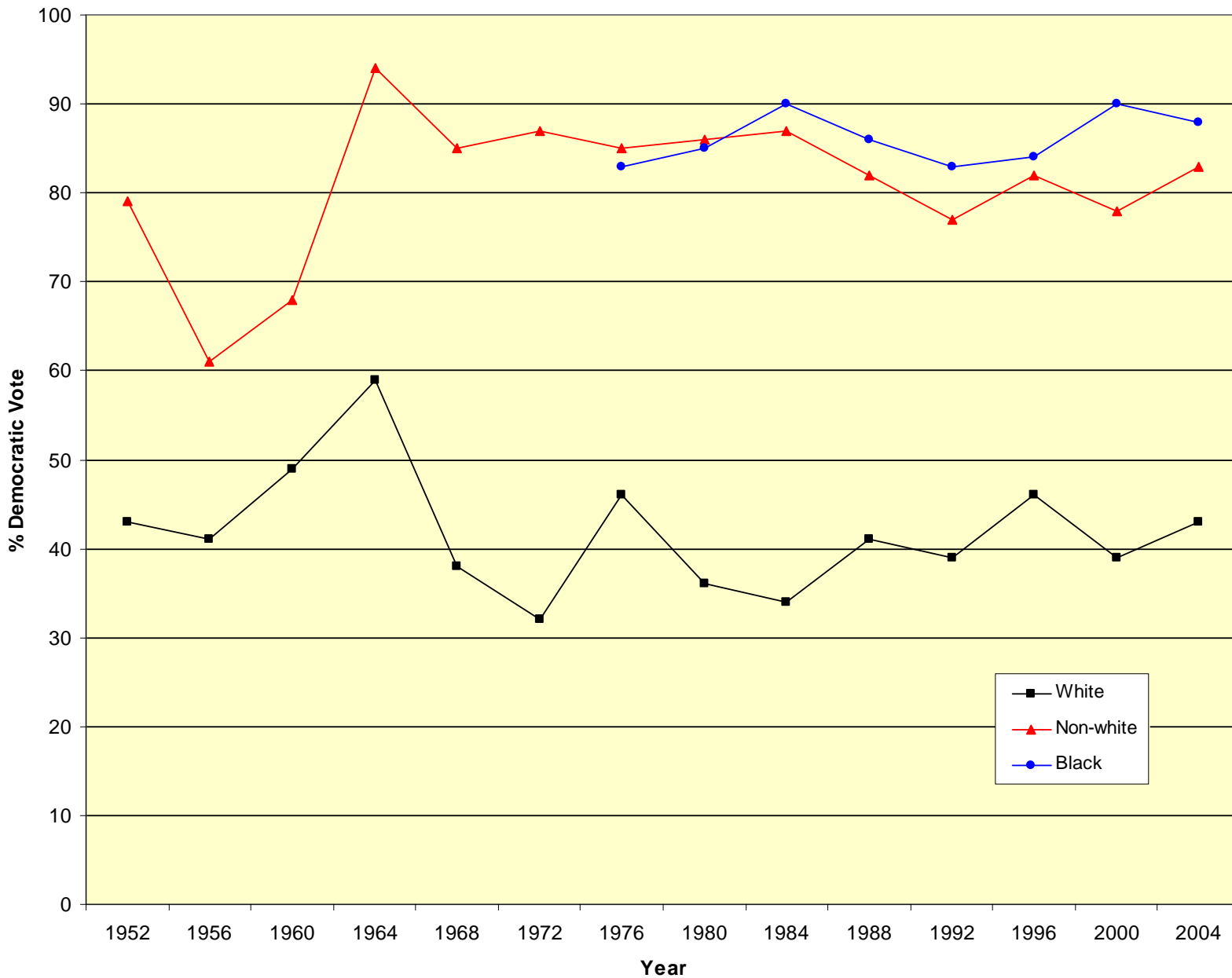




Wild Cards

- Events
 - another attack? Developments in Iraq – or Iran? Or Tibet? Or Burma? Or...
- The partisan tide?
 - Note recent Democratic House wins in Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi (!) – backwards coattails? How big the tent?
- Size of electorate
 - Can Obama expand the pie, esp. in swing states?
- The politics of race

Democratic Vote by Race, 1952-2004



History, one way or another

- “Are you comfortable with...”
 - An African-American as president
 - 88% ‘yes’
 - A 72-year old as president
 - 60% ‘yes’



Back to the Future?

