

Who participates in Politics?

Chapter 8, Theme C

Pop Quiz 8

1. Give 2 examples of election fraud.
2. Give 2 demographic features of an “inactive” citizen.
3. Give 2 demographic features of an “activist” citizen.
4. Identify 2 forms of political participation other than voting.
5. Which of the 6 proposals did you find to be the best?

Explaining Voter Turnout

- Decline in popular interest in elections
- Weakening of competitiveness between political parties
- Decline more apparent than real:
 - Voters were more easily manipulated in past
 - Voter fraud prevalent (Public polling, Party ballots, floaters “voted early and voted often” and parties counted and the padded ballots) before Australian Ballots adopted around the turn of century.

Explaining Voter Turnout

- **Political withdrawal**- fewer citizens felt close enough to or care about government to be interested in voting
- **Rational ignorance effect**- when people purposely decide not to become informed on an issue because they believe that their vote on the issue is not likely to be a deciding one; a lack of incentive to seek the necessary information to cast an intelligent vote

Explaining Voter Turnout

- Unintended consequences of stricter voter restrictions
 - Registration process reduced voting
 - Education requirements of the Progressives in the early 1900s caused a drop in voter turnout

Suggestions to improve voter turnout

1. Compulsory voting
2. Make elections less complicated and infrequent
3. Institute proportional voting
4. Strengthen the 2-party system
5. Vote on weekends
6. Make election day a holiday

Which is best? Pro & cons of this system?

Six forms of participation

Explain each label and develop a profile:

- In-actives
- Activists
- Voting Specialists
- Campaigners
- Communalists
- Parochial Participants

Using “How do we vote?” sheet, develop a profile.

Ways to participate in politics, other than voting

For each of the following: 1) explain the political advantage of the participation method 2) determine a profile of who would likely employ the action:

- 1. Contacting officials or letter writing**
- 2. Attending protests or rallies**
- 3. Campaign work or voter registration drives**
- 4. Campaign contributions**
- 5. Joining a overtly political organization**
- 6. Running or holding political office**
- 7. Litigation**
- 8. Holding political discussion to persuade others**

Causes/Factors for Participation (Graph on p. 193)

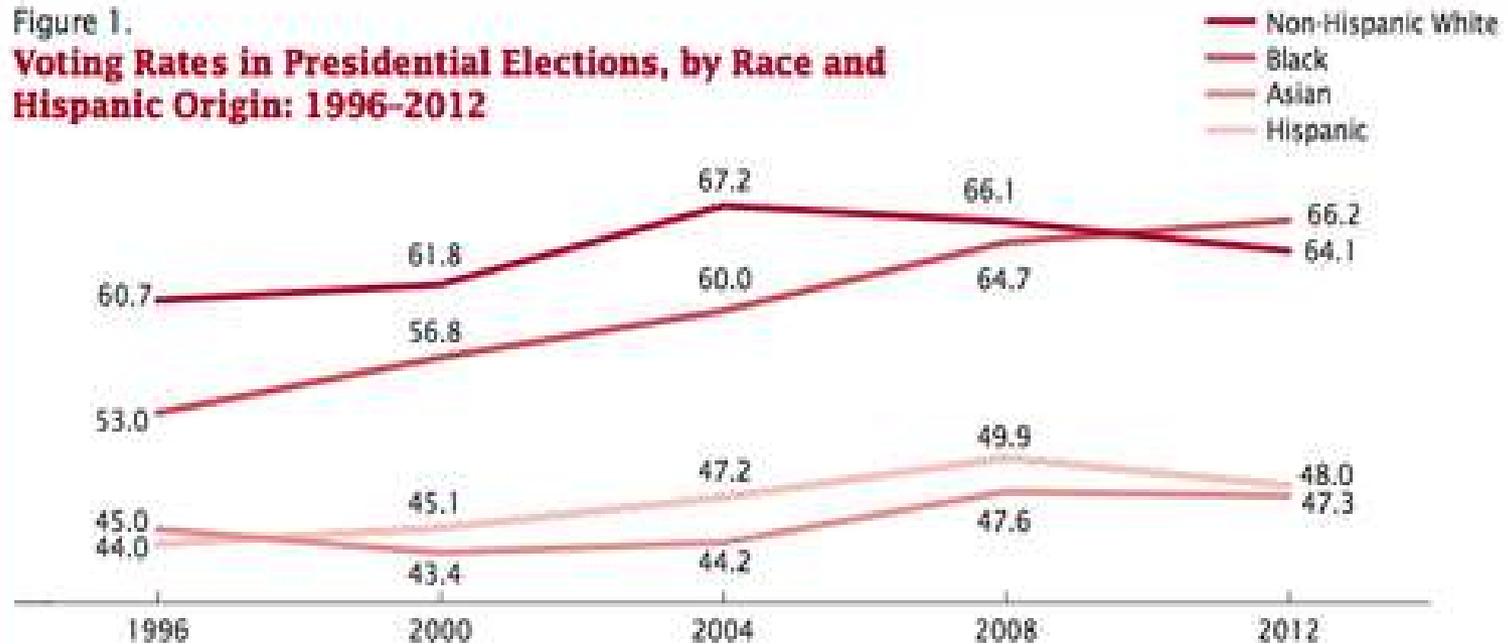
- 1. Education**
- 2. Religion**
- 3. Gender**
- 4. Ethnicity**
- 5. Age**
- 6. Socio-Economic Status**
- 7. Two-Party Competition**
- 8. Geographic Region**

How do each of these affect a person's voting participation?

