

Chicago ideopolis, backed George H.W. Bush against Michael Dukakis in 1988 64 percent to 36 percent; in 2000, it supported his son by just 50 percent to 48 percent, with 2 percent going to Nader. In general, Illinois' ideopolis counties have gone from about a 50-50 split in 1988 to a 59-39 Democratic margin in 2000, while the Democratic disadvantage in the rest of the state—a shrinking share of the electorate—has remained steady at about 7 percentage points.

New Jersey. In the '80s, Reagan and Bush won the first and third biggest counties, Bergen in the North and Middlesex in the center, by comfortable margins. But in the 1990s, the central and northeastern sections of the state became almost a continuous ideopolis. The state's largest occupational group—and fastest growing—consists of professionals, who make up 23.3 percent of the workforce compared to 15.4 percent nationally. Counties like Bergen and Middlesex moved sharply Democratic. Bill Clinton in 1996 and Gore in 2000 took the two counties by identical margins: 14 points in Bergen and 24 points in Middlesex. In Bergen County, Gore won 65 percent of college-educated white voters, including 77 percent of college-educated white women. In the state, he won voters with postgraduate degrees (usually a good indication of professionalism) by 62 percent to 34 percent. At the same time, he won 88 percent of the black vote and 58 percent of the Hispanic vote (which includes pro-Republican Cubans from Union City.)

But what of the Republican Solid South? The changes that have swept through California, Illinois, and New Jersey are affecting politics there. Take Florida, which the Republicans desperately need to keep in their column. As Florida's high-tech and tourist centers have grown dramatically, they have also moved sharply Democratic. For example, Orlando's Orange County, once the center of Florida agriculture, has become a major entertainment center and a home for

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■ THE SINGULAR virtue of John Judis' and Ruy Teixeira's *The Emerging Democratic Majority* is that it knows who's bein' born and who's busy dying. In the wake of George W. Bush's so-called election victory in 2000, a passel of polemicists passing as political analysts prophesied the renewal of the Republican ascendancy of 1980. Karl Rove (building on themes from Newt Gingrich) saw the victory as 1896 all over again.

As William McKinley had won his race by representing the new industrial order at the turn of that century, so Bush had won his by representing the new postindustrial order of today. Michael Barone saw the Republican tide rising in the fastest-growing counties and among churchgoers in this most devout of countries.

It's hard to say which of these analyses was worse. By the time of the 2000 election, Gingrich—whose idea of the postindustrial economy was the beach volleyball industry—had passed from the scene (as had big time beach volleyball). His contention, and Rove's, that the Republicans were the party of the new was belied by every bit of political and economic data that can be gleaned from studies of the 2000 vote. And it was Barone who couldn't tell if a GOP majority was coming or going, as he mistook a decline in churchgoing for a rise and held that the rapid percentage growth of some sparsely settled rural counties betokened a new Republican era. The problem with Barone's New Republican majority is that it moos.

In another, but not all that distant, part of the forest, DLC pollster Mark Penn blamed Al Gore's defeat on his failure to motivate a sufficient number of "wired workers," the paradigmatic figures of our New Economy. That contention is hard to sustain unless you believe that customarily

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Fellow Travelers

The coming Democratic majority will be drawn from the top and bottom of the Information Age economy.

|| by **Harold Meyerson**

Democratic but pro-Bush states such as West Virginia and Tennessee are high points of high-tech.

No such pseudo-science afflicts the Judis-Teixeira study. The coming of the postindustrial order, they argue, has been marked by social, economic, and geographic changes that all help Democrats. Economically, the new order has greatly increased the ranks of professionals in America (now 21 percent of the electorate), who more and more support social liberalism and regulated capitalism. Socially, it has led to the entry of more women into the workplace, increasing that group's commitment to civil and social rights. And, it has turned much of America into a land of ideopolises—metropolitan areas where the manufacture and exchange of ideas has surpassed the manufacture and exchange of things, and where a liberal and once exclusively urban culture now pervades the 'burbs.

Ideopolises tend to vote Democratic, the authors demonstrate. States that have them vote Democratic; states that don't—Kentucky, Montana, Mississippi—vote Republican. But the latter are a dying breed.

Judis and Teixeira document in detail that there's one more factor that signally helps the Democrats—the political consequences of immigration, chiefly Hispanic immigration. The political transformation of California to the most Democratic state in the union, of Illinois to a solid Democratic state, and of Florida to a state that

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LATINOS AND LABOR: In California, unions have played a key role in mobilizing Hispanic voters.



