

EQ #7- What is Public Opinion?  
How does it affect politics and  
government?

Chapter 6

# What are we doing today?

- News Quiz
- Test short answer
- Ch 6- Public Opinion

# What is Public Opinion?

- **Public Opinion**

- The distribution of the population's beliefs about politics and policy issues.
- What the people think about what government should / not do.



# What are Demographics? How are they measured?

- **Demography**

- The science of populations—gender, race, income, education... Patterns of public opinion occur over different populations.

- **Census**

- A count of each citizen in the U.S. Required every 10 years.
- It is a valuable tool for understanding population changes

# The American People

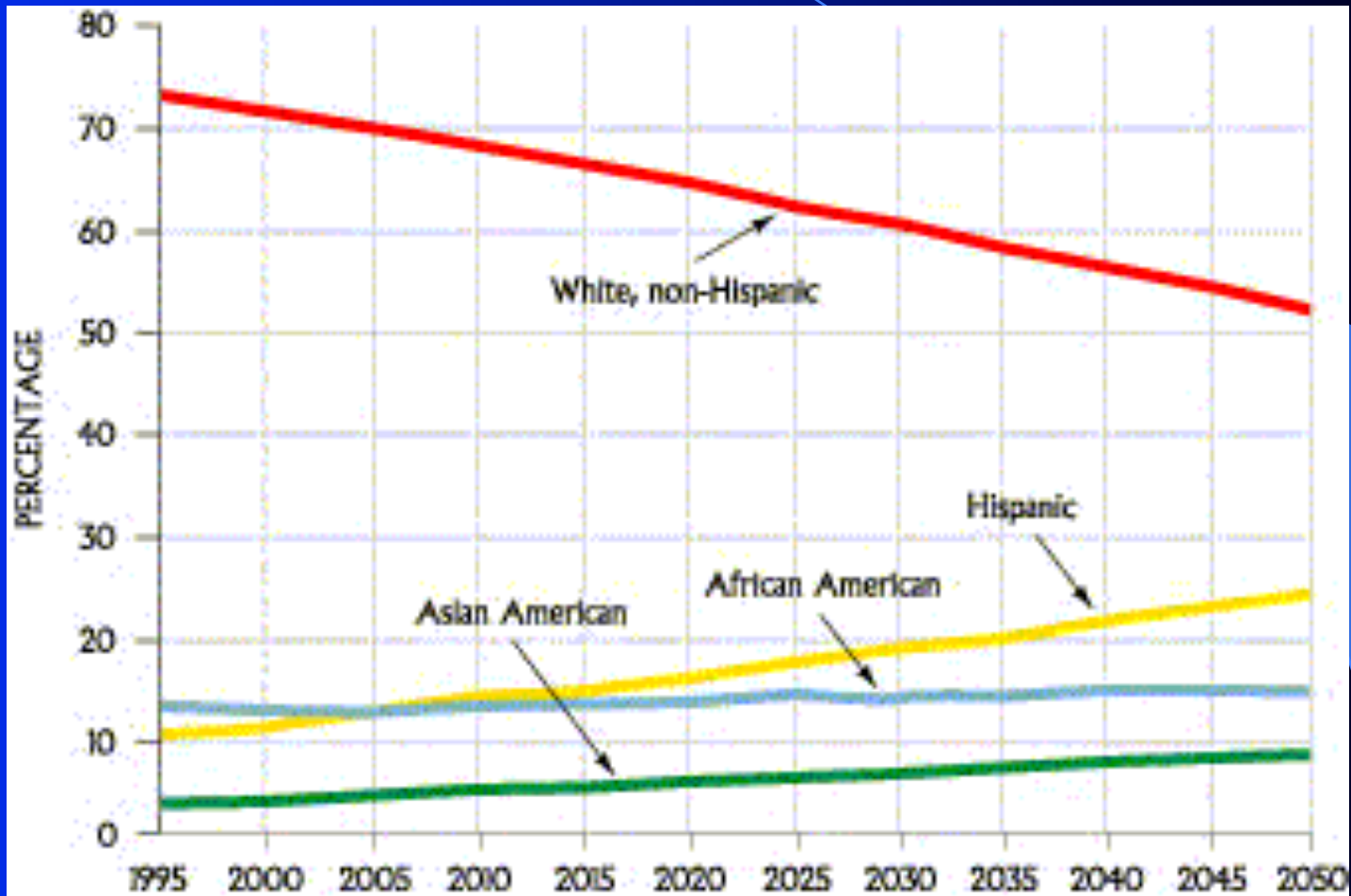
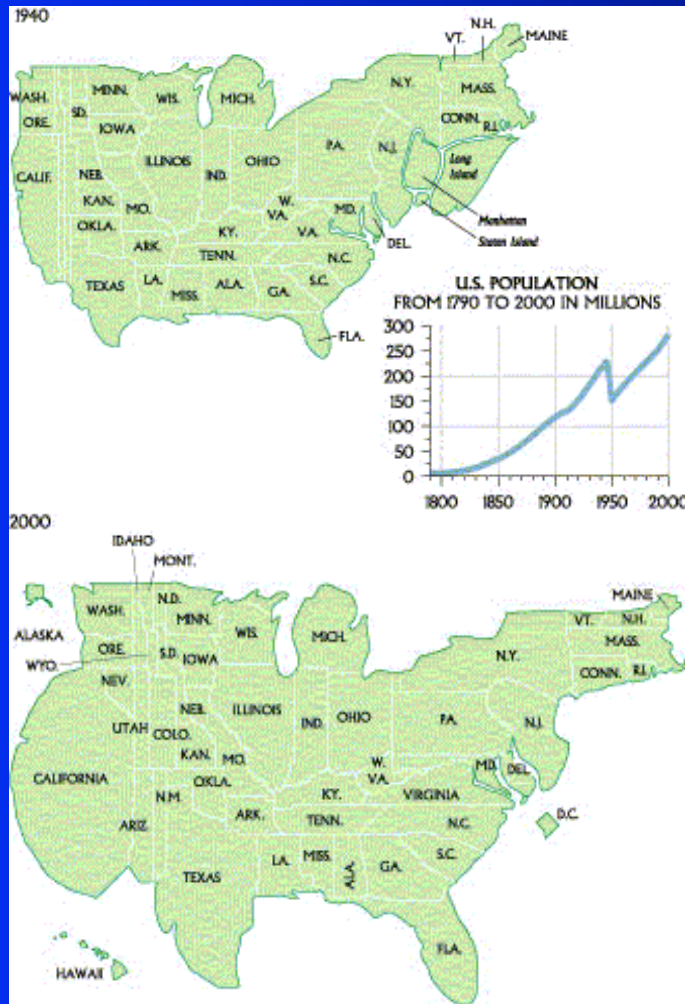