Develop a profile of a person most likely to vote using these 8 factors.

Race

Figure 1.
Voting Rates in Presidential Elections, by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1996-2012



1. Which racial group had the lowest turnout in 2008 & 2012?
2. Which racial groups had the highest in 2008? In 2012?
3. Using these trends develop a profile of who is likely to vote and who is least likely to vote?

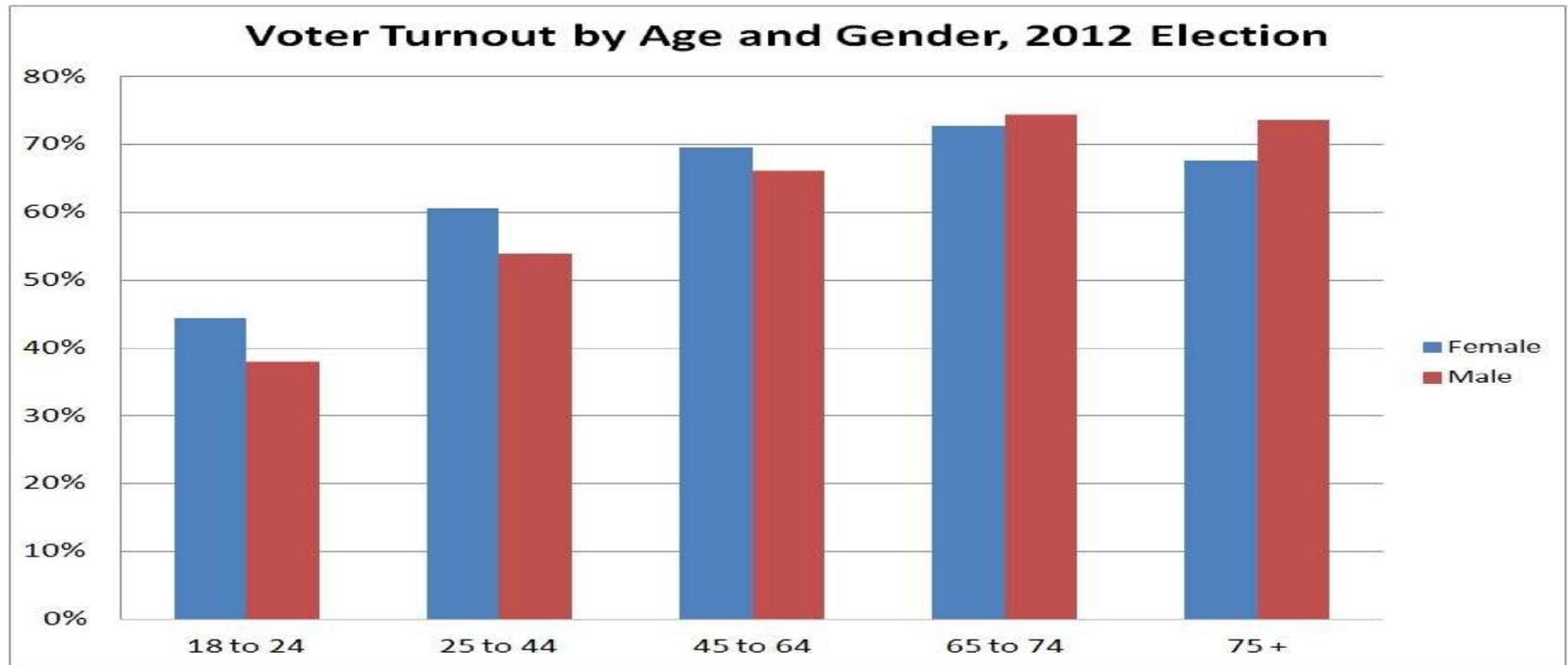
Age

Age	2008		2012		Change	
	<u>Total</u> (in 1,000s)	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Total</u> (in 1,000s)	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Total</u> (in 1,000s)	<u>Percent</u>
<i>18 to 24 years</i>	12,515	48.5	11,353	41.2	-1,162	-7.3
<i>25 to 34 years</i>	19,501	57.0	18,977	53.5	-524	-3.5
<i>35 to 44 years</i>	22,865	62.8	20,965	61.2	-1,900	-1.6
<i>45 to 54 years</i>	27,673	67.4	26,120	65.3	-1,553	-2.1
<i>55 to 64 years</i>	23,071	71.5	25,893	70.7	2,822	-0.8
<i>65 to 74 years</i>	14,176	72.4	17,182	73.5	3,006	1.1
<i>75 years and over</i>	11,344	67.8	12,459	70.0	1,115	2.2

