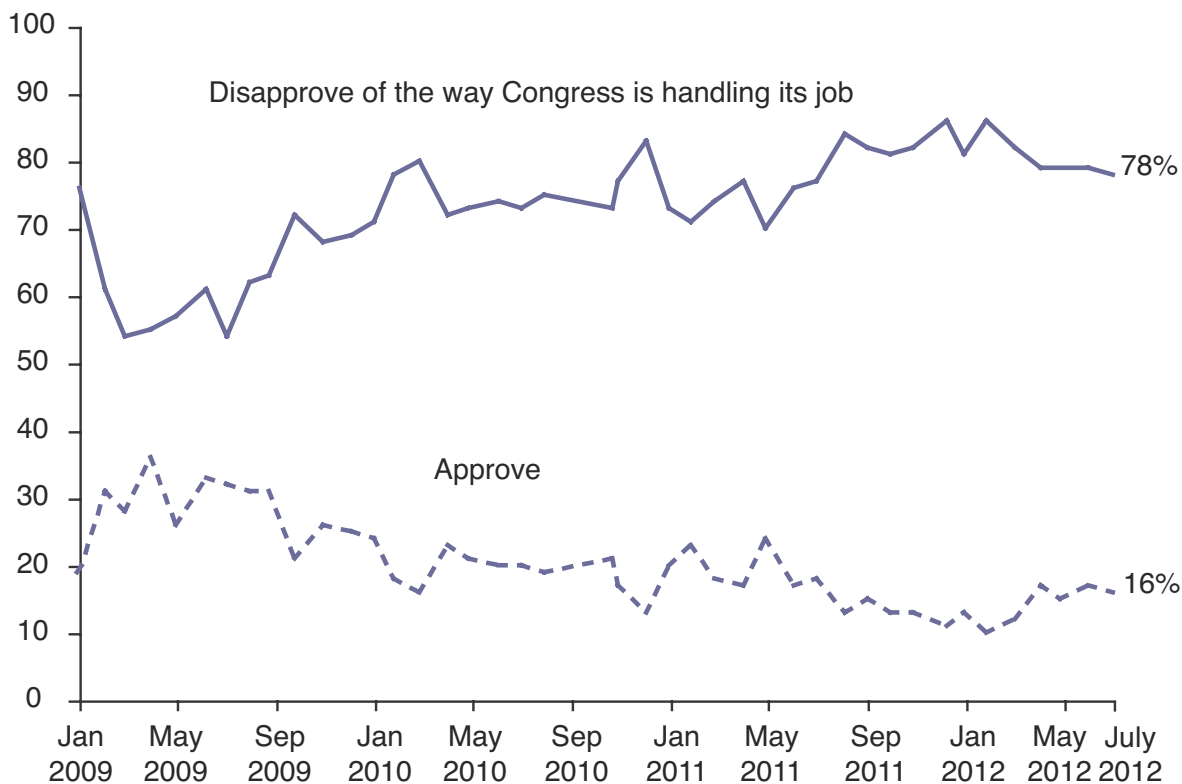


The Lowdown on Congress

In the next two pages we examine views about Congress and about Democrats and Republicans in the body. Congress remains deeply unpopular and high confidence in the institution falls below all 16 institutions Gallup examined recently. As the graph on page 2 shows, views of the parties in Congress were similar in 2010 and early 2011, but disapproval of the Republicans there spiked in the summer of 2011.

Washington's two top Congress watchers, Charlie Cook and Stu Rothenberg, recently filed columns about their expectations for November. "One might have expected two years after Republicans picked up 63 House seats [in 2010]—the biggest gain in a midterm election since 1938—Democrats would be on track to win back a boatload of those districts that the GOP didn't have much business winning in the first place," says Cook. But four months out, both Cook and Rothenberg see modest Democratic gains. Presidents seeking reelection rarely have long coattails in the House. Republican control of the Senate at this stage appears to be a 50-50 proposition.

Q: Do you . . . ?