Figure 6.1

# What is Reapportionment?

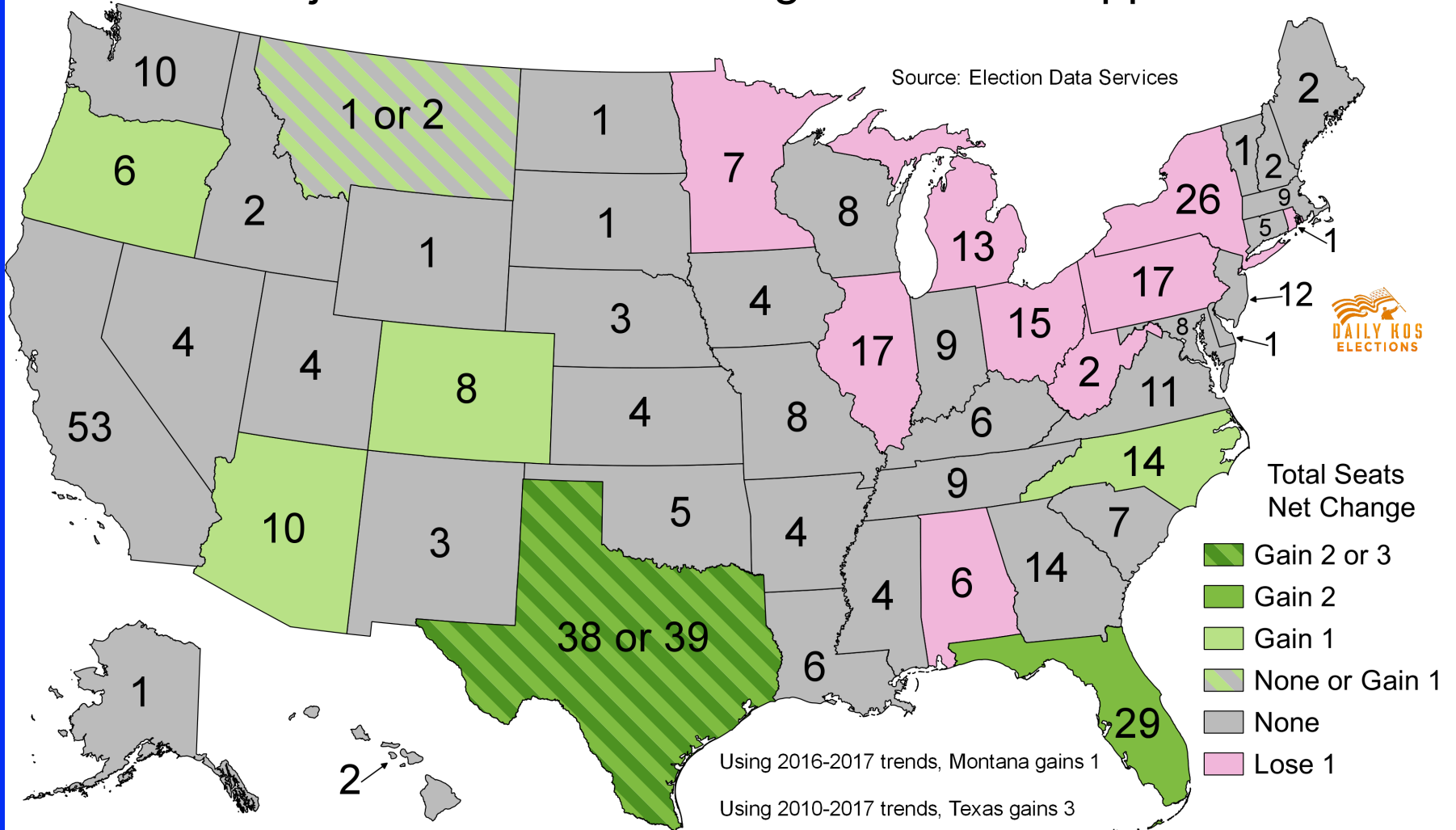


- The Regional Shift
  - Reapportionment: Is the process of reallocating seats in the House of Representatives every 10 years on the basis of the results of the census.

Figure 6.2

# Reapportionment

## Census Projections for 2020 Congressional Reapportionment



# The American People

- The Graying of America
  - Fastest growing age group today is over 65
  - Potential drain on Social Security benefits as people live longer and more retire
  - Collectively, “minority” populations will become the majority in the U.S.



# Activity- Graph the US Population Today

- Look at the chart describing the US population today.
- [http://www.indexmundi.com/united\\_states/demographics\\_profile.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/united_states/demographics_profile.html)
- Make bar graphs for AGE structure and ETHNICITY structure
- Why would this be important to politics?

# TUESDAY 10/16

- What is political socialization?
- What is Political Polling?
- How are accurate polls conducted?
- How do polls affect government and politics in the U.S.?
  
