

DO WOMEN VOTE FOR WOMEN?

The data below are the most comprehensive collection of publicly available data on how women and men have voted in Senate and gubernatorial contests since 1980. Because few states collect registration data by sex, we have to rely on exit polls to answer the question above. But exit polls are not available for many of the contests. The conclusion

1980

34 Senate contests, 5 women, 1 exit poll
13 gubernatorial contests, no women

In 1980, one woman, Paula Hawkins (R-FL), won a Senate race. Four women, including Holtzman, lost that year.

New York Senate Race

	Holtzman (D)	D'Amato (R)	Javits (I)	Voted*
W	42%	42%	16%	NA
M	37	46	17	NA

Source: ABC News 1980 Exit Poll.

Note: No exit poll data available for the Florida, Colorado, Nevada, or Kentucky races.

1982

33 senate contests, 3 women, 3 exit polls
36 gubernatorial contests, 2 women, 2 exit polls

In 1982, no woman won a Senate or a gubernatorial race.

Missouri Senate

	Woods (D)	Danforth (R)	Voted
Women	50%	49%	NA
Men	47	53	NA

Source: CBS News 1982 exit poll.

New Jersey Senate

	Lautenberg (D)	Fenwick (R)	Voted
Women	52%	45%	NA
Men	49	49	NA

Source: CBS News 1982 exit poll.

New York Senate

	Moyinhan (D)	Sullivan (R)	Voted
Women	71%	23%	NA
Men	69	26	NA

Source: CBS News 1982 exit poll.

Iowa Governor

	Conlin (D)	Branstad (R)	Voted
Women	47%	51%	NA
Men	46	53	NA

Source: CBS News 1982 exit poll.

Vermont Governor

	Kunin (D)	Snelling (R)	Voted
Women	49%	49%	NA
Men	43	55	NA

Source: CBS News 1982 exit poll.

1984

33 Senate races, 10 women, 4 exit polls
13 gubernatorial contests, 1 women, 1 exit poll

In 1984, one woman, Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS), won a Senate race (no exit poll data available for that race). Madeleine Kunin, the only woman competing in a gubernatorial race, won.

Minnesota Senate

	Grove (D)	Boschwitz (R)	Voted
Women	42%	58%	75%
Men	35	65	76

Source: ABC News 1984 exit poll.

New Jersey Senate

	Bradley (D)	Mochary (R)	Voted
Women	65%	35%	64%
Men	66	34	58

Source: ABC News 1984 exit poll.

Oregon Senate

	Hendriksen (D)	Hatfield (R)	Voted
Women	34%	64%	69%
Men	29	69	65

Source: CBS News 1984 exit poll.

Virginia Senate

	Harrison (D)	Warner (R)	Voted
Women	25%	75%	56%
Men	31	69	57

Source: ABC News 1984 exit poll.

Note: No 1984 exit poll data available for the Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico, Rhode Island, or Maine Senate Races.

Vermont Governor

	Kunin (D)	Easton (R)	Voted
Women	55%	45%	63%
Men	45	54	59

Source: CBS News 1984 exit poll.

1986

34 Senate races, 6 women (2 competed against one another), 4 exit polls
36 gubernatorial races, 9 women (2 competed against one another), 5 exit polls

In 1986, 1 women won a Senate race (Barbara Mikulski, D-MD defeated Linda Chavez, R). Madeline Kunin (D-VT) and Kay Orr (D-NE) won gubernatorial races (Orr defeated a woman).

Florida Senate

	Graham (D)	Hawkins (R)	Voted
Women	57%	43%	48%
Men	52	48	45

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Illinois Senate

	Dixon (D)	Koehler (R)	Voted
Women	69%	30%	47%
Men	65	34	48

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Indiana Senate

	Long (D)	Quayle (R)	Voted
Women	40%	58%	50%
Men	41	56	48

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Missouri Senate

	Woods (D)	Bond (R)	Voted
Women	54%	46%	48%
Men	42	57	45

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Arizona Governor

	Warner (D)	Mecham (R)	Schulz (I)	Voted
Women	43%	35%	21%	47%
Men	30	42	27	45

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Connecticut Governor

	O'Neill (D)	Belaga (R)	Voted
Women	63%	37%	46%
Men	56	42	47

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Nevada Governor

	Bryan (D)	Cafferata (R)	Voted
Women	75%	24%	44%
Men	69	29	41

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

Oregon Governor

	Goldschmidt (D)	Paulus (R)	Voted
Women	52%	47%	65%
Men	50	49	64

Source: ABC News exit poll.

Vermont Governor

	Kunin (D)	Smith (R)	Sanders (I)	Voted
Women	52%	35%	13%	59%
Men	37	48	16	58

Note: No exit poll data are available for the 1986 Alaska gubernatorial race.