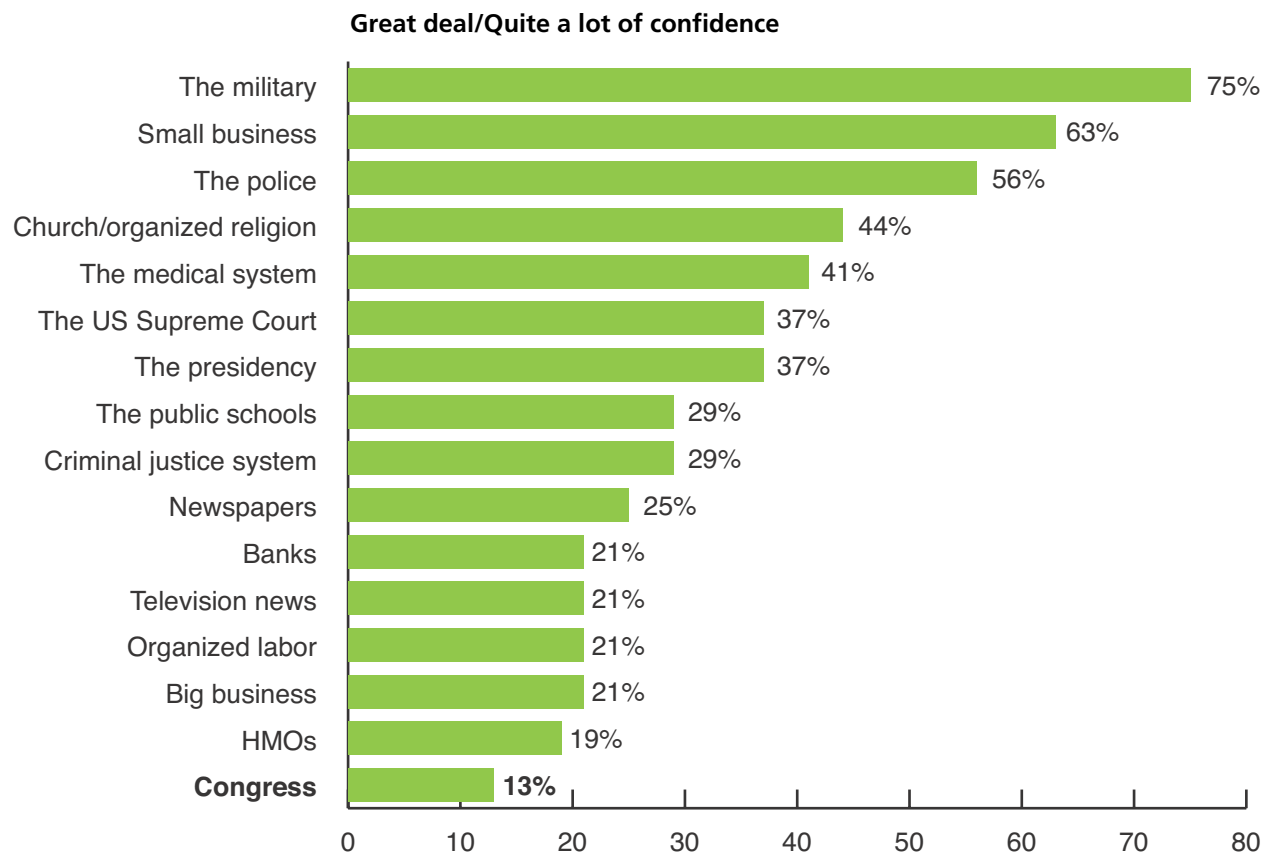
Source: Gallup, latest that of July 2012.

Thus far in the 112th Congress, eight members of Congress have resigned. Twenty-five House members have chosen not to seek reelection. By comparison, at this point in 2010, there were forty open House seats.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from the previous page)

Q: I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself have in each one . . . ?



Source: Gallup, June 2012.

Q: Do you think the representative in Congress from your district has performed his or her job well enough to deserve reelection, or do you think it is time to give a new person a chance?



Note: Sample is registered voters.

Source: *National Journal's* Congressional Connection, July 2012.

Q: Regardless of how you feel about your representative, would you . . . ?