- Look at Weekly Calendar

# Activity- Register to Vote

- Voter registration for Oregon's 2018 Midterm Election ends Tuesday October 16<sup>th</sup>.
- You MUST be 16, a US Citizen and resident of Oregon to register
- Let's look at the Website-
- <https://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/registration.aspx?lang=en>

# How Do Americans Learn About Politics? What is Political Socialization?

- What is Political Socialization?
  - It is the process through which an individual acquires his/her individual political orientation
  - How we develop our values and beliefs about what government should do

# What are the KEY Influences on Political Socialization?

## 1. FAMILY

- Is the MOST important influence
- Time spent with family during development & emotional commitment
- Children often mirror their parent's political leanings

# How Americans Learn About Politics: Political Socialization

**Table 6.1 How Party Identification Is Passed Down from One Generation to the Next**

The National Election Study has often asked respondents whether their parents thought of themselves as Democrats, Independents, or Republicans when they were growing up. In the most recent available data, 87 percent of those who could identify the partisanship of both parents reported that their parents agreed on partisan choice. Here you can see how these respondents have generally followed in their parents' footsteps politically.

	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	REPUBLICAN	TOTAL
Both Parents Democrats	59	29	13	100%
Both Parents Independents	17	67	16	100%
Both Parents Republicans	12	29	59	100%

*Source:* Authors' analysis of 1992 National Election Study data.

# What are the KEY Influences on Political Socialization?

## 2. The MASS MEDIA

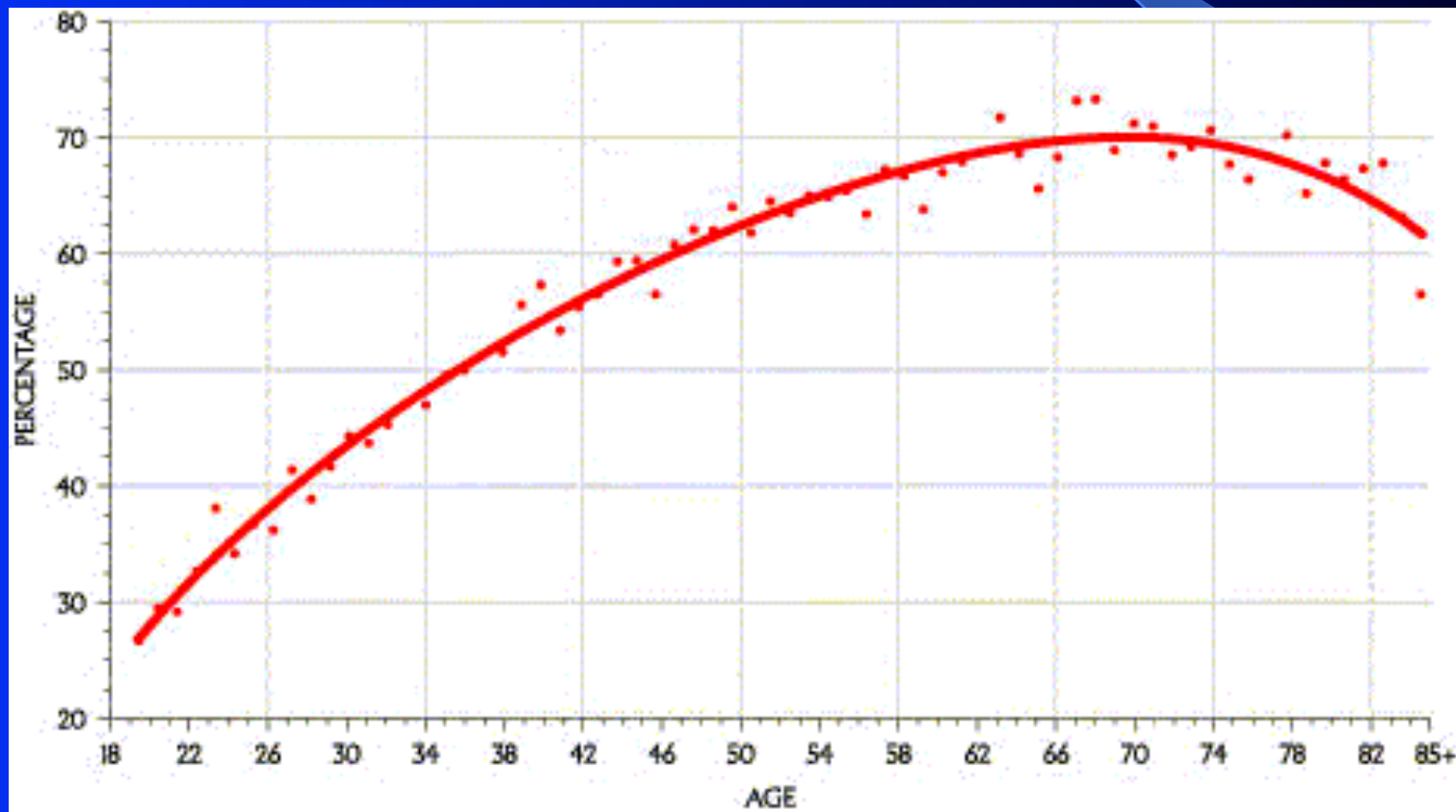
- TV, radio, social media outlet coverage of news
- Today, far FEWER read the newspapers or watch the news.

## 3. School / Education

- Used by government to socialize the young into the political culture
- Higher education produces better jobs and a more positive view of government

# How American Learn About Politics: Political Socialization

- Turnout by Age, 2000 (Figure 6.3)





# How is Public Opinion Measured?

- Political polls measure public opinion.
- POLLS are a scientific sample of public opinion regarding political issues and policies
- Media outlets often conduct polls.
- Poll results are watched closely by political parties and elected officials.