Source: ABC News 1986 exit poll.

1988

33 Senate races, 2 women, 1 exit poll
12 gubernatorial races, 2 women, 2 exit polls

In 1988, no woman won a Senate race, but Madeleine Kunin (D-VT) successfully defended her gubernatorial seat.

Wisconsin Senate

	Kohl (D)	Engeliter (R)	Voted
Women	54%	45%	71%
Men	51	49	70

Source: ABC News 1988 exit poll.

Note: No exit poll data available for Hawaii Senate race.

Note: Women candidates are in bold. The races shown are those in which the women competing received at least 10% of the vote. *Percent of voting age population of the state who reported in November Census survey that they voted in the general election.

we draw from the limited data is that with a few exceptions (Gov. Kunin is one), women have not voted for women in significantly greater numbers than men have*. Is this changing? In three (CA, OR, TX) of the twelve 1990 races for which we have data, significantly more women than men voted for the woman candidate.

Vermont Governor

	Kunin (D)	Bernhardt (R)	Voted
Women	60%	38%	66%
Men	47	52	62

Source: ABC News 1988 exit poll.

Missouri Governor

	Hearnes (D)	Ashcroft (R)	Voted
Women	35%	64%	66%
Men	31	67	63

Source: ABC News 1988 exit poll.

1990

33 Senate races, 8 women, 6 exit polls
33 gubernatorial races, 8 women, 6 exit polls

In 1990, Nancy Kassebaum successfully defended her Senate seat, but there were no other female Senate winners. Women won gubernatorial seats in Texas, Kansas, and Oregon.

Colorado Senate

	Heath (D)	Brown (R)	Voted
Women	46%	51%	51%
Men	38	61	50

Source: Voter Research and Surveys 1990 exit poll.

Delaware Senate

	Biden (D)	Brady (R)	Voted
Women	66%	33%	38%
Men	58	40	39

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Hawaii Senate

	Akaka (D)	Saiki (R)	Voted
Women	54%	44%	52%
Men	54	45	51

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Kansas Senate

	Williams (D)	Kassebaum (R)	Voted
Women	21%	78%	54%
Men	31	69	51

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

New Jersey Senate

	Bradley (D)	Whitman (R)	Voted
Women	54%	46%	43%
Men	49	51	41

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Rhode Island Senate

	Pell (D)	Schneider (R)	Voted
Women	61%	39%	53%
Men	62	37	53

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Note: No exit poll data are available for the 1990 Virginia and Wyoming Senate races.

California Governor

	Feinstein (D)	Wilson (R)	Voted
Women	58%	42%	44%
Men	42	58	41

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Kansas Governor

	Finney (D)	Hayden (R)	Voted
Women	49%	44%	54%
Men	50	44	51

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Oregon Governor

	Roberts (D)	Frohn-mayer (R)	Mobley (I)	Voted
Women	56%	29%	14%	56%
Men	38	47	13	52

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Nebraska Governor

	Nelson (D)	Orr (R)	Voted
Women	48%	49%	59%
Men	49	49	57

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Pennsylvania Governor

	Casey (D)	Hafer (R)	Voted
Women	66%	33%	42%
Men	68	32	43

Source: VRS 1990 Exit Poll.

Texas Governor

	Richards (D)	Williams (R)	Voted
Women	59%	41%	42%
Men	44	56	41

Source: VRS 1990 exit poll.

Note: No exit poll data available for the 1990 Alaska or Wyoming Governor races.

In the past, in the general election data we show to the left, women have occasionally voted for women candidates in significantly greater numbers than men have (defined as a 10 percentage point spread or more). In both of her gubernatorial races, for example, Madeleine Kunin of Vermont drew many more votes from women than from men. But these tend to be isolated, not typical occurrences.

In two of the Senate primary contests this year—in Pennsylvania and Illinois—significantly more women than men voted for the woman who was running. Dianne Feinstein did not get many more votes from women than from men this year in her Senate primary contest, but she did in her 1990 race for Governor, though she did not win. Men and women appear to be voting at roughly the same rate in all of the contests we examined from 1984 (when the Census first began collecting state turnout data by sex) through 1990.

1992

Illinois Democratic Primary, Senate

	Braun	Hofeld	Dixon
Women	43%	26%	31%
Men	34	28	38

Source: VRS exit poll, March 17, 1992.

Pennsylvania Democratic Primary, Senate

	Yeakel	Singel	Colville
Women	55%	29%	11%
Men	40	37	16

Source: VRS exit poll, *New York Times*, April, 29, 1992.