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now tilts slightly Democratic, is inexplicable absent immigration from Mexico and Central America. Indeed, I'd argue that the Latinoization of America is as important as the ideopolization of America to the coming Democratic realignment. Historically, all previous Democratic realignments (all two—Andy Jackson's and FDR's) involved bringing new working-class elements into the electoral system, and the coming realignment is no different. The reason behind the transformation of, say, northern Orange County, Calif., from the loony-right stomping grounds of the John Birch Society and Bob Dornan into a reliably Democratic region isn't that northern Orange County has become notably postindustrial but that it's gone from all-white to all-Latino in 30 years.

The politicization and mobilization of the new immigrant community is in many locales the handiwork of the Sweeney-era labor movement, just as the politicization of the Eastern European steel and autoworkers of the 1930s was the handiwork of the CIO. Judis and Teixeira acknowledge the heightened effectiveness of labor's

political program over the past seven years, but I think they understate just how important to the Democrats' short- and long-term prospects it really is.

Based on all these trends, Judis and Teixeira prescribe what they call "progressive centrism" for Democrats in search of majority status. By this, they mean support for civil and women's rights (including the right to an abortion), environmentalism, (re)regulated capitalism, greater social protections (say, more universal health coverage), and a populism that targets big business in a time of plutocracy. They get no quarrel from me on any of this. Where we differ a bit is on the need for incrementalism in pursuing a progressive agenda. Popular skepticism of government, they argue, is such that no sweeping universal programs are imaginable. But in arguing that Democrats have a negative image as big spenders on programs that helped precious few, they are forgetting the biggest program of all: Medicare, which is a political untouchable. The difference, of course, is that Medicare is a universal program for all seniors, not a means-tested or racially targeted set of benefits. Does that mean a universal program like universal health insurance can be enacted in one fell swoop? Not likely,

alas. But it does mean that if our health system continues its trajectory toward implosion and if no partial fix seems remotely adequate to the challenge of insuring and reinsuring the American people, the public's anti-statism could likely be eclipsed by the public's pragmatic acceptance of a non-incremental solution.

Finally, what do we make of the new-model Democratic Party that Teixeira and Judis so convincingly sketch? It is in some ways the opposite of Roosevelt's, which was characterized by (working) class cohesion on economic issues and constant tension on racial issues. The two fast-growing major groups in today's party are professionals and Latinos, the latter chiefly concentrated in low-wage, non-union jobs in service, construction, and manufacturing. In short, there's no class cohesion this time out, but there is widespread support for civil rights. In this party of the future, there would be agreement on increased funding for schools, probably on a higher minimum wage and more comprehensive health care, maybe on increasing worker rights, but maybe not on pro-corporate globalization policies. But whatever the disagreements, they would take place within the majority party. ●

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computer services. Democrats lost Orange County by 37 percent in 1988; in 2000, Gore won it by 2 points.

But the changes are not just in Orange County. As the table shows, since 1988, Democratic strength has dramatically increased in all five counties of the state that added the most people during the last decade—Fort Lauderdale's Broward County, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Tampa's Hillsborough County, as well as Orange County. It's not hard to see where Florida's political future lies.

As the postindustrial economy grows, change is coming to the rest of the South as well. As North Carolina has moved away from reliance on textiles and tobacco, it has become more receptive to a progressive centrist politics. All the state's postindustrial areas have become more Democratic since

1988. Dukakis lost Charlotte's Mecklenberg County 59 percent to 40 percent in 1988, but Gore lost it only by 51 percent to 48 percent in 2000, even though he did not campaign in the state (Clinton carried it by 3 points in 1996). The Democrats' edge in Durham County in the Research Triangle increased from 54 percent to 45 percent up to 63 percent to 35 percent over the same time period. In the Raleigh metro area as a whole, Gore edged Bush by a point, up from a 5 point Democratic deficit in 1988.

Virginia's premier postindustrial area, the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., where AOL and many of the nation's telecommunications firms are headquartered, has also been moving Democratic. Fairfax has gone from a 61 percent to 38 percent Republican margin in 1988 to a 49 percent to 47 percent Bush margin in 2000, with 3 percent to Nader. Arlington went from a 53 percent to 45 percent Democratic edge to a 60 percent to 34 percent Democratic advantage, with 5 percent to Nader,

over the same time period. If these suburban voters keep increasing their proportion of the Virginia vote, and if they continue to trend Democratic, they could very well tilt Virginia back to the Democrats, even in presidential elections. Certainly, Democratic Gov. Mark Warner's recent victory suggests this is a very real possibility.