# How are Polls Conducted?

- Scientific polling uses random sampling

# What are the parts of a Scientific Poll?

- 1. Choose a Universe**
- 2. Determine Sample**
- 3. Use Random Sampling**
- 4. Create Valid Questions**

# What is a Universe in polling?

1. Poll Universe : Is the entire group whose opinions you want to measure

Example- All Churchill Students

# What is the Sample?

**2. Sample:** The sample is the subset of the group who actually responds to poll questions

\*There are scientific calculations that go into how few can be sampled for an accurate poll

# What is a RANDOM Sample?

**3. Random Sampling:** For accuracy, everyone in a polling universe must have an equal probability of being selected for the sample.

If RANDOM, a sample size of as few as 1500 people is sufficient to gather useful information about ALL Americans' attitudes on an issue.

# What is a Sampling Error?

- Is the published accuracy of a public opinion poll
  - Because only a subset of the universe is polled, polls aren't 100% accurate
  - Usually is + or – 1%-5% in most political polls
  - Sometimes called “margin of error”

# What are Valid Questions in Polls?

## 4. Valid Questions

- Are key to an accurate poll.
- The wording of questions makes a difference.
- Accurate polls should be objective.
- “How would you rate President Trump’s performance” is more objectively written than “Do you believe President Trump is doing a bad job?”



# What is the Role of Polls in US today?

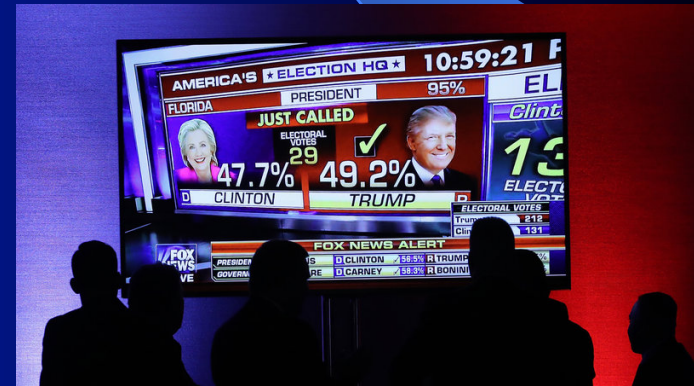
- The Role of Polls in American Democracy
  - Polls help politicians gauge public preferences
  - Polls inform the policy agenda.

# What are EXIT Polls?

- Is a poll of voters taken immediately after they have exited the polling place.
- Used to predict election day winners.
- Ask voters who they voted for as they leave polling place

# EXIT Polls and Problems

- Exit polls were thought to be highly accurate but recently have had problems due to...
  - Increases in early voting
  - Conservative older voters less willing to talk to pollsters
  - More Democrat respondents which skew results



