

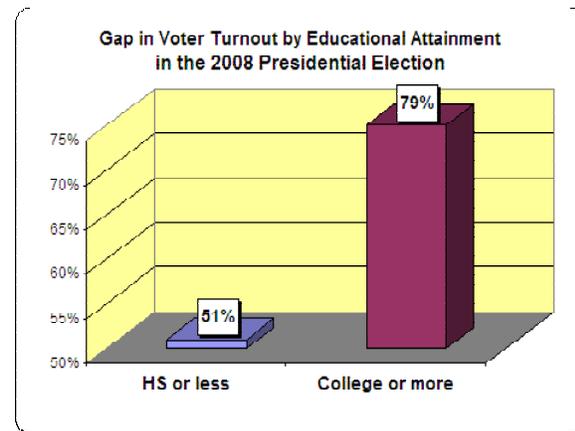
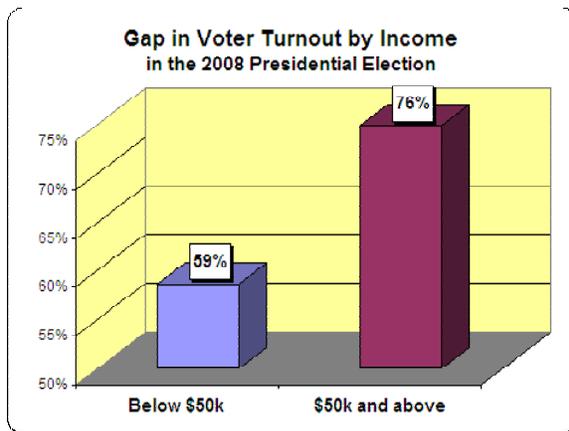
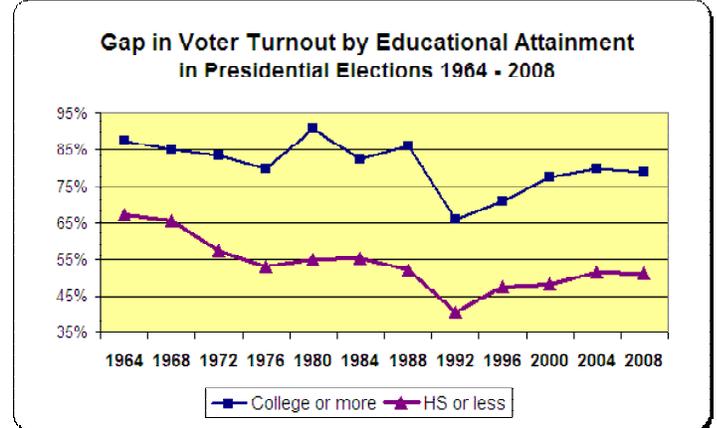
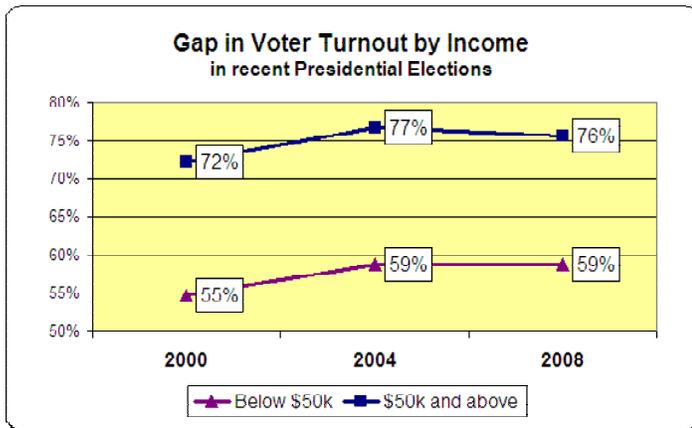
Voting Gaps in the 2008 Election

American democracy is challenged by large gaps in voter turnout by income, educational attainment, age, ethnicity and other factors. Closing these gaps will require sustained effort to understand and address the multiple reasons people with less education and lower incomes do not vote or are unable to vote in an otherwise higher turnout and higher profile presidential election.

