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The 2000 Presidential Election in Louisiana

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The 2000 Presidential Election in Louisiana

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Dr. Rosenblum's Research Methods and
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Overview

The University of New Orleans Survey Research Center interviewed

- 658 registered voters by telephone
- between October 15 and 22.

Results are reported for both

- the complete cross-section of registered voters and
- for the subset of likely voters, identified by the Gallup likely voter scale, which asks seven questions about voting habits.

Regardless of whether you consider likely voters or all registered voters,

George W. Bush enjoys a comfortable lead in Louisiana as of October 22.

The margin is largely based on the 40% lead he has among white voters, who comprise over 70% of the electorate. Predictably, black voters overwhelmingly favor Al Gore.

Presidential Preferences Among All Registered Voters

Registered Voters	All	White	Black
Bush	45%	60%	11%
Gore	34	21	65
Buchanan	3	2	4
Nader	4	4	4
Undecided	14	13	16
N	658	456	183

Presidential Preferences Among Likely Voters (using Gallup method)

Likely Voters	All	White	Black
Bush	48%	62%	5%
Gore	35	22	74
Buchanan	2	2	4
Nader	2	2	3
Undecided	13	12	14
N	461	337	110

Gallup's likely voter scale applied to Louisiana assumes 70% turnout among registered voters, as was the case in the 1996 presidential election.

Presidential Preference Assuming Three Scenarios

All election predictions are based on a series of "what-ifs", so we have computed three scenarios, based on different assumptions about the undecided vote and turnout.

- The assumptions range from a pro-Gore set of assumptions to a pro-Bush set of assumptions.
- Any of the assumptions can be disputed, but the basic point is that, even in the most pro-Gore scenario, Bush leads by three points.
- All scenarios represent opinions at the time the survey was taken.

Scenario 1 assumes equal turnout between blacks and whites and allocates 90% of the entire black vote to Gore. White undecided voters are allocated 50/50 between Gore and Bush.

Scenario 2 assumes equal turnout between black and white registered voters and allocates 90% of the undecided black vote to Gore. White undecided registered voters are allocated in the same proportions as the white decided voters.

Scenario 3 assumes turnout based on the Gallup likely voter method and allocates 90% of the undecided black vote to Gore. White undecided likely voters are allocated in the same proportions as the white decided voters.

	<u>Scenario 1</u> All Registered Voters	<u>Scenario 2</u> All Registered Voters	<u>Scenario 3</u> Gallup Likely Voters
Bush	49%	53%	55%
Gore	46	40	40
Buchanan	2	3	3
Nader	3	4	2
N	639	639	447

Presidential Preferences and Party Identification (likely voters only)

	White Democrat	White Independent	White Republican	Black Democrat	Black Independent
Bush	31%	58%	94%	3%	Only 10 cases
Gore	51	13	2	81	
Buchanan	2	3	1	2	
Nader	3	4	0	1	
Undecided	13	22	3	12	
N	120	74	122	89	

A major part of Gore's problem in Louisiana is the defection to Bush of 31% of white Democrats. This contrasts to the national pattern of greater loyalty of Democrats to their candidate. The Gallup poll of U.S. likely voters October 18-20 showed 88% of Democrats supporting Gore.

Within this survey we can identify three reasons for the white Democratic vote for Bush (see table below). One fourth of white Democratic likely voters either identify as conservatives, favor using the surplus for a tax cut, or disapprove of Clinton, any of which could incline them to vote Republican.

The defection of 31% of white Democrats in Louisiana, in combination with Bush's four to one lead among white independents, has created a higher level of racial polarization in this state than existed in the past two presidential elections. In those contests white Democrats and white independents voted proportionately more Democratic than today.

Conservative	28%
Moderate	32%
Liberal	10%
Favoring Tax Cut	26%
Favoring Deficit Reduction	63%
National economy is Better	50%
National economy is Worse	11%
Disapprove of Clinton	25%

Presidential Preferences and Demographics (likely voters only)

Total N:	registered voters	658
	likely voters	461
% Black among registered voters:		29
% Female among registered voters:		56
Sampling Error, Total Sample:		3.9%
Sampling Error, Likely Voters:		4.6%