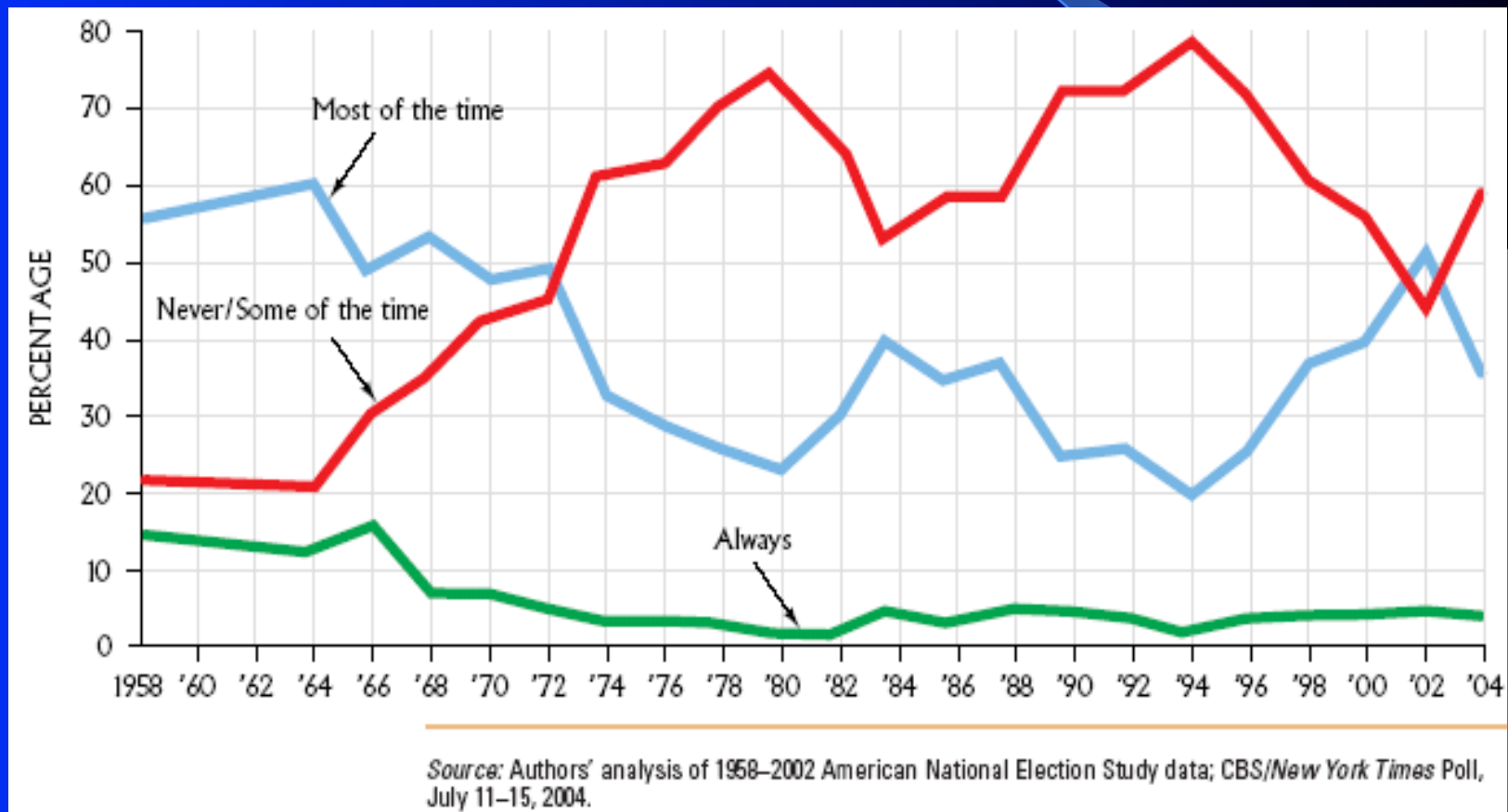
Let's look at some polls

# Measuring Public Opinion and Political Information

- What do Polls Reveal About Americans' Political knowledge?
  - Americans don't know much about politics.
  - Americans may know their basic beliefs, but not how that affects policies of the government.
- American's Trust in Government is declining
  - Since 1964, trust in government has declined.

# Measuring Public Opinion and Political Information

- The Decline of Trust in Government, 1958-2004 (Figure 6.4)



# Political Polling Article

- Answer the Q's in your INB.
  1. Identify THREE characteristics of a valid scientific public opinion poll.
  2. How do political polls get random samples today?
  3. Describe THREE problems with modern polling techniques that you read about.
  4. Describe TWO common methodological errors in polls.

# WEDNESDAY 10/17

- Warm-Up- Polling
- EQ #8- Political Ideology
- Activity- Take the Online Ideology Quiz



# EQ #8 What are the common political ideologies in the US?

Review- What is political ideology?

What are the common ideologies and beliefs in the US?

What is your political ideology?

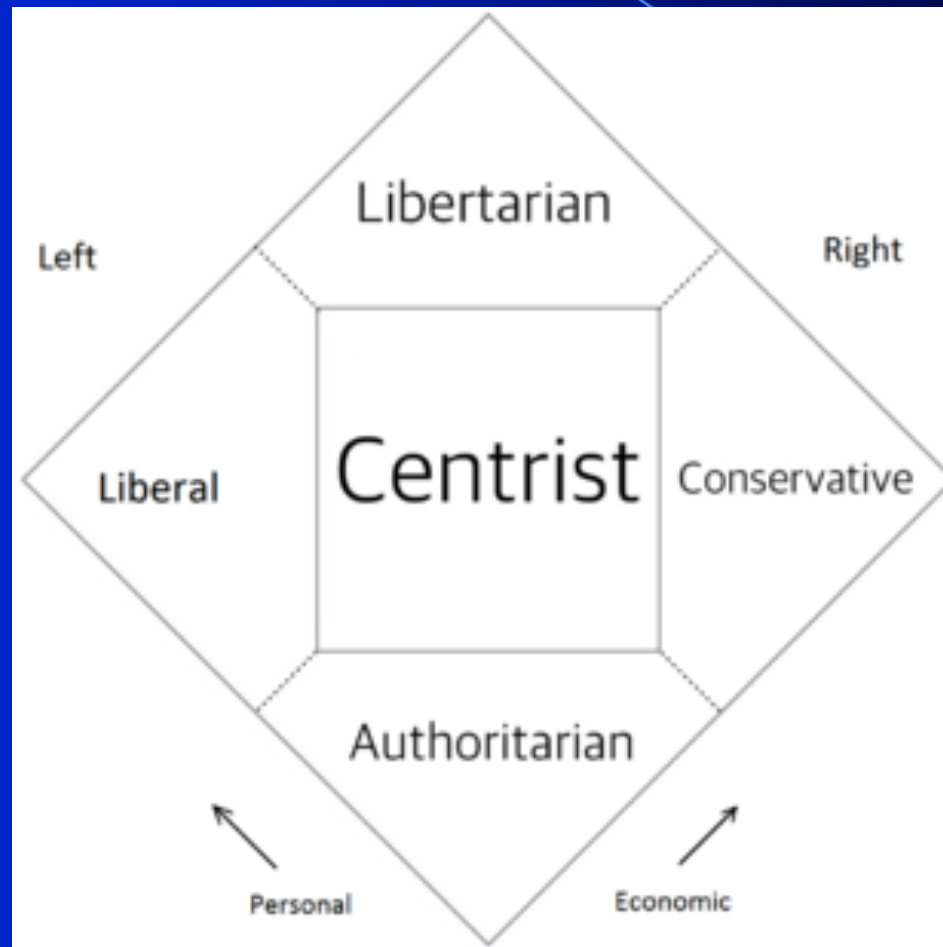
# What is Political Ideology?

- A Political Ideology is
  - A voter's coherent set of beliefs about politics, public policy, and public purpose.
- \*In the US, common ideologies are Conservative, Liberal or Moderate.
- Our political ideology affects how we vote

# Activity: Political Ideology

- Predict your ideology: Liberal / Moderate / Conservative
- Take the online iSideWith quiz to determine your political beliefs /ideology
- Note where your numbers are on grid handout (your score is a STAR)
- Write definitions using next slides

# Where are you?



# Political Ideology

- LEFT / LIBERAL

- Democrats

- View government as a regulator in public interest

- Want to tax rich more; provide welfare for those in need

- CENTRIST / MODERATE

- Independents / those who vote for both Democrats and Republicans depending on the issue and candidate

