

## The Gender Gap and the 2004 Women's Vote Setting the Record Straight

Media coverage this election season has featured a great deal of misinformation about the gender gap and women's voting patterns. For the record:

**THE GENDER GAP** in voting is the difference in the percentage of women and men who support a given candidate, generally the leading or winning candidate. It is the gap *between* the genders not *within* a gender. Even if women and men favor the same candidate, they may do so by different margins, resulting in a gender gap.

**THE WOMEN'S VOTE** describes the behavior of women as a voting bloc, or the divisions among women voters for or against a given issue or candidate.

### Gender Gap Facts:

- There has been a gender gap in every presidential election since 1980. In the 2000 election, women were 10 percentage points less likely than men to vote for George W. Bush (43% of women vs. 53% of men supported Bush); and 12 percentage points more likely than men to vote for Al Gore (54% of women vs. 42% of men supported Gore), according to the Voter News Service.
- In the 2004 election, a gender gap is apparent in women versus men's support of George W. Bush and John Kerry, both nationwide and in battleground states. For example:
  - Nationally, the gender gap is about 10 percentage points, with 51% of women vs. 41% of men supporting Kerry, and 39% of women vs. 50% of men supporting Bush, according to the Pew Research Center for People and the Press (Oct. 15-19 poll).
  - In Pennsylvania, 51% of women vs. 43% of men support John Kerry, according to the latest Quinipiac poll (Oct. 16-20) – a gender gap of 8 percentage points.

### Women's Voting Facts:

- Women vote in higher numbers than men, and have done so in every election since 1964. In 2000, 7.8 million more women voted than men did. Because of unprecedented voter registration efforts, women may vote in even larger numbers in 2004.
- Women have voted at higher rates than men since 1980. In 2000, 56.2% of registered women voters went to the polls, compared to 53.1% of men voters.
- More women register to vote than men. Some 68.7 million women were registered to vote in 2000 compared to 59.4 million men. Initial reports show the trend will continue in 2004.
- Women are late deciders, and make up a higher number of undecided and swing voters than men. Women are 60% of undecided likely voters in the latest Battleground Tracking Poll conducted by Lake Snell Perry & Associates and the Tarrance Group (Oct. 18-21).

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