

# THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

## Guest Column: The Texas Political Atlas

by Bill Hobby  
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The Political Atlas of Texas displays presidential election returns (2000, 2004, 2008) and census data (2000) by county. Some slides show the distribution of the total population; for instance, 27% of all Texans live in Harris and Dallas Counties. Some show ethnic distribution.

Since we are talking about election returns, we mostly use Voting Age Population (VAP) rather than total population. The census data include the Voting Rights Act ethnic variables that must be considered in redistricting as well as median age, median income, and educational attainment.

One interesting slide shows that about 20% of Texas' 254 counties have more registered voters than VAP. Conspiracy theorists, don't worry! There's nothing evil going on here! Twenty percent is about the average for the 3,000 counties in the country. Voting data is from 2008. VAP is from 2000. And, of course, there is the Hispanic undercount.

Lastly, there is an analysis that shows how the GOP vote percentage in each county is affected by the census variables.