# What are the most common political ideologies?

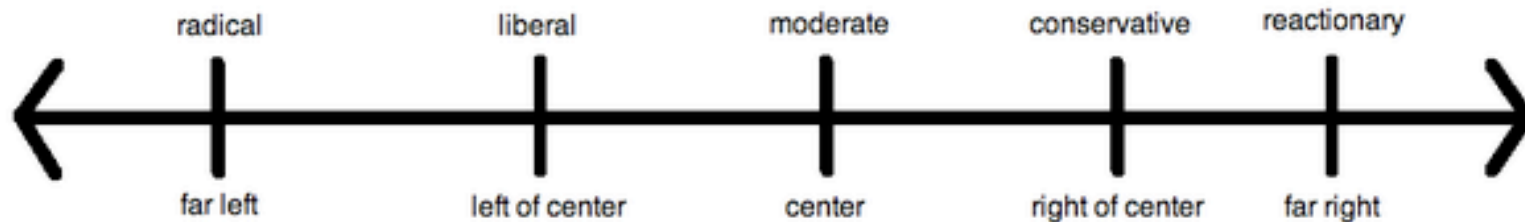
- RIGHT / CONSERVATIVE
  - Republicans
  - Favor free market solutions and individuals themselves rather than government intervention
  - Want to keep taxes and spending low

# Right, Left, Center??

- LEFT  
Liberal

Moderate

RIGHT  
Conservative



# What does a Conservative believe? Key Traits!

- Limited government & Free Market
- Taking personal responsibility
- Traditional American values /traditional roles
- Traditional religious views
- Nationalism
- Is associated with the REPUBLICAN Party



# What does a Liberal Believe?

## Key Traits!

- (LEFT)
- Governments should take action to achieve equal opportunity and equality for all
- Gov't has a duty to solve problems, fix social problems and protect human rights
- Preserve civil rights
- Progressive values
- Associated with the DEMOCRATIC party

# What is a Moderate?

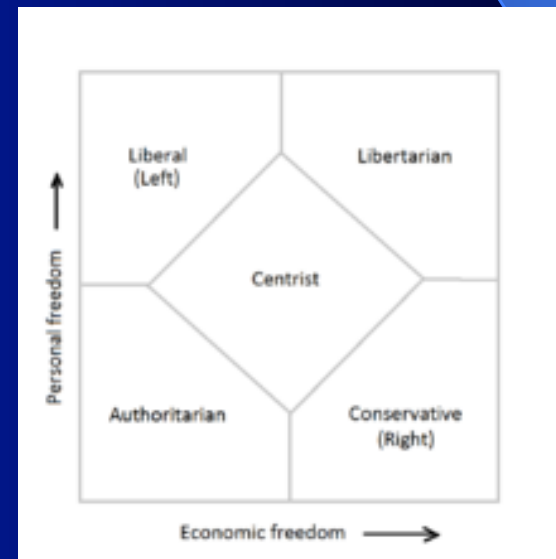
- Moderates represent a mix of liberal and conservative ideologies
- The majority of Americans classify themselves as moderate (rather than conservative or liberal)
- Can be D or R but are often “Independent”
  - Not registered as either D or R and swing their votes between parties, depending on issues and election

# Are there other, less common political ideologies?

- YES! They are important but are NOT usually a major influence on American politics.
- **Socialist** –
  - Government ownership and democratic management of economy and markets
  - Universal health care
  - Greater employee benefits

# Other Ideologies...

- **Authoritarian:**
  - Opposes extreme individualism
  - Government is needed to make rules to ensure fairness and order



# Other Ideologies...

- **Libertarian:**

- Opposes government interference in personal, family and business decisions.
- Advocates for a smaller government, lower taxes and more individual freedom



# THURSDAY

- Finish Ideology Notes
- Do Gender Gap Activity

# How are Political Ideologies in US Distributed?

- Who Are the Liberals and Conservatives?

Currently in US -

- 38% conservative
- 24% liberal
- 34% moderate
- 4% other

# Gallup Poll from 2017

- Asked voters “Which party do you identify with?”
- 31% as Democrat
- 24% as Republican
- 42% as Independent



## Americans' Self-Identified Political Ideology

How would you describe your political views -- [very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal or very liberal]?

■ % Conservative    ■ % Moderate    ■ % Liberal



Based on annual averages of Gallup multiday telephone polls

GALLUP®

# Activity- Look at Liberal v. Conservative Views

- READ the handout (<https://www.studentnewsdaily.com/conservative-vs-liberal-beliefs/>)
- Complete the graphic organizer by choosing your TOP THREE issues and describing the Left and Right perspective
- Write a paragraph- Which perspective are you more in agreement with? Why?

# What Americans Value: Political Ideologies

- Do People Think in Ideological Terms?
  - Ideologues: think in ideological terms / values and beliefs - 12% of the population
  - Group Benefits: rely on party labels - 42% of the population
  - Nature of the Times: Swayed by current conditions (economics and political climate) - 24% of the population
  - No issue content: based on personalities - 22% of the population

# How do Americans Participate in Politics?

- What is Political Participation?
  - All the activities used by citizens to express their political views and influence candidates, elected leaders or policies.
- What is Conventional Participation?
  - Voting in elections
  - Working in campaigns / running for office
  - Contacting elected officials
  - Donating \$

# What are other examples of political participation?

\***PROTEST:** A form of political participation designed to achieve policy changes through dramatic and unconventional tactics.

