

MONTANA
Winner: Republican

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After much research, I feel that the “Treasure State” will vote Republican in November of 2008. The states history of voting is a huge factor in my prediction that the state will swing red along with its demographic makeup. Although John McCain did not win the Republican caucus in February (Leip, 2008) in Montana, I still feel that Montanans will choose him for the general election.

Historically, Montana has voted Republicans into the White House much more than they have Democrats. Between 1952 and 2004 Montana has consistently voted Republican with the exception of Johnson in '64 and Clinton in '92 (Leip, 2008). Montana, although typically a swing state, voted with an overwhelming majority for Bush in 2000 and 2004 indicating a support for the war (Leip, 2008). For example, Bush beat out Gore in 2000 by over 100,000 votes winning with a 58% majority lead. Montana once again showed Bush a 59% advantage in 2004 when he ran against Kerry who only received 38% of the vote (Leip, 2008). Montana has also kept a Republican Governor in Helena since 1992 with the exception of Democrat Brian Schweitzer in 2004 who won only by a mere 4% (Leip, 2008). Since 1996 Montana has had a Republican U.S. House Representative and in previous years only lost to the Democratic Party by a small percentage (Carle, 1996; Trandahl 1998-2004; Miller, 2006). In the February Caucus, Montana gave the majority Republican vote to Mitt Romney who has been considered to be more conservative than his former running mate, John McCain. This is another indication that Montana will vote for any Republican over Senator Clinton or Barrack Obama in the upcoming general election.

The demographic makeup of Montana is a great indicator for determining the outcome of the November general election. According to Census reports, Montana is comprised of 90% white Americans (Gill, 2004) making them the overwhelming majority. Native Americans make up the largest minority group at only 6% totaling the minority population to only 10% overall. As discussed in POLS 3037 with Dr. Baumgartner, studies show that minorities tend to lean more liberal voting for Democrats and with only 10% of this states vote, a Democratic nominee does not have a great chance for a victory. With a population of 926,865, an outstanding 2/3 of the population is considered rural (Gill, 2004). Similar demographic studies from POLS 3037 also show that rural Americans are more likely to cast a vote for a Republican nominee, and with a huge majority of Montana's population being rural, one could conclude again that the “Big Sky Country” will vote for John McCain in November 2008.

Although the state of Montana does not track party affiliation, one could assess that Montana has voted with a Republican majority since the early 1950's. In conclusion, I predict Montana giving all 3 electoral votes to John McCain in the November 2008 election due to its previous voting record and statewide demographics.

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