

H 15, 2000
LINE

Industrial average slumps
plummets 200.61 points to
yield falls to 6.09%. 1A, 1B,
6.03 points to 187.86. 4B,
in 63 points, 0.3%, to 19,079
'9 per dollar. Hong Kong's
ints, 1.0%, to 16,765.

HARGED: Michael Ska-
w of Ethel Skakel Kenne-
late Sen. Robert Kennedy,
d in the 1975 Connecticut
path of Martha Moxley, his
neighbor. 8A.

AY SAFETY: Federal
s will begin granting par-
ity to pilots whose errors
away close calls if pilots say
incidents happened. 4A.

VOICE MAIL: After en-
omplaints, state govern-
-ngress are scaling back
phone mail systems. 3A.

There are more than 100
-Canadian border. Yet, as
ered, crossing is easy. 21A.

A: In Silicon Valley, where
ld, stock options have be-
Why, even some landlords

giant Fannie Mae set to
minorities, women, im-
ne-ownership rates. 8A.

for gay couples. In USA
treats gays fairly, without

Don't want counterfeit mar-
-t says. 30A.

February, the latest signal
ring economy. 1B.
y storm, and the govern-
1B.

o insider trading. 1B.
o others are falling. 3B.
x back in the suds. 20B.

Elliott marks return from
am dunk. NBA. 1,4,7C.
on the mat. 1C.

made from snake venom
rival drug. 1D.
The Final Word. 1D.
or the albatross. 6D.

ritten by John O. Buckley

Travel twist
Do you want an ex-
citing vacation but
don't want to break
much of a sweat?
Somewhere between
climbing hard rocks
and supping on soft-
serve, a new kind of
adventure travel is
taking shape.

DDAY 4 SECTIONS
ossword 9D
itorial/Opinion 30-31A
tories 11C
arketplace Today 9D
ate-by-state 14A
ocks 4,6,15-16,18B

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Bush and Gore clinch nominations

Full report, 10-12A



By Luke Frazz, Agence France-Presse
Victors: Vice President Gore addresses
a rally Tuesday night in Tallahassee, Fla.
At left, Texas Gov. George W. Bush and
wife Laura take in their victory in Austin.
By Eric Draper, AP

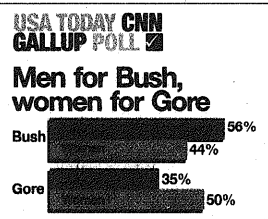
Women hold the key

In a close race, female vote might deliver victory

By Susan Page
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Texas Gov. George W. Bush initially won over some key swing voters who often vote Democratic with a message of "compassionate conservatism" and an emphasis on education. But many of them are moving back to Vice President Gore, making the presidential race nearly even.

The voters: Women. Specifically, married women in suburbs and small towns who have children at home and full-

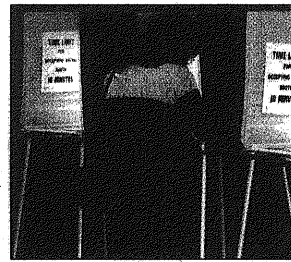


Alejandro Gonzalez, USA TODAY

COVER STORY

time jobs. They include not only the upscale "soccer moms" who gained renown in 1996, but also less affluent "waitress moms." Together they make up about 20% of the electorate and might hold the key to the White House this year.

"It's a huge group and it's the margin of victory," Democratic pollster Celinda Lake says. "There are other groups who would like to get, but these voters already have shown real



By Jack Dempsey, AP

The difference? Though Gore holds the advantage with female voters, Bush has made inroads.

swing" between the candidates.

When Bush was scoring double-digit leads over Gore in national polls last year, it was due to his wide lead among men and narrow lead among women. Now Bush's overall lead has nearly vanished because Gore has regained support among women, although he still trails distant among men.