In this brief report, we illustrate some of these gaps using simple line and bar graphs, pulling out the most pertinent facts.

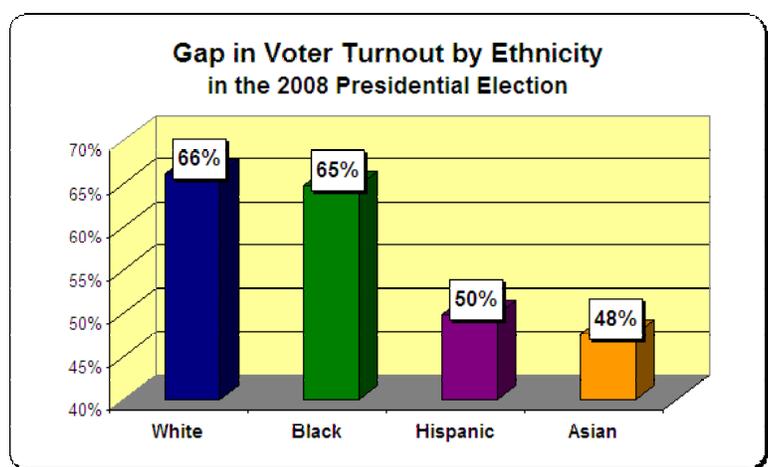
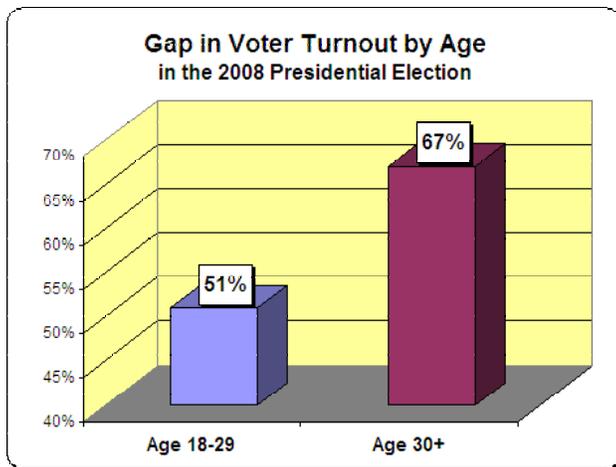
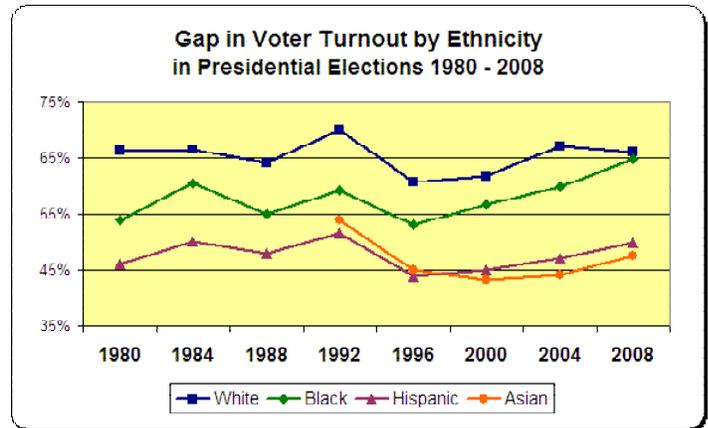
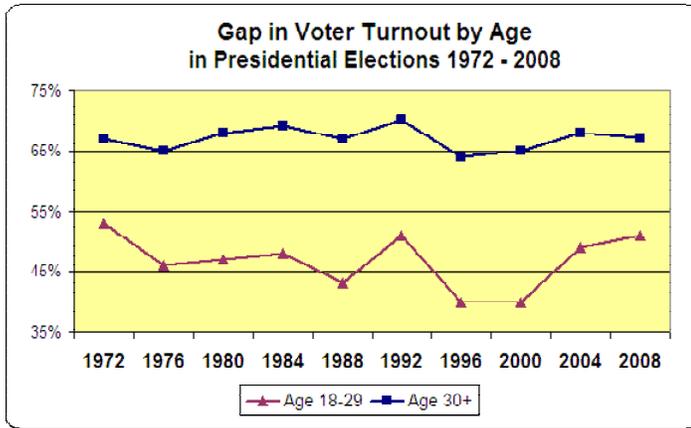
Gaps in Voter Turnout by Income and Educational Attainment