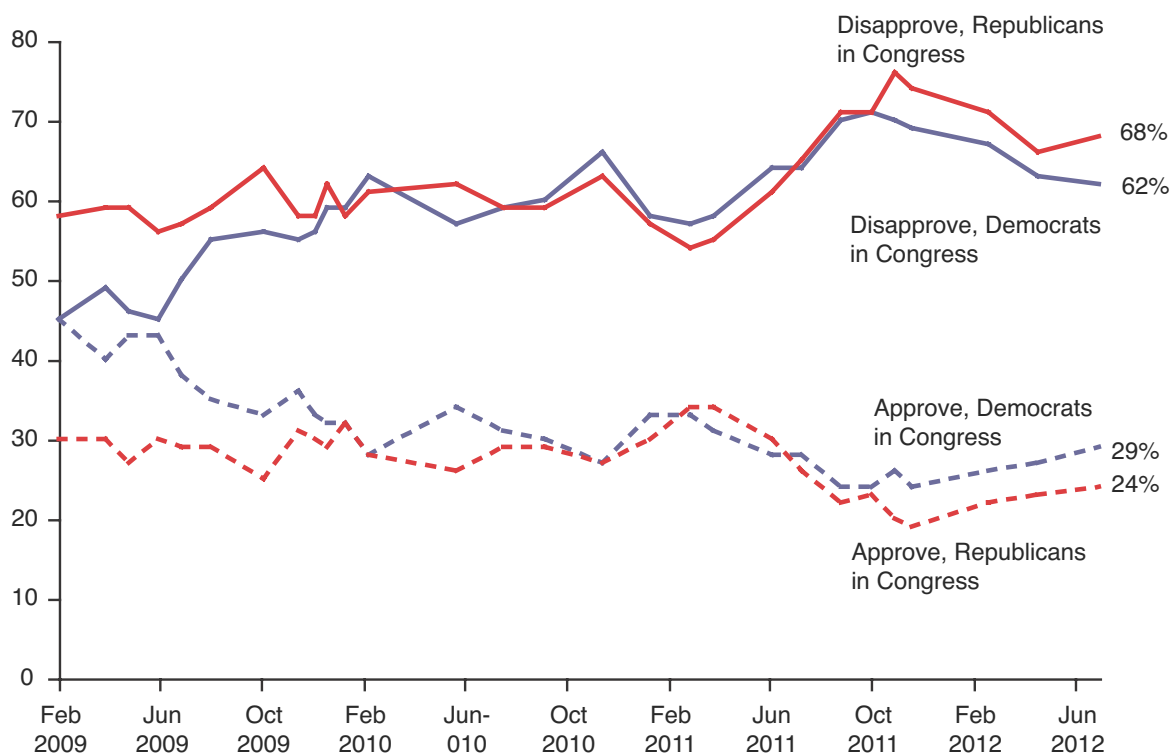


Note: Sample is registered voters.

Source: *National Journal's* Congressional Connection, July 2012.

The Parties in Congress

Q: Do you . . . ?



Source: Quinnipiac, latest that of July 2012.

Q: Thinking about your vote for Congress this fall, will the issue of . . . ?

Which party controls Congress will be a factor in your vote for Congress this fall

June 1998	45%
July 2000	46
June 2002	47
June 2004	43
June 2006	58
June 2008	44
June 2010	58
June 2012	49

Source: Pew Research Center, June 2012.

If the Congressional Election Were Held Today . . .