If the election were held today, women would elect Gore president by a narrow 50%-44% margin, according to a USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll during the weekend. Men would elect Bush by a yawning 56%-35% margin. That margin gave Bush an overall lead over Gore of 49%-43%.

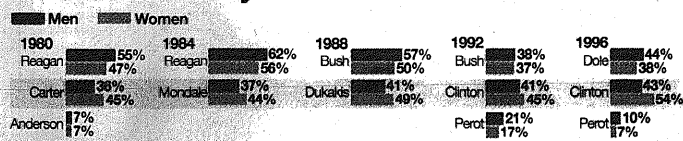
The telephone survey of 502 likely voters has a margin of error of +/-5 percentage points.

Despite the gains Gore has made in recent weeks, the battle for female voters is a sign of weakness as the general election campaign effectively begins. He is being forced to defend a traditional Democratic advantage against a determined Republican campaign.

If he succeeds in holding the

COVER STORY next page >

Women more likely to vote Democratic



By Alejandro Gonzalez, USA TODAY

Heart group revising fat guidelines

By Nanci Hellmich
USA TODAY

Dean Ornish, who says the heart association now allows too much fat

The new guidelines are scheduled to be released in May or June after

Nasdaq plunges on biotech shake-up

201-point slide comes
2 days after record close

By Matt Krantz
USA TODAY

A blowup in biotech stocks Tuesday infected the entire Nasdaq, sending the tech-heavy index to its second-worst point loss and down 7% in just two days since a record close.

President Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair triggered the slide by declaring that genomic research belongs "to scientists everywhere."

Investors feared that if the government forces biotech companies to share their research, it will be tougher for them to turn science into profits. As a result, investors sent the American Stock Exchange biotech index down 13%; it was down 31% from just last Thursday.

That helped send the Nasdaq from an early 106-gain to a 201-point loss at Tuesday's close of 4707. That 4.1% loss didn't rank among the index's 10 biggest percentage drops.

The Dow Jones Industrials and Standard & Poor's 500 fell 1.4% and 1.8% respectively.

Some wondered whether the biotech panic could further unnerve Wall Street. "Investors are looking for any news the tech bull its coming to an end," said Jim Paulsen, strategist at Wells Capital Management. "And biotech has been the leader."

"The government's been funding gene research for a decade," says Rachel Leheny of Warburg Dillon Read. "It needs something to show for it."

The selloff wasn't even rational, says Al Rauch of First Union Securities. Companies that would benefit from more research being made public, such as Millennium Pharmaceuticals, also fell.

► Worldwide database urged, 3B

Biotech's hit hardest

	Tuesday close	Change
Millennium Pharmaceuticals	176	-\$68.5
Human Genome Sciences	123.5	-\$29
Immunex Corporation	153.9	-\$31.4
Incyte Pharmaceuticals	143.5	-\$53.5
Sequenom	94.5	-\$30.5

Source: MSN MoneyCentral Investor

By Marcy E. Mullins, USA TODAY

Jammed lines leave Census callers helpless

By Haya El Nasser
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The Census Bureau's telephone help line was clogged with 636,000 calls Monday, the first day most questionnaires arrived.

Lines to the toll-free number, 1-800-471-9424, were so jammed that about 20% gave up.

"Of all of our operations right now, it's the one we're most concerned about," Census Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt said Tuesday.

Census officials were taken aback by the volume of calls so soon. Forms are still going out.

In the 1990 Census, calls didn't flood in until a week after the forms were sent. The bureau hadn't planned to beef up its staff until next week.

Now officials are scrambling. Phone operators will go from 3,000 to 9,000 by Monday.

Some callers are using the help line as a gripe

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Male voters are solidly behind Bush

Continued from 1A

support of women, Gore then will have to address his deficit among men, where Bush has widened the traditional Republican advantage.

At the moment, though, both Bush and Gore are wooing women in every way they can: the words they use, the issues they emphasize, the audiences they choose to appear before and the ads they air.