- People with more education and income are more likely to vote. These two gaps are closely related and have remained relatively unchanged over the last few decades
- In 2008 only 59% of the voting age population (VAP) with income of \$50,000 or less voted, while 76% of VAP with income over \$50,000 voted, a gap of 17 points
- The same gap is seen in those with a High School diploma or less (voting at 51% of VAP) and those with at least some college (voting at 73% of VAP), a gap of 22 points
- Closing these gaps will take broader mobilization and voter education strategies and changing election practices that disproportionately impact less educated and lower income voters.



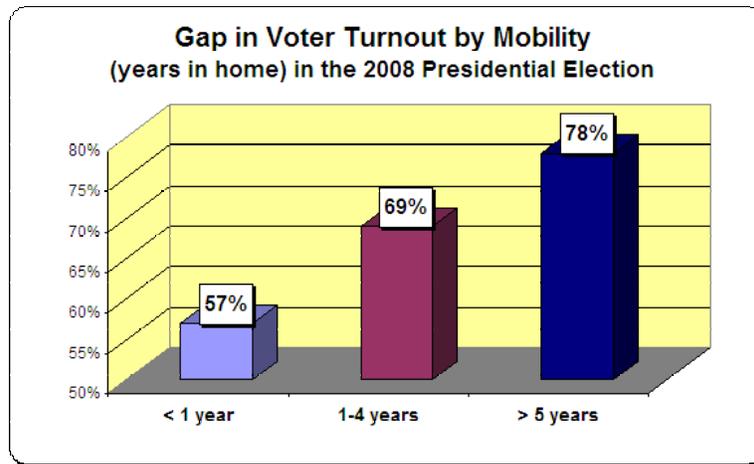
Gaps in Voter Turnout by Age and Ethnicity

- ❑ Young voters have turned out in greater and greater numbers in the last presidential elections, recovering from particularly bad years in 1996 and 2000
- ❑ A similar trend can be seen among African American voters, largely driven by African American youth and women. The same can be said for Hispanic and Asian Americans, though increases have not been as dramatic as they have African Americans
- ❑ In 2008 51% of the voting age population (VAP) aged 18-29 voted, while 67% of VAP aged 30 or over voted, a gap of 16 points
- ❑ In 2008, white voters and African American voters had nearly equal turnout (66% and 65%) for the first time since the Census began keeping records. Hispanic and Asian American voters continued to lag behind with turnout of 50% and 48% respectively



Gaps in Voter Turnout by Mobility

- The length of time an eligible voter has occupied their current residence is a strong indicator of their likelihood to vote. There is a likely correlation with income level and educational attainment, but difficulty registering to vote or finding ones polling location are also likely factors
- In 2008, the gap in voter turnout between those who had lived in their home for less than a year and those who had lived in their home for at least 5 years is 19 points, similar to gaps by income and education attainment



Methodology:

All numbers were obtained from the Census Bureau's November 2008 Current Population Survey supplement on Voter Registration and Turnout. Voter turnout is calculated as a percentage of Citizen Voting Age Population, i.e. US citizens ages 18 and up. To calculate the gap in voter turnout by income, the report we groups the CPS's detailed breakdown into those earning less than \$50,000 per year and those earning more. The same is done for turnout by educational attainment. Voters are divided into those with a High School diploma or less and those with a Bachelor's degree or more. We do not take into account those with some college or an associate's degree.

Figures on age and mobility also represent a grouping of the CPS's more detailed breakdown for each of these categories. For turnout by ethnicity, figures on white voters represent only non-Hispanic white voters. Figures for Black and Asian voters include those who also identify as Hispanic. Hispanic voters include all voters of any ethnicity who self-identify as Hispanic.