

## The Gay Vote in 2006

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Here's [an analysis](#) (PDF) from the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**, a far left group. The data, however, are clear and the report admirably lays out the empirical evidence, based on exit polls of self-identified gay, lesbian and bisexual voters. Demographically, and in terms of geography, income and background, gays should split pretty much like the rest of the country. But the GOP's attack on gay dignity has alienated many - and made gay voters the third most reliable Democratic voting bloc (Jews and blacks are more loyal). Two slightly surprising factoids: One in five gay voters has a child under 18 living in his or her home (Mary Cheney is not an anomaly). Gays are slightly more likely to vote Independent than straights. Here's the money quote from the authors:

While it is easiest to notice how many LGB voters are liberals and how few are conservatives, we should note that LGB voters are about as likely to say that they are moderates as is the rest of the electorate. LGB voters also are slightly more likely than all other voters to say they are Independents. This combination means that the electoral capture of the LGB vote by the Democratic Party is not complete.

At the moment, the data indicate revulsion by LGB voters to the hostility toward gay people that has been manifested by some of the most visible members of the Republican Party's leadership. The data also indicate that, in terms of family heritage and other demographic variables, we should expect LGB Americans to be just about as Republican as anyone else.

So the Democrats cannot take this group for granted. Many of us share basic small-c conservative ideas - limited government, individual freedom, strong defense - but have been forced out of the tent by the Christianists. If the GOP wanted gay votes, they could gain a lot by dropping the hostility. Equally, if the Democrats treat gays solely as ballot-fodder, and do not deliver any pro-gay policies, they may not be able to rely on Karl Rove to rally their base next time.