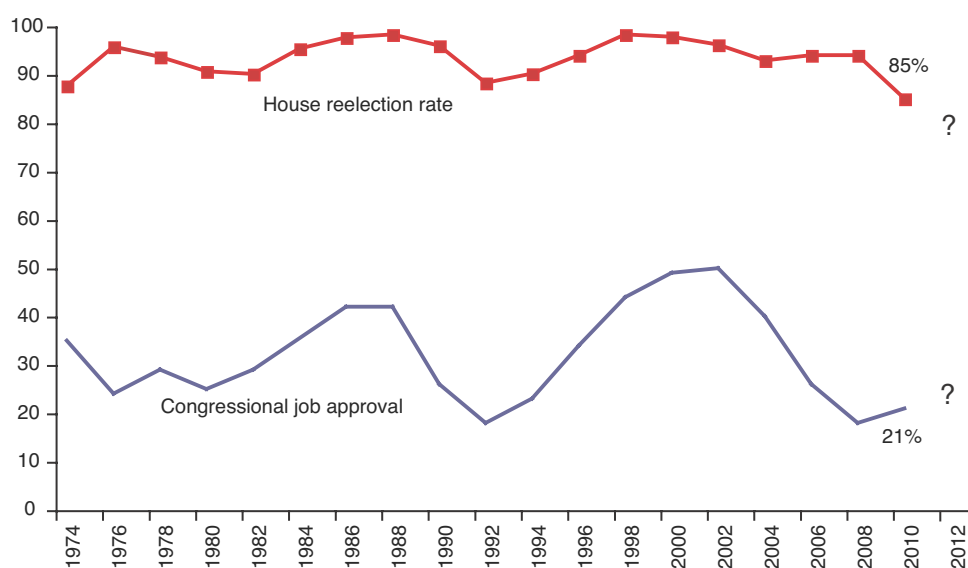
		Would vote for the		
		Republican	Democrat	
		for Congress		
NBC/WSJ	June 2012	44%	45%	(Registered voters)
Democracy Corps (D)	June 2012	46	45	(Likely voters)
Bloomberg	June 2012	41	48	(Likely voters)
Pew	June 2012	43	47	(Registered voters)
Ipsos/Reuters	June 2012	44	47	(Registered voters)
Quinnipiac	July 2012	40	43	(Registered voters)

Note: The NBC/*Wall Street Journal* question asks about preference for the outcome of this year's congressional elections. All other pollsters here ask people how they are going to vote.

House Reelection Rate and Congressional Job Approval

As Tip O'Neill famously said, "All politics is local." That is one reason why most members of Congress who seek reelection keep their jobs. In the 2010 election, 85 percent did.

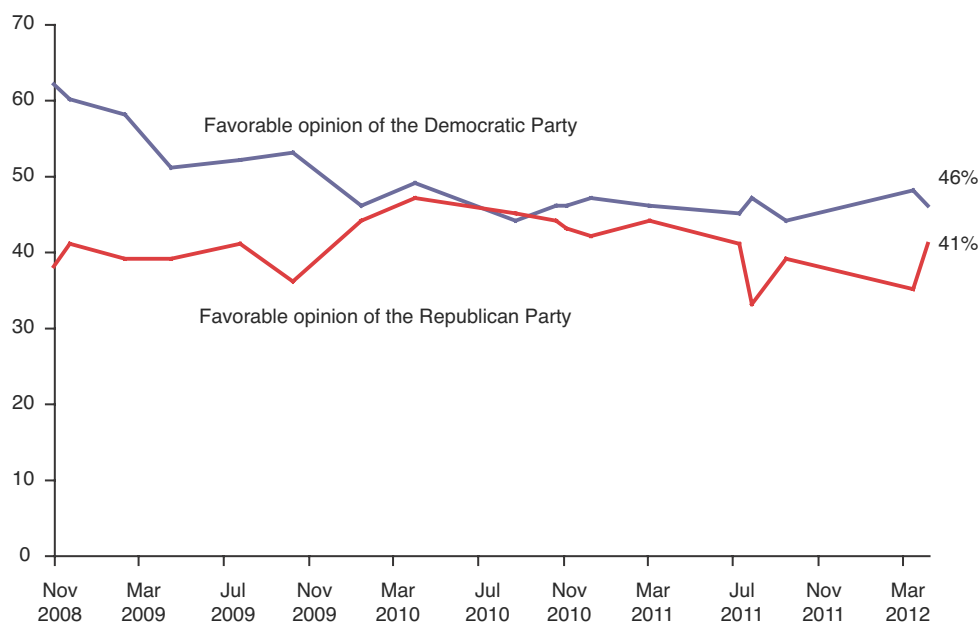
Note: Congressional approval ratings represented here are those closest to the election. House reelection rating calculated as a percentage of those seeking reelection.
Source: Gallup, latest that of 2010. *Vital Statistics on Congress*, 2008.



Views of the Parties

Neither political party gets high marks from the public. As the chart on the next page shows, 26 percent have a very negative impression of the GOP; 19 percent give that response about the Democratic Party. In its latest poll, Pew reports that "For the first time in the past four election cycles, majorities of independent voters view both parties negatively."

