**The Forthcoming Presidential Election:**

**A Political Puzzle**

Alan Nevin

The forthcoming Presidential Election is going to be the most expensive and probably the closest contest in U.S. history. In this article, I take a look at the various factors that will play a role in the election.

First, I take a look at the **United States** **Senate** and its composition. There are 43 states that are either wholly Demographic or wholly Republican. Combined, they form a picture of what the United States looks like and which way it leans.

In terms of leaning, the Republicans lean inland. Four out of five Senate Republicans live inland. Conversely, four out of five Senate Democrats live on the East Coast. None of the Republican Senators serve the West Coast.



1.1

This map tells the story:



1.2

Looking at the Senate by ethnicity, there has been some headway made in the past forty years. There have been most advances in Hispanics and Asians. The percentage of non-whites has doubled from 20% to 40%.


 1.3

There has definitely been advancement in male/female ratios in the Senate. In 1980, there was only one woman in the Senate. Now there are 25.



 1.4

However, there remains only one black woman in the Senate:



 1.5

Perhaps the most interesting statistic is the **ethnic dichotomy** between the two parties. Whites account for 1/3rd of Democrats and almost 2/3rds of Republicans. Democrats who are Asian or Hispanic far outweigh the Republicans. And oddly enough, there are substantially more Blacks than Whites in the republican party.



 1.6

**Members of the House**

There are 435 members of Congress and **all are running for office in the 2024 election**, that is, all except the 40 members who have decided not to run again.



 1.7

Folks who design marketing for the two parties must spend many sleepless nights trying to figure out how to draw minorities into their respective parties.

Below are the results of numerous surveys on the public approval ratings from 2021 through the present. It shows that the public was satisfied in the beginning and has gradually become disenchanted:



Top line: Presidential

Orange Line: Direction of Country

Bottom Line: Congressional Approval

1.8

**The Next Presidential Election Budgets**

The next Presidential election will unleash an enormous amount of spending. Perhaps the most ever spent in a presidential election.

Selecting Presidents is not an easy thing to do. There are more than 500 electoral votes to be segmented. What is rather interesting is that the percentage of the electoral votes that the winner gets has, over time, declined. In 1964, LBJ won 90% of the electoral votes. By the time of the most recent election, Mr. Biden won only 57% of the electoral votes.

It may be that the forthcoming election has the **least spread** of electoral votes of any Presidential election in recent history.



1.9

In 2016, Hillary Clinton received 2.9 million more votes nationwide, a margin of 2.1% of the total cast, but Trump won a victory in the Electoral College (56.9%). A total of 128 million people cast their votes, but the Electoral College carried the ball.

In 2020, the popular vote had a broader margin than in 2016, but the electoral percentage in 2016 was negligible:



1.10

**Roe v Wade**

Is it at all possible that the results of the 2024 Presidential election will relate to the Supreme Court decision on Roe v. Wade. Basically, a one issue election?



1.11



1.12

**The Numbers Game**

If you assume that Democrats are more upset over Roe v Wade than Republicans, then population dominance of the over 18 population of Democrats carries the day.

The Senate and the House may be almost even in terms of percent Democrats vs. Republicans, but there are **28 million more Democrats** over age 18 than there are Republicans. This assumes, of course, that Democrats and Republicans go to the polls in like percentages. In the 2020 elections, 46% of registered Democrats went to the polls and 43% of Republicans.



 1.13

And then there are the voting statistics on **ethnicity** and **educational attainment and age**.

In the 2020 election, Black, Asian and Hispanic voters heavily favored Biden:



 1.14

And educated voters heavily favored Biden.



 1.15

And younger voters favored Biden as well.



 1.16

**Economic Track Record: Trump v. Biden (1st 3 years in Office)**

Ordinarily, the voting populace would dwell on numerous other factors than abortion. There is the matter of war in the Mideast, interest rates, inflation and all the other factors that folks typically consider when going to the polls.

At the end of the third year in Presidential office (3Q2109 and 3Q2023), we looked at economic indicators for the state of the Nation.

In both cases the economy looks in rather good shape with the exception of inflation and interest rates, but the newscasters do not appear to be talking much about those factors. They are far too entranced with the mid-East, Trump legal problems and Roe v. Wade.



 1.17

**International Warfare**

**Mr. Trump** ordered a shutdown of Afghanistan military involvement with total troop withdrawal. By June 2020 he ordered a series of drawdowns of U.S Troops and by September, troop strength was down to 8,600. And by the end of 2020, the U.S. troops were no longer in Afghanistan. It was a very popular decision. Afghanistan is all but forgotten.

**Mr. Biden**, on the other hand, has had a massive involvement in warfare in the Mid-East. Conversely, in 2023- 2024, his involvement has been hands-on and now has Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis in military action and is taking on Lebanon, Iran, Yemen and possibly Iraq. And, oh, yes, there is the matter of Ukraine. The status of those two major warfare activities are not likely to be solved by election day. Mr. Biden’s involvement will, no doubt, have an impact on the voting public.

Conclusion: Mr. Biden’s approval ratings continue to decline, despite the fact that the economy has remained strong and that his Mid-East and Ukraine activities are viewed positively in most surveys.

The bottom line may come down to Roe v. Wade and the percent of Democrats and Republicans who go to the polls.

Will you be watching Fox or CNN on election night?

Or flipping between the two.

All night!

Alan Nevin

February 7 2024

Nevin.econ@gmail.com