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### **Party Identification: The Disappearing Gap**

Republicans have just about caught up with Democrats in party identification among registered voters. The University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey, with interviews of 8,091 registered voters this fall, finds that 33.7 percent call themselves Democrats and 32.5 percent say they are Republicans. That lead was statistically insignificant, given the survey's margin of sampling error of plus or minus one percentage point.

In the 2000 election the NAES found a wider differential between Republicans and Democrats. Then, 33.7 percent of the 44,877 registered voters interviewed called themselves Democrats, and 29.9 percent called themselves Republicans. That difference was outside the margin of sampling error of one half of one percentage point.

The closing of the gap was reflected in major demographic groups such as age, sex, race, and ethnicity. In cohorts where Democrats had an advantage in 2000, their lead narrowed by 2003. Among groups where Republicans led in 2000, those leads were wider in 2003.

The same shifts between 2000 and 2003 were evident in the population as a whole – registered and unregistered. But in the entire population, Democrats still held a clear if slim advantage, with 32.6 percent of the 10,670 adults polled compared to 29.1 percent for the Republicans. That was outside the margin of sampling error of plus or minus nine tenths of one percentage point. But the gap had been wider in 2000, when 31.9 percent of the public called themselves Democrats and 27.0 percent said they were Republicans. In the 2000 campaign, 58,373 people were interviewed.

**-See Tables Below-**

Table 1: Registered Voters

Year		Republicans	Democrats	Independents
2000	Total	29.9%	33.7%	26.7%
<b>2003</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>25.0</b>
2000	Men	32.1	28.0	30.0
<b>2003</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>28.6</b>
2000	Women	28.0	38.8	23.9
<b>2003</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>21.7</b>
2000	18-29	29.2	30.6	27.2
<b>2003</b>	<b>18-29</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>27.5</b>
2000	30-44	32.2	31.8	26.0
<b>2003</b>	<b>30-44</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>24.8</b>
2000	45-64	28.1	34.5	28.6
<b>2003</b>	<b>45-64</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>26.1</b>
2000	65 +	30.1	38.0	24.2
<b>2003</b>	<b>65 +</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>39.5</b>	<b>21.3</b>
2000	Blacks	5.2	67.9	18.5
<b>2003</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>68.0</b>	<b>17.2</b>
2000	Hispanics	21.6	46.3	21.2
<b>2003</b>	<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>24.5</b>

Note: Margin of sampling error for 44,877 respondents in the 2000 election (interviewed between Dec. 14, 1999 and Jan. 19, 2001) is plus or minus one half of one percentage point. Margin of sampling error for 8,091 respondents in 2003 (interviewed between Oct. 7 and Dec. 22) is plus or minus one percentage point.

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**Table 2: All Respondents**

		<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>
2000	Total	27.0%	31.9%	21.8
<b>2003</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>26.1</b>
2000	Men	28.7	26.9	31.5
<b>2003</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>29.1</b>
2000	Women	25.5	36.5	25.0
<b>2003</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>23.2</b>
2000	18-29	24.5	27.9	29.8
<b>2003</b>	<b>18-29</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>28.5</b>
2000	30-44	28.3	29.8	28.1
<b>2003</b>	<b>30-44</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>26.2</b>
2000	45-64	26.4	33.7	29.0
<b>2003</b>	<b>45-64</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>26.8</b>
2000	65 +	28.8	38.1	24.2
<b>2003</b>	<b>65+</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>21.3</b>
2000	Blacks	5.9	62.2	20.4
<b>2003</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>62.9</b>	<b>18.7</b>
2000	Hispanics	18.0	34.4	27.7
<b>2003</b>	<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>27.5</b>

Margin of sampling error for 58,373 respondents in the 2000 election (interviewed between Dec. 14, 1999 and Jan. 19, 2001) is plus or minus four tenths of one percentage point. Margin of sampling error for 10,670 respondents in 2003 (interviewed between Oct. 7 and Dec. 22) is plus or minus nine tenths of one percentage point.

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