Q: We'd like to get your overall opinion of some people in the news. As I read each name, please say if you have a . . .



Note: The new July Quinnipiac poll finds that 37 percent of registered voters have a favorable opinion of the Democratic Party and 50 percent an unfavorable opinion. Those responses for the Republican Party are 33 and 50 percent, respectively.
Source: CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, latest that of April 2012.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from the previous page)

Q: Now I'm going to read you the names of several public figures and organizations, and I'd like you to rate your feelings toward each one as . . . ?

Very negative impression



Somewhat negative



Very positive

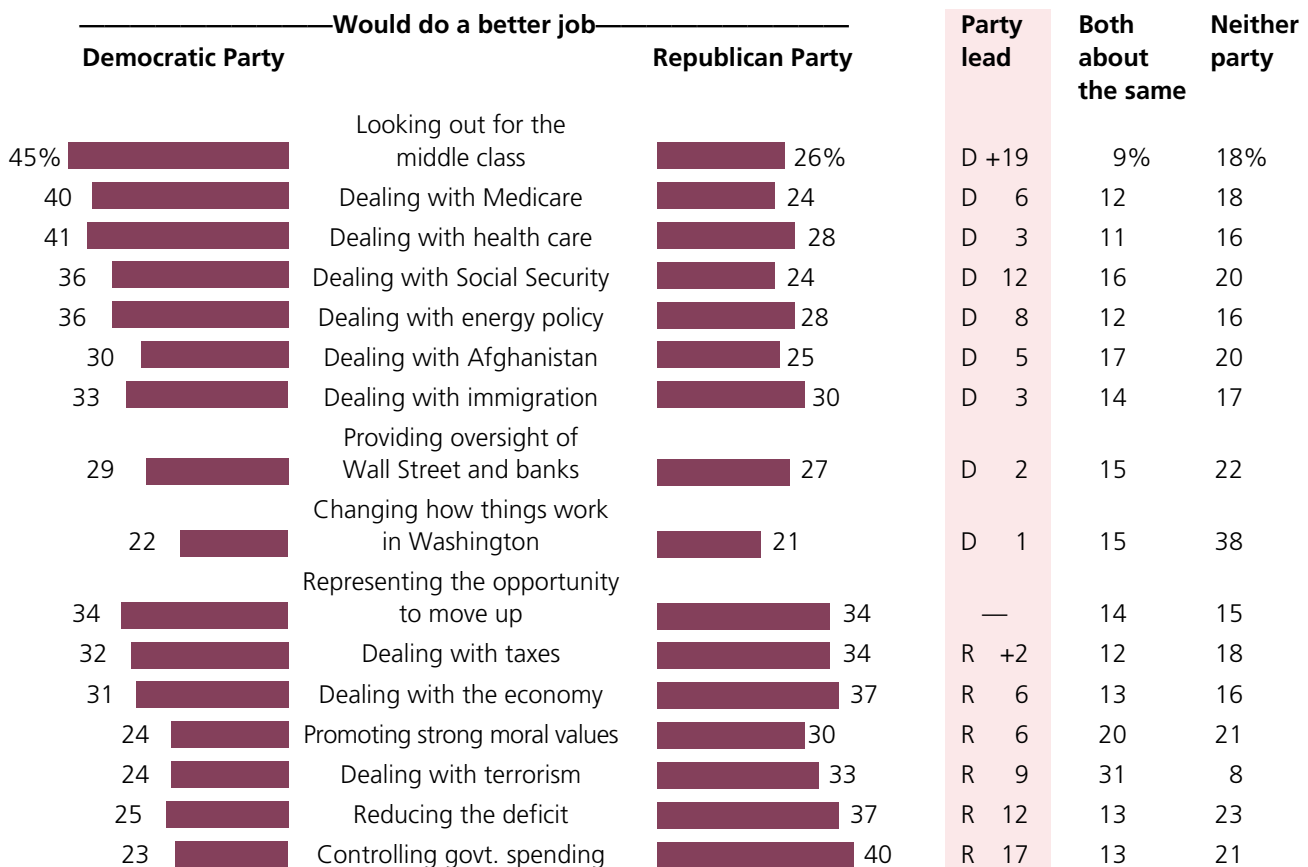


Somewhat positive



Source: NBC/Wall Street Journal, June 2012.