CPS Citizen Voting-Age Population Turnout Rates by Age, 2008 and 2012

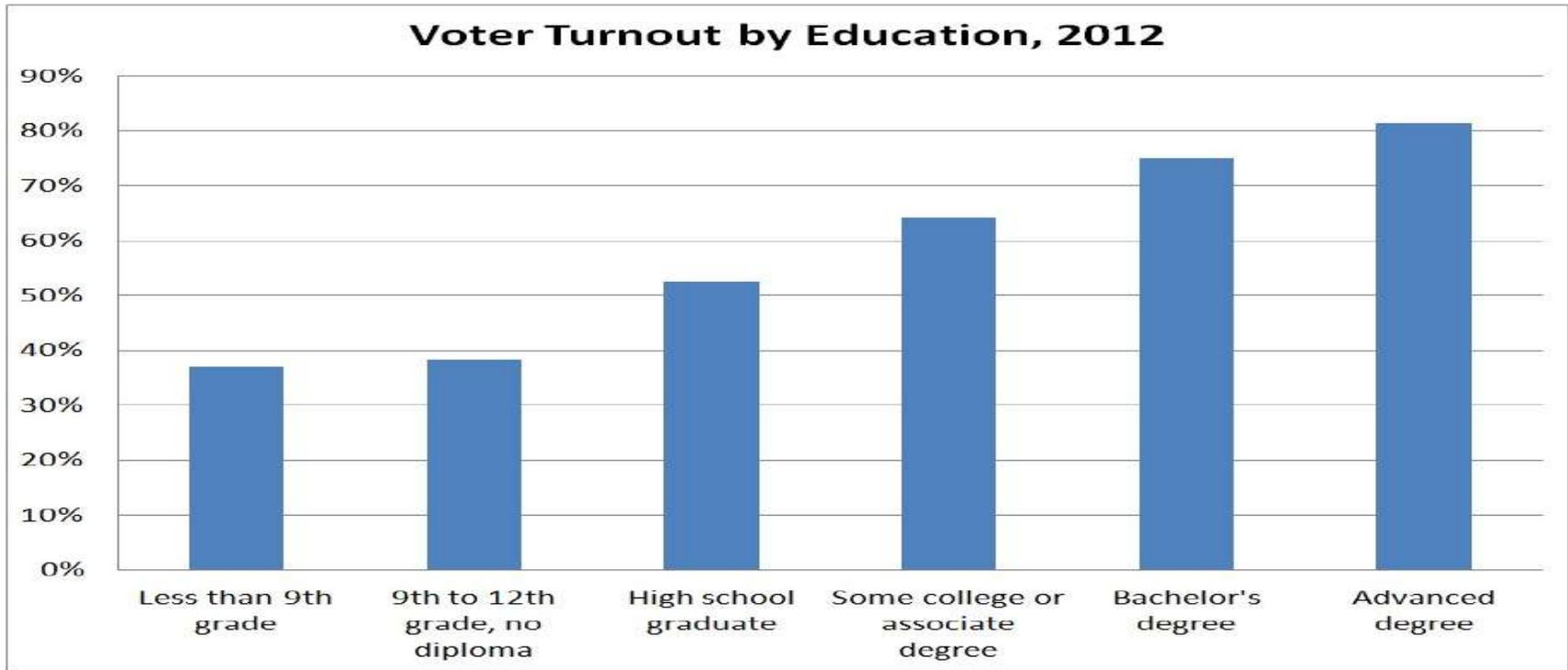
1. Which age group had the most voters in 2008 & 2012?
2. Which age group had the fewest voters in 2008 & 2012?

Gender & Age



1. What trends do you notice?
2. How do you explain these trends?

Education Levels



How would you expand your descriptions of the most likely voter vs. the least likely voter?

Making it easier to vote or Guarding against fraud?

- What measures have Democrats taken in the last 25 years?
 - Have these been successful in increasing turnout?
 - Have these led to a increase in the elections won by Democratic candidates?
- What measures have Republicans taken in the last 25 years?
 - Have these been successful in stopping fraud?
 - Have these led to a increase in the elections won by Republican candidates?

Culminating Activity

- **Divide into SIX small groups.**
- **Each group will be assigned a proposed voting policy.**
- **As a group determine the pros and cons of your proposed policy.**
- **Which party would be more likely to favor such legislation & why?**
- **As a committee, make a recommendation as to whether or not the policy should be adopted.**
- **Report to the class.**

Culminating Activity

- **Read p. 197.**
- **What two values of American political culture are in conflict by implementing a fine for not voting?**
- **Which side do you think public opinion would support & why?**
- **Which party would be more likely to favor such legislation & why?**
- **Do you think such a measure would improve our government? Why or why not?**