COVER STORY Can Bush win them back? He did well with female voters in Texas, splitting women's votes evenly in 1994 against an incumbent Democratic woman, Ann Richards, and winning 65% of women's votes in his runaway reelection in 1998.

"Gov. Bush talks frequently in a way that Republicans usually don't about the needs of women," campaign spokesman Ari Fleischer says. In his stump speech, Bush says single mothers have "the toughest job in America" and casts his tax-cut plan as helping them. In TV ads, he has emphasized his record on education — an issue with appeal to women.

"I know it sounds goofy, but this is how I look at the election: If I were to leave my children with one of the presidential candidates, whom would I want them to be with?" says Brenda Bidoli, 38, of Duncansville, Pa. She was one of the women surveyed. Bidoli, whose children are 8 and 11, says she plans to vote for Bush.

Whitney Merrill, 29, of Dawson Spring, Ky., wrestles with similar issues and plans to vote for Gore, although her original choice was Republican John McCain. A graphic designer who runs a small business out of her home, Merrill gave birth to her first child two weeks ago.

"Especially just having had a son and everything, I'm really scared about the whole public school system" and highly publicized incidents of violence involving children, she says. "I really wish they could get the gun thing with kids under control."

Primary advantage

Both Bush and Gore have the presidential nominations in hand, in part because of the disproportionate support they received from women in the primaries. Democratic rival Bill Bradley, a former New York Knicks basketball player, and GOP rival John McCain, a heroic prisoner of war in Vietnam, each drew heavier support from men than women.

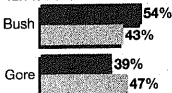
Of course, women don't form a monolithic voting block any more than men do. But women as a group



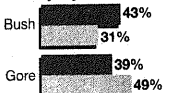
Conyers, Ga.: Donna Windham, with daughter Grayson, voted on March 7, Super Tuesday.

Having dinner, watching kids

Men Women
With whom would it be more fun to have dinner?



Whom would you trust more to babysit your children?



Source: USA TODAY/CNN/ Gallup Poll of 502 likely voters, Friday-Sunday. Margin of error: 3 percentage points.

By Alejandro Gortalez, USA TODAY

have voted in notably different ways from men since Ronald Reagan's 1980 campaign spawned the phenomenon known as the gender gap. Since then, every Democratic presidential candidate has fared better among women than men.

This time, Bush aims to neutralize that Democratic advantage, including with his relative youth and likability. "He's a very open and expansive person, and it's clear women are comfortable with that," Republican pollster Linda Divall says. He seems more likely to understand modern-

day women's lives than, say, the 73-year-old Bob Dole did in 1996.

One of Gore's top strategists, Bob Shrum, scoffs at Bush's chances of success once his record is scrutinized. "They think saying the word 'education' is the same thing as having an education policy," he says, arguing that Bush's rightward steer during the hard-fought South Carolina primary already has cost him the "compassionate conservative" label.

Other Democrats acknowledge that keeping female voters has become the first must-do task of Gore's general-election campaign. "If Bush can get them, it would be a big problem," says Lake, who occasionally advises the Gore campaign.

"Bush is going to do better among women than any Republican candidate since his father" received 50% of female vote in 1988, GOP pollster Frank Luntz predicts.

What's his strategy?

"There is a language one can use that doesn't scream 'gender'" but does appeal to women by striking themes they care most about, says Kathleen Hall Jamieson, dean of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. "If women hear that you're identifying with them without shouting, 'I'm appealing to you,' it's a far more effective message and one that's less likely to alienate men."

So when Bush attacked McCain before last week's Super Tuesday primaries for failing to support funding for breast cancer research, he was appealing to moderate women.

"This is how I look at the election: If I were to leave my children with one of the presidential candidates, whom would I want them to be with?"

— Brenda Bidoli, 38

When Gore pushes his plan to expand prescription drug coverage in Medicare, he is speaking to women, a group that is more likely than men to care for aging parents.