Q: When it comes to _____, which party do you think . . . ?



Source: NBC/Wall Street Journal, June 2012.

AEI POLITICAL REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Karlyn Bowman, Senior Fellow;
Norman Ornstein, Resident Scholar;
Michael Barone, Resident Fellow;
Henry Olsen, Vice President.

Research Assistants: **Jennifer Marsico**, Editor;
Andrew Rugg, Editor. Interns: **Wylie Galvin**,
Allan Liu, **Clement Bilhorn**, **Jonathan Achard**.

Health Care Reactions

At least five major pollsters were in the field immediately after the Supreme Court's decision on aspects of the health care law. All showed closely divided opinions about the decision. The Kaiser Family Foundation updated a question they have asked for many months about the law itself and found a slight uptick in the proportion with a favorable opinion of it.

Republicans are clearly upset about the decision. Twenty-seven percent of them say that they will only vote for a candidate who shares their views on the issue. If this response holds up in November, it would be a large single issue vote. How survey questions are worded affects people's responses about what to do now.

In the July ABC/*Washington Post* poll, 41 percent approved of the way President Obama is handling health care and 52 percent disapproved. In January 2011, those responses were 43 and 52 percent, respectively. In the poll, the public split, 46 percent for Obama to 45 percent for Romney in terms of the candidate they trusted to do a better job on health care. In the new July Quinnipiac poll, 45 percent of registered voters said Obama would do a better job on health care and 44 percent said Romney.

Split Verdict on the Court's Decision

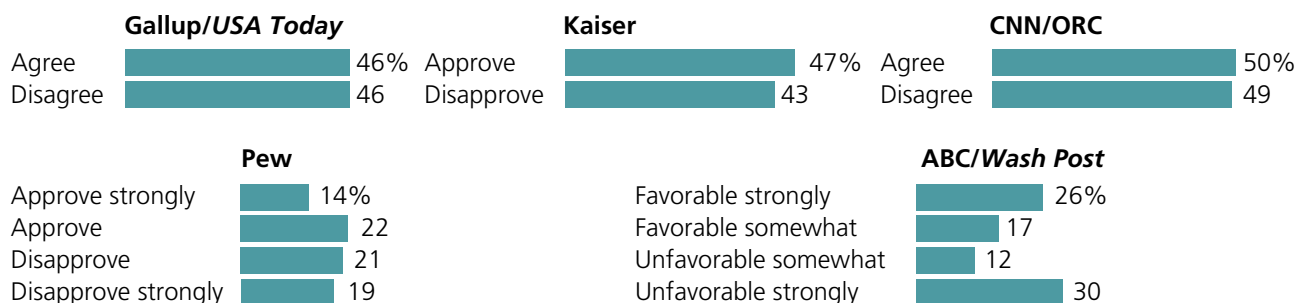
Q: As you may know, the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the entire 2010 healthcare law, declaring it constitutional. Do you agree or disagree with the decision? (Gallup/USA Today, June 28, 2012)

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the Court's decision in this case? (Kaiser, June 28–30, 2012)

Q: As you may know, on Thursday the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that provision of the health care law is constitutional, allowing nearly all of the proposals in the health care law to take effect. In general, do you agree or disagree with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in that case? (CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, June 28–July 1, 2012)

Q: From what you've read or heard about the Supreme Court's ruling on the 2010 health care law, would you say you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of their decision? (Pew, June 28–July 1, 2012)

Q: Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on the health care law? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat? (ABC/Washington Post, June 28–July 1, 2012)



Slight Uptick in Favorable Views of the Law

Q: As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you . . . ?

	June	May
Have a very favorable opinion	25%	17%
Somewhat favorable	16	20
Somewhat unfavorable	11	12
Very unfavorable	30	32

Source: Kaiser, latest that of June 2012.

