

Where the gender gap matters

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Below, I take a look at the gender gap from 2008 at the swing state level using CNN exit polls.

You can see that in some swing states the gender gap matters massively, while in other battlegrounds less so.

North Carolina vs. Florida is a perfect example.

In North Carolina, women supported Obama by 11%, while men supported McCain by 13%, and Obama squeaked out the win in the state.

But compare that with Florida. There, women supported Obama by just 5%, while men supported him by 4%, and Obama pulled it out in a squeaker.

So in North Carolina, the gender gap was 24%. In Florida, it was just 1%, but the important thing is that the race was close in both states.

Thus, while the final result of North Carolina and Florida was very similar, their voting patterns based on gender were dramatically different.

So I've put the swing states in two categories -- ones where the gender gap was more than 5% and ones where it was less than 5%.

Also, I've noted where men and women differed **directionally** (i.e. women supported Obama, but men supported McCain) because that's a more meaningful gap.

Where the gender gap mattered in 2008 (Swing states with a 5% difference or more).

1. **North Carolina**: Women = 54% of the vote and supported Obama, 55%-44%. Men supported McCain, 56%-43%.

That's a stunning **24% gap**, and is **different directionally**.

2. **New Hampshire**: Women = 52% of the vote and supported Obama, 61%-38%. Men supported McCain and Obama evenly.

That's a **23% gap** between men and women, and is **different directionally**.

3. **Colorado**: Women = 50% of the vote and supported Obama, 56%-41%. Men supported McCain by 1%.

That's a **16% gap** between men and women, and is **different directionally**.

4. **Wisconsin**: Women = 51% of the vote and supported Obama, 60%-39%. Men supported Obama by 7%.

That's a **14% gap**, but is the **same directionally**.

5. **Iowa**: Women = 53% of the vote and supported Obama, 55%-43%. Men supported Obama by 3%.

That's a **9% gap** between men and women, but is the **same directionally**.

6. **Nevada**: Women = 52% of the vote and supported Obama, 59%-38%. Men supported Obama by 4%.

That's a **7% gap**, but is the **same directionally**.

7. **Ohio**: Women = 52% of the vote and supported Obama, 53%-35%. Men supported Obama by 3%.

That's a **5% gap** between men and women, but is the **same directionally**.

Where the gender gap didn't matter in 2008 (swing states with a gap of less than 5%).

1. **Florida**: Women = 53% of vote and supported Obama, 52%-47%. Men supported Obama by 4%.

That's a **1% gap** between men and women, and is **the same directionally**.

2. **Virginia**: Women = 54% of the vote and supported Obama, 53%-46%. Men supported Obama by 4%.

That's a **3% gap** between men and women, and is **the same directionally**.

Honorable mention goes to Missouri, where the gender gap was only 4%, but it differed directionally; therefore you have to say it mattered.

Missouri: Women were 54% of the vote and supported Obama, 50%-48%. Men supported McCain by 2%. That's a **4% gap** between men and women, but is different directionally.