Roderick Hart, a University of Texas professor and author of a new book, *Campaign Talk*, on the language of campaigns, says "education" has become a code word for female voters.

Consider the candidates' speeches last week after winning the Super Tuesday contests and vanquishing their party rivals.

► Bush began by thanking Phyllis Whiting, a teacher from Houston who introduced him, for her work in "one of the most important jobs in America." Then he highlighted a litany of issues with special appeal to women.

"We must... be a party of inclusion, a party with a generous heart and an open door," he said. He promised to "reach across party lines to strengthen and preserve Social Security" and said, "As president, I am going to rescue children from failure and return excellence to American education."

► Gore began by thanking his wife, Tipper, "the love of my life," who had introduced him. He called "for an America of tolerance and high ideals" and said his campaign would be a "cause" for strengthening Social Security and Medicare, expanding health care, protecting the environment and bringing about "revolutionary improvements in education." In a comment that would resonate with Whitney Merrill, the graphic designer, he added, "If your heart is burdened with the news of a gun death of a 6-year-old in a first-grade classroom at the hand of a classmate, then join us now for common-sense (gun control) measures."

The male vote

What about men?

The flip side of the gender gap is men, now solidly in Bush's camp. In the latest USA TODAY poll, only

about one in three men backed Gore. "We'll make gains there over the course of the campaign," Shrum insists.

In time, aides say, Bush will focus on increasing his support among men with an argument that he has the experience necessary to continue the economy prosperity — the economy being the same sort of top-tier issue for many men that education is for many women.

In the current survey, men say Bush would be better at handling the economy and taxes, and at "ensuring that the next generation can live better than their parents"; women pick Gore as better in all three categories.

Men say Bush would be better at dealing with "the problems of raising children in today's culture"; women pick Gore. Men say Bush would better deal with the rising price of gasoline; women pick Gore.

"Women like candidates who compromise more, and they're more inclined to candidates who are compassionate — no surprise there," says Andrew Kohut, director of the non-partisan Pew Research Center. But men "consistently give Gore significantly lower ratings on whether he is a 'strong leader.'"

Kohut says Gore's clean-cut image might put off men.

"What hurts him is this image of coming across as the kid who always won the spelling bee," Kohut says. "Men just hate that."

The dueling views of the candi-

dates extend even to the frivolous. In a USA TODAY poll, men say they'd prefer to have dinner with Bush; women chose Gore. Men say they'd trust Bush more to babysit their children; women chose Gore.

On more substantive issues, men and women often have different priorities and different perspectives. They differ in their view of government and their sense of the fragility of their world, factors that make women more likely to vote Democratic.

"A majority of women say government could help the average family while a majority of men say government is more the problem than the solution," Lake says. "When you ask, 'Do you think you or someone in your family could need a safety-net program in the next 10 years?' two-thirds of women say 'yes' and two-thirds of men say 'no.'"

Many female voters now feel "cross-pressured," she says, feeling that Gore is better on issues such as education and health care while Bush is better on values like responsibility and discipline.

"Moral issues is one of the main things this country lacks," says Rosemary Dean, 44, of Clarksville, Ohio. She is backing Bush for his stance against abortion and his moral values, saying Gore is "shadowed" by his association with President Clinton and his personal scandals.

Gloria Caban, 39, of Bronx, N.Y., says Bush may be a stronger leader, but she is looking for other qualities in the next president.

"At one time we needed protection, to show we were a power, but we're not in that position nowadays," she said in a phone interview amid sounds of working in the kitchen, fixing dinner. "So I'm looking for things that will matter to me at home."

She shares a characteristic of many of the working mothers: a strong desire for a good night's sleep. Besides raising her children, ages 11 and 15, she works as an early childhood education teacher during the day and attends school at night for her master's degree.

"I go to bed exhausted," she says.



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