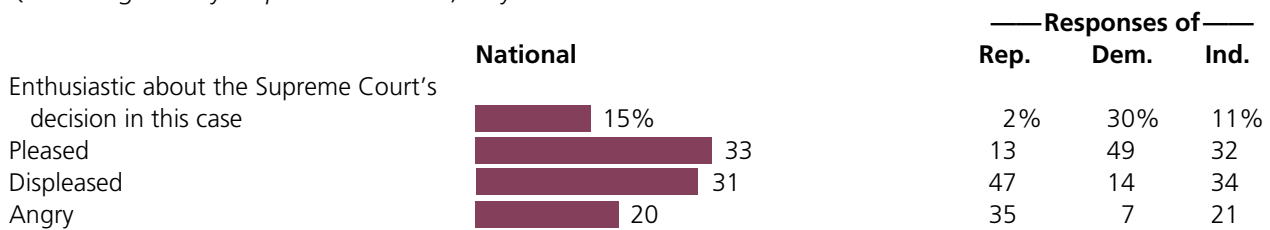
Q: On another subject, overall, do you support or oppose the federal law making changes to the health care system?

	July	April
Support	47%	39%
Oppose	47	53

Source: ABC/*Washington Post*, latest that of July 2012.

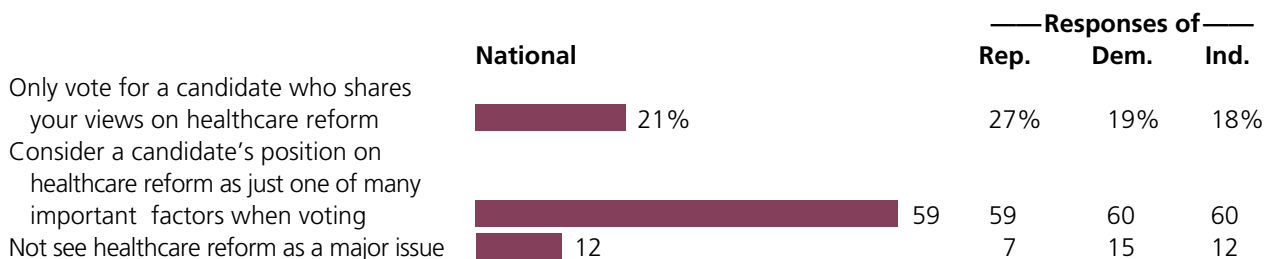
Republicans Are Upset

Q: Thinking about your personal reaction, do you feel . . . ?



Source: CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, June–July 2012.

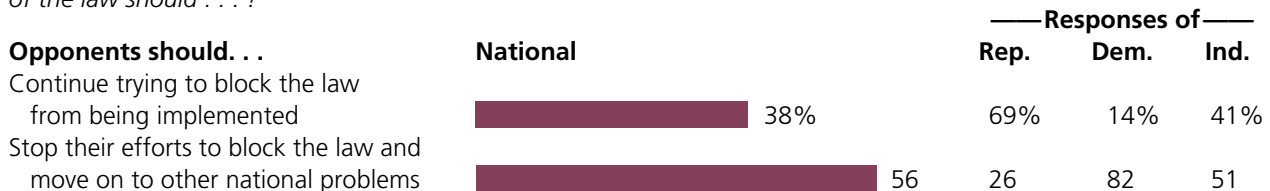
Q: Thinking about how the healthcare reform might affect your vote for major political offices, would you . . . ?



Source: Kaiser, June 2012.

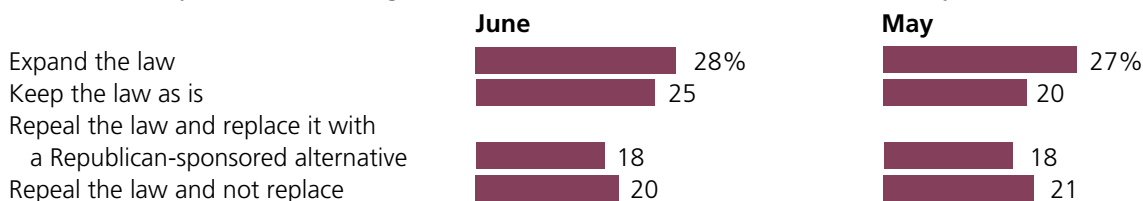
What Now? Three Perspectives

Q: Which comes closer to your view? Now that the Supreme Court has ruled to uphold the health care law, opponents of the law should . . . ?



