



THE ISSUES

Undervoting

"When you see 42%, 70% and 80% undervotes in a precinct in this election, you know that's not real. There's something desperately not right."

Marybeth Kuznik
Pennsylvania poll worker

Massive get-out-the-vote efforts created a huge turnout on Election Day 2004, bringing more voters to the polls than ever before. But in key states, many voters showed up at the polls and waited in long lines for hours only to later discover the voting machines showed they had no vote recorded for any presidential candidate, even though their votes for other offices were counted.

These presidential "undervotes" - ballots cast without recording a choice for the highest office in the land - raised suspicions in many areas. UNCOUNTED focuses on instances of undervoting in two battleground states in 2004 - New Mexico and Pennsylvania. New Mexico had a particularly large problem, where presidential undervote rates of 25% were reported in Democratic-leaning Hispanic and American Indian precincts. New Mexico had the nation's highest presidential undervote rate - 21,084. (George W. Bush won that state by less than 6,000 votes.)

This undervote problem also plagued the 2006 mid-term election. In one of Florida's most hotly contested Congressional races, more than 18,000 voters showed up at the polls in Democratic-leaning Sarasota County and apparently failed to cast a vote for a Congressional candidate on the paperless electronic voting systems there. This race was ultimately decided in favor of the Republican candidate by fewer than 400 votes.

Here's more startling information about what happened in New Mexico in 2004:
<http://www.votersunite.org/info/NewMexico2004ElectionDataReport.pdf>

Here's more about what happened in Sarasota County:
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/28/AR2006112801382_pf.html