But what about all those fast-growing edge counties and sprinkler cities that Barone and Brooks write about? Won't the increasing weight of these pro-Republican counties tilt these states and others back toward the Republicans? That's not likely for two simple reasons. First, most of these counties aren't very big (the 50 fastest growing average 109,000 in population), so their high growth rates translate into only modest increases in actual Republican voters. These modest increases pale in comparison to the additional Democratic voters provided

§§ The politics of these ideopolises **emphasizes tolerance** and openness. It is **defined** by the professionals, many of whom were **deeply shaped** by the social movements of the '60s. §§

by populous metropolitan counties (the 50 largest growing average 1.46 million) that had the largest increases in population. Al Gore gained a 2.7 million vote advantage from the 50 largest growth counties; George W. Bush gained only a 500,000 vote advantage from the 50 fastest growing counties.

Second, as these edge counties and sprinkler cities get bigger and become more integrated into a metropolitan area, they typically become more Democratic (call it the "ideopolis effect"). Combined with their relatively small size, it means that even Brooks' and Barone's best-case counties are unlikely to have the potent political effects they predict.

Take Loudon County in the Northern Virginia suburbs, the sixth-fastest growing county in the country, cited by Brooks in his article. Even after a decade of very fast growth, Loudon still has only about 170,000 inhabitants. And, as Loudon has grown, it has

become less Republican, going from a 66 percent to 33 percent Republican margin in 1988 to a much more modest 56 percent to 41 percent Republican advantage in 2000. The county's modest size and its declining Republican edge mean it can't stop an area-wide pro-Democratic trend (much less start a pro-Republican one): Even as Loudon was growing like topsy, the Northern Virginia suburbs as a whole went from a 20 point Democratic disadvantage to almost even over the same time period.

Or take Douglas County, Colo., outside of Denver, the fastest growing county in the country and lovingly cited by both Brooks and Barone. Douglas still has only 176,000 inhabitants. And, while it went for Bush by 34 points in 2000, that's down from 42 points in 1988 and 60 points in 1984. Reflecting these realities, Douglas' fast growth just hasn't been enough to drive its metro area toward the Republicans. Instead, the

Denver metro area has gone from a 3 point Republican margin in 1988 to a 1 point Democratic advantage in 2000.

And Loudon and Douglas are two of the larger, fast-growing counties. The smaller ones, of course, have even less chance of impacting political trends. Contrary to Barone and Brooks, edge counties/sprinkler cities are clearly no antidote for trends in the nation's ideopolises—not in states that still lean Republican and certainly not in states that lean or are solid Democratic.

The new political geography has a powerful logic that should lead, over time, to a Democratic, not Republican, electoral majority. Of course, demography is not destiny—Democrats could fall back into the bad habits of their past, while Republicans could move decisively to the center. But barring unforeseen developments, the trends moving America toward a postindustrial economy should favor Democrats in the decade to come. ♦



BIG BOX MALLS: The new sprawl people don't live in cities, don't work in cities, and don't share the values of urban culture. They shop in giant malls and their politics are moderately Republican.

The Brawl in the Sprawl

If Democrats look down on the values of the outer suburbs, they'll soon see red. || by **David Brooks**

■ FOR A LONG TIME, I BOUGHT the argument that the emerging majority in this country was Democratic. The key forces, it seemed, were the rising Hispanic population, which everybody talks about, and the rising professional population so well described by John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira. In upscale regions across America—on the Main Line outside of Philadelphia, in the North Shore suburbs outside of Chicago, and in Silicon Valley—there is a sharp and significant swing to the Democrats.

But now I am not so sure about this Democratic trend.

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In fact, I'd bet that the emerging majority is a Republican one—or at least it can be.

Consider just one statistic: In 1979, less than 15 percent of the office space in America was in the suburbs. Today, almost half of the office space is in suburbs, often in those low-slung office parks you see near the airports and along the highways. That means that we now have a whole tribe of Americans, a majority in fact, who not only don't live in cities, but don't work in cities, don't go to movies or restaurants in cities, and don't have any regular contact with urban life.

The Democrats are strong in urban "blue state" America and Republicans are strong in rural "red state" America. But this new tribe of people is not red or blue but is a mix—a purple America. These are the sprawl people, and they are the swing voters who will shape the destinies of both parties. At the moment their values are moderately conservative, when they think about politics at all.

We are in the midst of a great period of suburban growth. Sure, some cities rebounded in the 1990s, but the suburbs grew twice as fast. The suburbs around Atlanta now sprawl for hundreds of miles. In a few decades the greater Phoenix area will have almost 10 million people; it will be a more sig-