\***CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE:** A form of political participation that reflects a conscious decision to break a law believed to be immoral and to suffer the consequences to show the injustice

Example- Civil Rights lunch counter sit-ins

# How Americans Participate in Politics

- Class, Inequality, and Participation

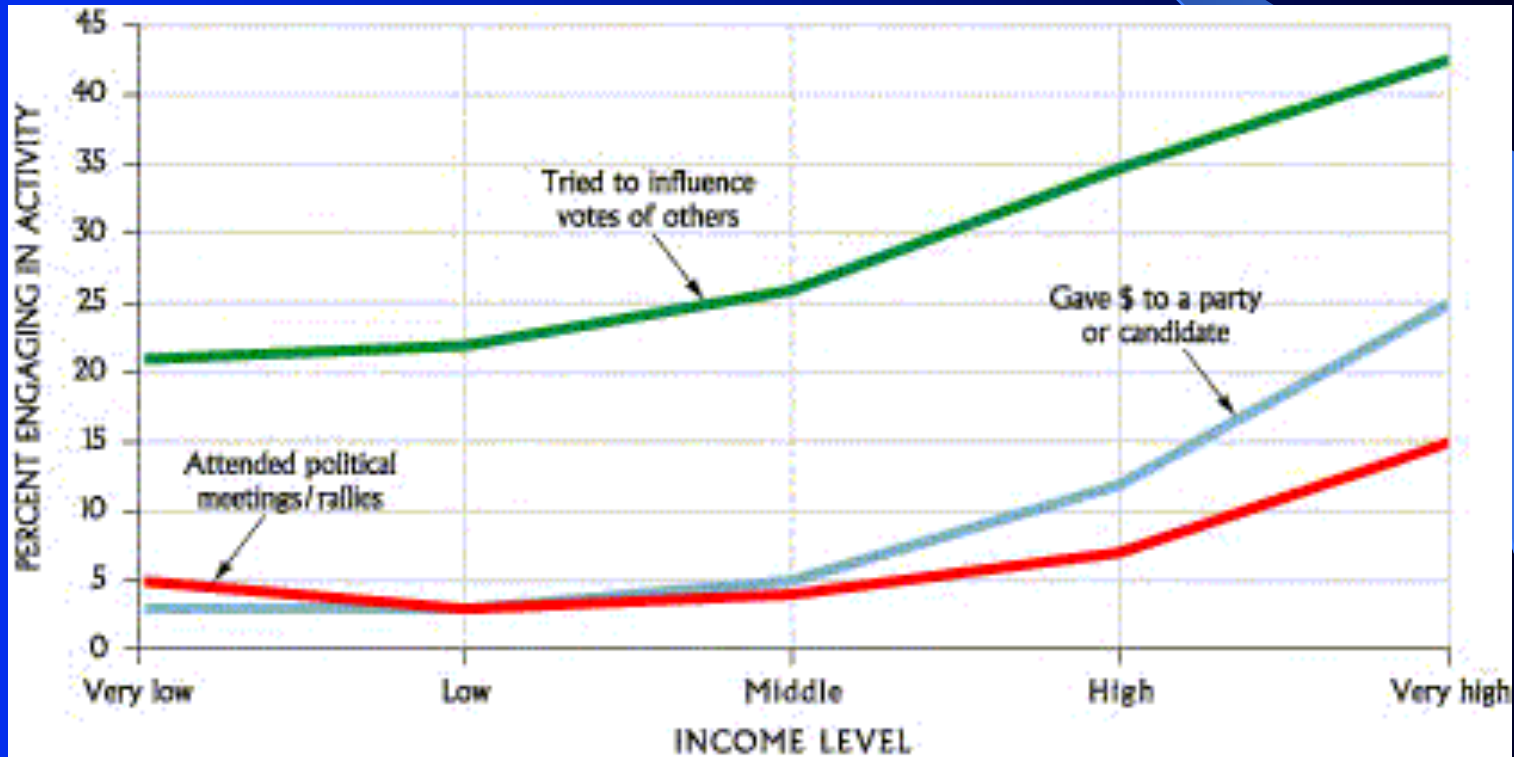


Figure 6.5

# Warm-Up

## Pair Questions

1. What is political ideology?
2. How is that different than political socialization?
3. Describe the **THREE** most common political ideologies in the U.S.

# Political Typologies

- Review our class results
- Comments / Questions?



# Men and Women and Political Ideology

- Men and women prioritize political issues differently and vote differently.
- This is referred to as a political Gender Gap

## ACTIVITY-

- Look at data in handout.
- Discuss with a table partner and answer the questions in your INB.

# What is the Gender Gap?

- **The gender gap in voting is the difference between the proportions of women and men who support a given candidate**

**[% Women for Winning Candidate] – [% Men for Winning Candidate] = Gender Gaper**

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
2016	Trump (R)	41%	52%
	Clinton (D)	54%	41%

# What is the Gender Gap?

- It is also the measurable difference in voting patterns between men and women that has persisted over decades of elections.
- Pattern= A greater percentage of women vote for Democrats rather than Republicans
- Why? What issues seem key for women?
- What are the effects of this pattern?

# Why does the Gender Gap Exist?

- Issues that women say matter to them most tend to also be issues Democrats prioritize
  - Equality in the workplace
  - Keep abortion legal
  - Aid for needy & families
- These issues usually require MORE government interventions (aid for needy, for example). This favors Democratic positions.

