

# Assignment #1



Election Reflections Consider briefly the of the nation in November 2008. President-elect Obama had campaigned on slogans such as " Change we can believe in" and the chant " Yes We Can". The core of Obamas campaign had been the illusive yet irresistible theme of hope. Things will be different when I am sitting in the Oval office. Some of that hoped for change was as plain as the nose on his face, literally. The United States would have its first visible minority President, a President who was visibly different than his predecessor. A President who was born into a different social class than his wealthy predecessor. A President who was not the son of a former President and grandson of a Senator. A President whose roots lay in community organizing and advocacy not the oil industry. A President who was from a different party than his predecessor: A Democrat. A President who laid claim to not supporting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. A President who was not implicated in the economic meltdown that occurred in the last years of George W. Bushs presidency. Many Americans saw President Obamas election of the dawning of the new era in the first decade of the new millennium.

Two years later, in November 2010 some of the hope has faded, change has not occurred as quickly or as completely as many Americans believed it would, or hoped it would, and the Presidents image as a knight in shining armor changing the political landscape, has been tarnished. It was this sense of hope betrayed that was reflected in the most recent election results.

Nationally, the Democrats, the Presidents party, lost sixty seats in the House of Representatives and their majority. (" Politics", 2010) Nancy Pelosi, former House Speaker, is left debating whether or not to run for the position of Minority Leader. (Hulse, 2010) In the Senate, the Democrats maintained

their majority while still losing six seats. (" Politics", 2010) The results were clearly negative for the Democrats.

Clearly, the vote reflected the electorates displeasure that change had not happened as quickly and as thoroughly as was hoped two years ago. On the other hand, the phenomenon of the Presidents party losing seats in Congress in midterm elections is not uncommon. It happened to Obamas predecessor President George W. Bush and to his predecessor President William Jefferson Clinton. Therefore, taking the longer view it would be a mistake to attach too much importance to this shift.

Turning from the national picture to the situation in Colorado the results can be seen considerably more positively for the Democrats. Democrat Michael Bennet, the incumbent Senator, defeated Republican challenger Tim Buck. Additionally, the Republican and Independent candidates for Governor was defeated by Democrat and Denver mayor, John Hickenlooper. This is gratifying to me but also indicative of an important larger trend in the recent elections. The Tea Partiers, despite their passion may have actually had a negative impact on the electoral prospects of the Republican candidates, in Colorado. (Rybczinski, 2010) Moreover, this negative impact of the Tea Partiers may have been felt throughout the country. The Associated Press reports, " Tea partiers largely spurned establishment candidates in the GOP primaries and helped nominate Christine ODonnell in Delaware, Sharron Angle in Nevada and Ken Buck in Colorado. All three lost on Tuesday." (Associated Press, 2010) Those three candidates may also have cost the GOP a majority in the Senate. It is reassuring to know that one of the results of the recent elections is that the GOP is reconsidering the role of the Tea Party movement in the Republican Party.

## References

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