

HANDOUT

# 2004 ELECTION



**GEORGE W. BUSH**  
and Dick Cheney

POPULAR VOTE: 62,040,610  
ELECTORAL VOTE: 286

**REPUBLICAN**

George W. Bush was the **incumbent President**.

Bush campaigned as a **strong and decisive leader** in response to the **9/11/2001** terrorist attacks.

Bush was a wartime president, having attacked Afghanistan and Iraq as a part of the ongoing **War on Terror** during his first term.

Bush won the support of those who based their vote on the issues of **terrorism** or "**moral values**."

Bush was attacked in the controversial film **Fahrenheit 9/11**, which debuted in the summer of 2004, attracting record numbers for a documentary film.

Bush won in the **Great Plains, the Mountain States and the South** where his solid majority sealed the "Republican South," a region where Democrats once were the majority.

Republicans increased their numbers in both Houses of Congress.



**JOHN KERRY**  
and John Edwards

POPULAR VOTE: 59,028,111  
ELECTORAL VOTE: 251

**DEMOCRAT**

John Kerry was a U.S. **Senator from Massachusetts**.

Kerry defeated a field of **nine challengers** for the Democratic nomination after former vice-president Al Gore decided not to run again.

Kerry's **slogan** was, "Stronger at home, respected in the world."

Kerry criticized Bush for incompetence in the **Iraq War**, which he said was a distraction from the War on Terror.

Kerry himself was criticized as a "**flip-flopper**" for having voted to support the **war in Iraq** and then speaking out against it.

Kerry was a decorated Vietnam War veteran who had become a leader of **Vietnam Veterans Against the War**. Some Vietnam-era vets criticized him for being **dishonest and unpatriotic** for his antiwar activities.

Kerry won the support of those who were critical of the **war in Iraq** or whose focus was on **economic issues and health care**.

The 2004 election saw a record turnout. Seventeen million more citizens voted in 2004 than had voted in 2000, an increase of 16% (Ceaser 10). This was the largest such increase in 50 years. The election was close enough that the winner was not decided on Election Day. Ohio turned out to be the key battleground state. Critics there complained of faulty voting equipment and disputed provisional ballots but Kerry decided against a legal challenge. He conceded on the day after the election, with both candidates urging unity and common purpose in the wake of a bitter campaign.