

**HANDOUT**

# 2000 ELECTION



**GEORGE W. BUSH**  
and Dick Cheney

POPULAR VOTE: 50,459,211  
ELECTORAL VOTE: 271

**REPUBLICAN**



**AL GORE**  
and Joe Lieberman

POPULAR VOTE: 51,003,894  
ELECTORAL VOTE: 266

**DEMOCRAT**

This was the closest and most disputed election in modern U.S. history. On election night the TV networks initially predicted Gore the winner but later retracted that as Florida results became too close to call. A month later the election was still in dispute when the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5 to 4 decision, handed down the ruling which resulted in George W. Bush being declared the winner.

George W. Bush was **Governor of Texas** and **son of former President** George H. W. Bush.

**“Compassionate conservative”** was Bush’s self-definition.

Both parties supported **tax cuts** but Bush favored deeper cuts than Gore.

Bush advocated allowing young workers to invest portions of their **Social Security** payments.

**Bush targeted** religious conservatives, white males, and rural voters.

For the first time the Republican Convention featured African American, Latinos, and women as keynote speakers, emphasizing **diversity** in the party.

**John McCain** challenged Bush in the Republican primaries calling for campaign finance reform.

The governor of **Florida** (where the disputed election took place) was George W. Bush's brother, Jeb Bush.

Talk-show mania prevailed as both major candidates appeared repeatedly on TV and radio.

Suburban voters were key targets of both major campaigns, and the majority of advertising money was spent in the 15 “battleground states” where polls showed the outcome could go either way.

Al Gore was the **incumbent Vice President**.

**Clinton’s ethical problems** affected Gore’s campaign when Bush demanded that Gore denounce the President.

Gore chose Joe Lieberman as his running mate, the **first Jewish candidate** to be named on a national ticket.

Gore was portrayed as a smart but wooden **“policy wonk”** by his opponents.

Gore advocated putting Social Security and Medicare in a secure **“Lock Box”** so it couldn't be used for tax cuts or other federal expenses.

**Gore targeted** African Americans, college-educated women, and union members.

Senator and former NBA star **Bill Bradley** challenged Gore in the primaries.



**RALPH NADER**  
and Winona LaDuke

POPULAR VOTE: 2,834,410  
ELECTORAL VOTE: 0

**GREEN PARTY**

Green Party candidate Ralph Nader criticized both of his opponents for accepting large donations from corporations and special interest groups. Nader was not invited to participate in the debates. He may have drawn enough liberal votes away from Gore to hand the election to Bush.

The outcome of the election of 1876 was strangely similar to that of 2000. Democrat Samuel Tilden won the popular vote, but lost by one electoral vote to Rutherford B. Hayes who was named President. It took four months before the disputed election was finally decided by an 8-7 vote of a special electoral commission named by a divided Congress. The controversy came down to a quarrel over disputed votes in Florida with suggestions that newly enfranchised African American voters had been intimidated and turned away from voting.

## **Lessons on the Web**

The following lessons from the 2000 Presidential Campaign have been deleted from the 2nd edition of *Media Construction of Presidential Campaigns*. They can be found on the web at [www.projectlook-sharp.org](http://www.projectlook-sharp.org).

2000 doc. #3: Convention Entrances

2000 doc. #5: Election Campaign Web Sites

2000 doc. #6: Comic Strips

2000 doc. #8: *Newsweek* Article: "But Where's the Salsa?"

2000 doc. #9: *Newsweek* Sidebar: "Faith is Busting Out All Over"