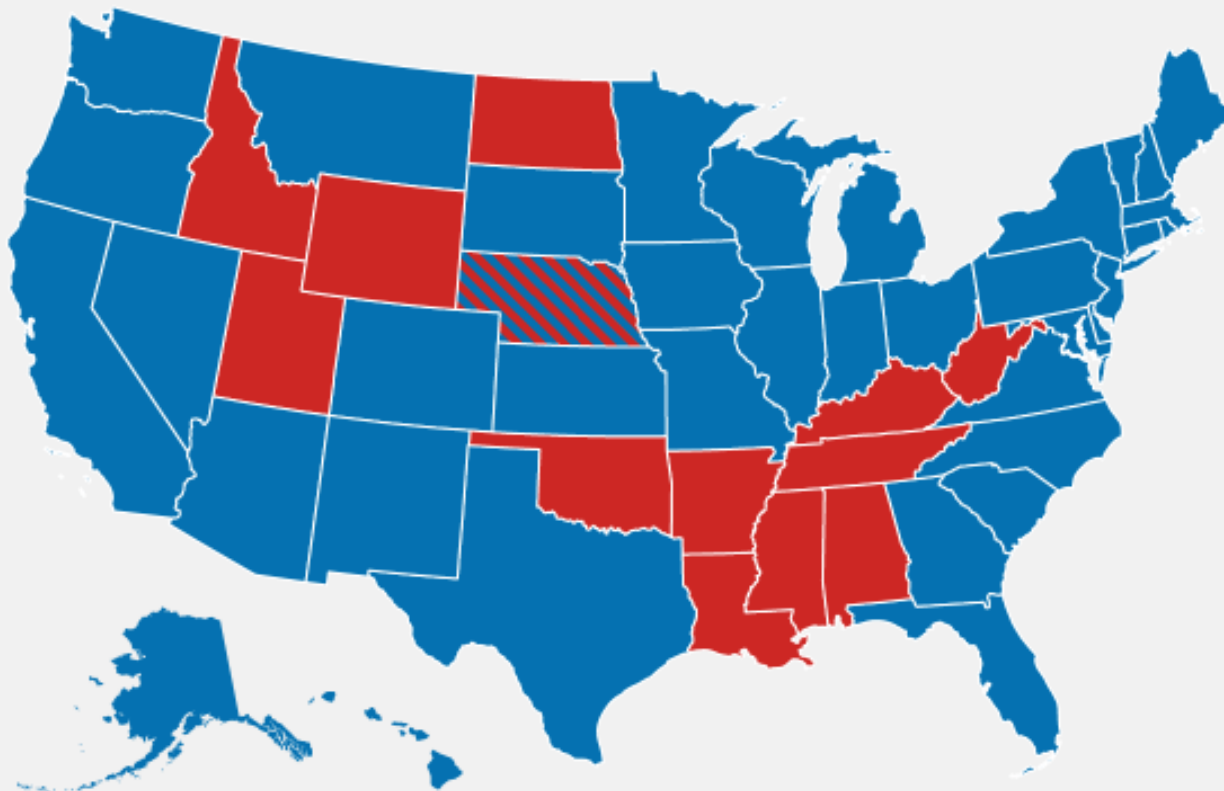
# What are the Effects of the Gender Gap?

- Neither party can ignore the issues women voters prioritize.
- These issues have been more traditionally part of the Democrat's party platform
- What could Republicans do to appeal to more women?

# Why do Women's Votes Matter?

# What 2016 would look like if just women voted

Based on the FiveThirtyEight polls-only forecast



Nebraska's 5 electoral votes

STATEWIDE: ■■  
DISTRICTS: ■■■

Maine's 4 electoral votes

STATEWIDE: ■■  
DISTRICTS: ■■

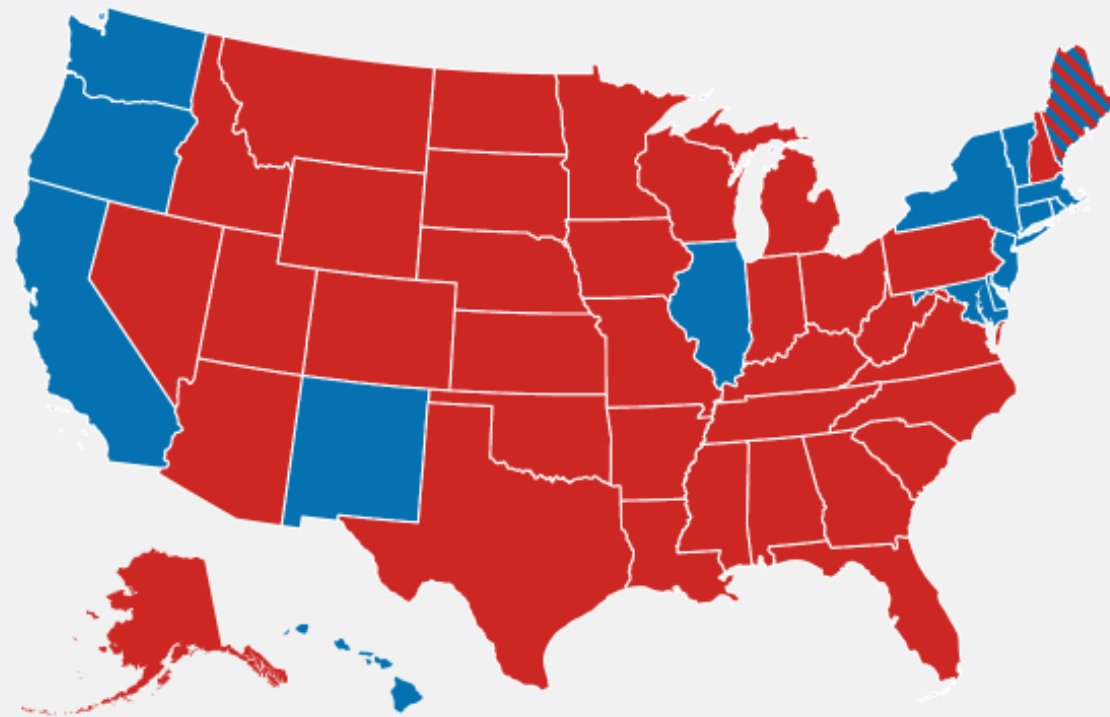
# What 2016 would look like if just men voted

Based on the FiveThirtyEight polls-only forecast

188 Clinton

ELECTORAL VOTES  
NEEDED TO WIN

Trump 350



Nebraska's 5 electoral votes

STATEWIDE: ■■  
DISTRICTS: ■■■■

Maine's 4 electoral votes

STATEWIDE: ■■  
DISTRICTS: ■■