California Democratic Primary, Senate

	Feinstein	Davis	Alioto
Women	61%	32%	5%
Men	58	35	5

	Boxer	McCarthy	Levine
Women	47%	27%	21%
Men	39	36	22

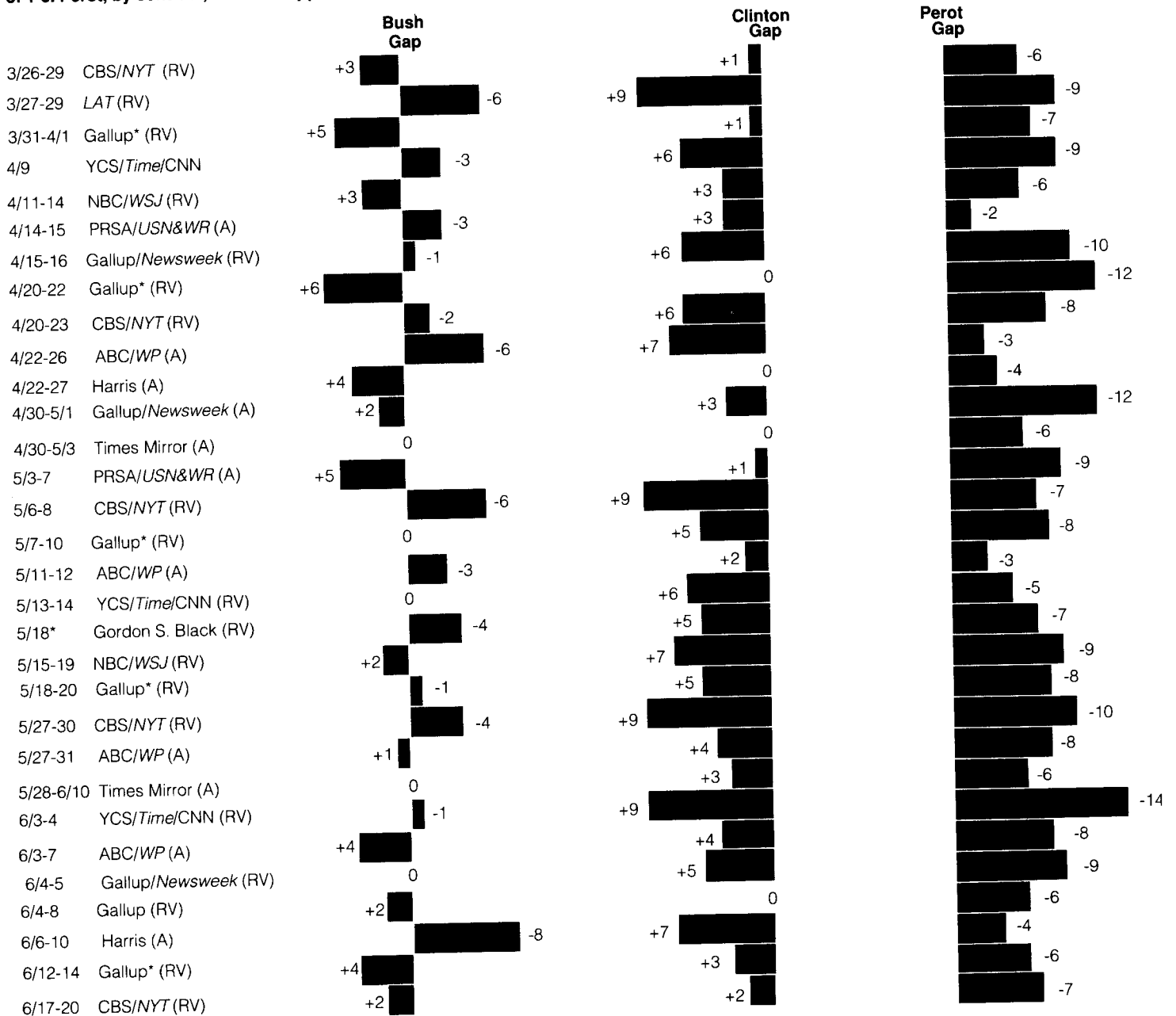
Source: VRS exit poll, *New York Times*, June 9, 1992

Note: *We define as "significant" a 10 percentage point or more difference in the support of women for women.

THE GENDER GAP IN 1992

What does the gender gap—that is the difference between men's and women's preferences—look like now in the presidential contest? For Bush, it doesn't have any particular shape. Perot, by contrast, is consistently stronger among men than women, and Bill Clinton has an edge among women voters.

How to read this chart: In the March CBS/NYT poll, 45% of women supported Bush and 42% of men did. Thus, Bush had a gap of +3. Perot, by contrast, had the support of 13% of women and 19% of men, producing a gap of -6.



Note: *Gallup survey conducted for USA Today and CNN.