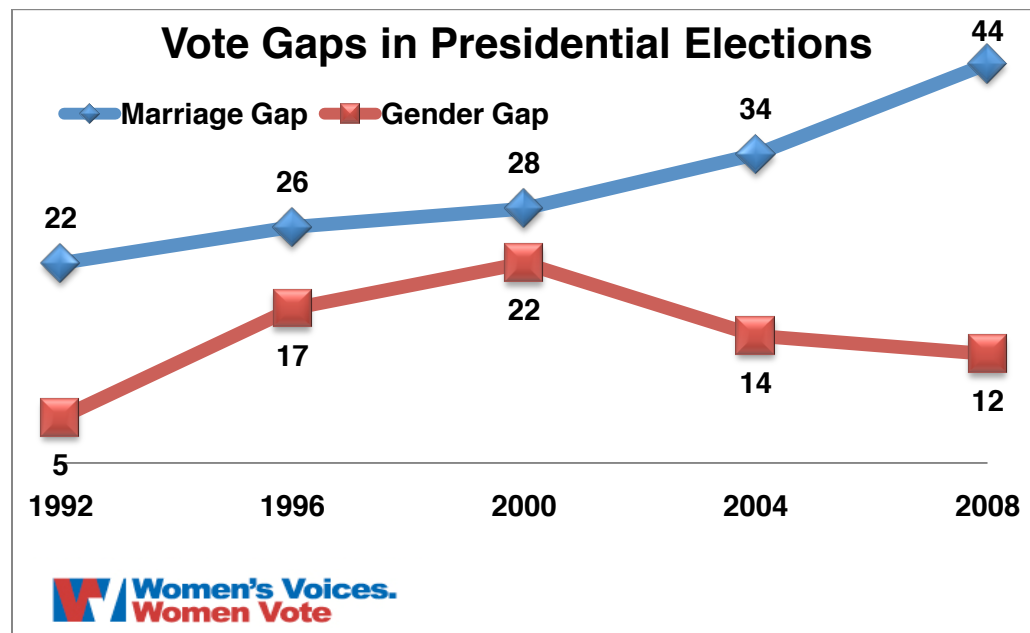




Fast Facts: The Marriage Gap

- Women's Voices. Women Vote discovered the marriage gap as a key dynamic in American politics today, with marital status being a strong predictor of whether one registers and votes.
- The marriage gap predicts a difference in voter participation and voting behavior between unmarried and married women.
- Married women are more likely to register and to vote than unmarried women. However, unmarried women are narrowing the gap, registering to vote and voting in increasing numbers.
- In 2004, unmarried women trailed married women by 9.4 percentage points in voter registration and by 13 percentage points in actual voting.
 - In 2004, married women registered at 78% (43,059,516), while unmarried women registered at 69% (32,603,778)
 - In 2004, married women voted at 71% (39,423,134), while unmarried women voted at 59% (27,857,568)
- In 2008, unmarried women trailed married women by 8 percentage points in registration, and by 11 percentage points in actual voting.
 - In 2008, married women registered at 77% (43,172,223), while unmarried women registered at 69% (34,897,075).
 - In 2008, married women voted at 71% (39,960,132), while unmarried women voted at 60% (30,454,383).

- Had unmarried women voted at the same rate as married women in 2008, an additional 5.6 million voters would have participated.
- Marriage gap vs. the gender gap
 - ✓ The gender gap is a descriptive term, whereas the marriage gap is a phenomenon that is predictive.
 - ✓ Despite the numerous differences among unmarried women -- unmarried women come from all walks of life, across a broad range of ethnic, racial, religious, age, and economic backgrounds -- election results show that they vote as a cohort, and that they tend to prefer progressive policies and candidates.
 - ✓ In presidential elections since 2000, the gender gap has been decreasing while the marriage gap has been increasing.



- ✓ In 2004, unmarried women voted for Kerry over Bush 62-37.
In 2008, unmarried women voted for Obama over McCain 70-29.