Source: Kaiser, June 2012.

Q: What would you like to see Congress do when it comes to the health care law? They should . . . ?



Source: Kaiser, latest that of June 2012.

Q: And, if you had to choose, would you rather see Congress . . . ?



Note: In January 2011, in a question with slightly different wording, 50 percent favored repealing all provisions and 42 percent favored keeping all the provisions in place.

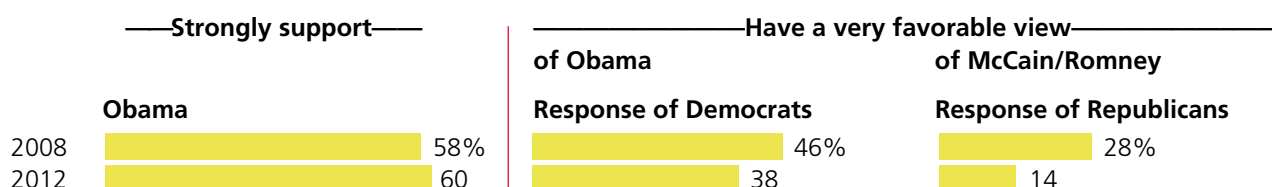
Source: CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, June–July 2012.

November 2012: Straws in the Wind?

Most polls show a very close presidential contest. The Pew Research Center reported recently that Barack Obama's supporters are just as enthusiastic as they were four years ago, although the share of his supporters with a *very* favorable view of him has declined from 46 to 38 percent. Conservative Republicans are more enthusiastic about Mitt Romney than they were about John McCain in 2008. In most polls, Republicans are more interested and enthusiastic about the race than Democrats or independents. Young people are less enthusiastic than those who are older.

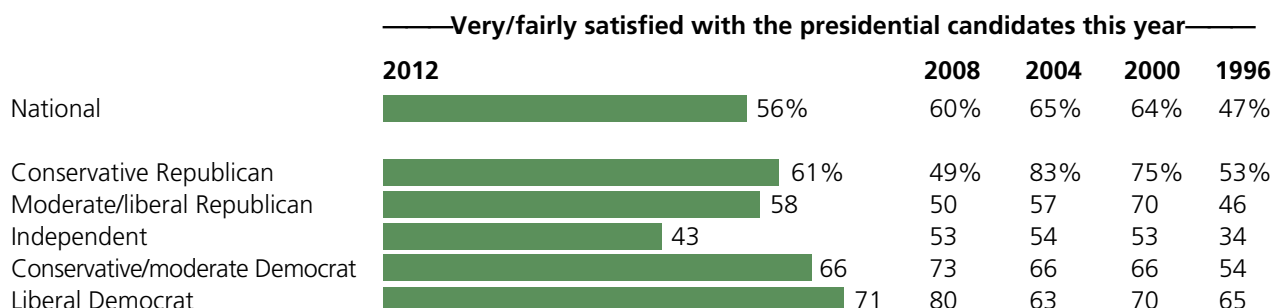
Q: Now, suppose the 2012 presidential election were being held today. If you had to choose between Barack Obama, the Democrat, or Mitt Romney, the Republican, who . . . ? Do you support _____ strongly or only moderately?

Q: Is your overall opinion of _____ very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of June 2012.

Q: What's your opinion of the presidential candidates for this year? Would you say you are . . . ?



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of June 2012.

Republicans Still Winning Enthusiasm Contest

Q: Right now, how interested are you in the 2012 presidential election? Are you . . . ?

	National	Responses of			Responses by age			
		Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	<35	35-54	55+	65+
Extremely interested in the presidential election	38%	46%	34%	30%	21%	40%	44%	46%
Very	35	34	39	35	29	36	39	38
Somewhat	20	15	19	23	38	17	12	12
Not at all	6	3	7	10	10	6	4	2

Note: Sample is registered voters. In the late June NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll, 60 percent put themselves at point 10 on a 10-point scale, indicating that they were very interested in November's election. In June 2008, 67 percent gave that response. In August 2004, 63 percent did. In Pew's late June poll, 45 percent said they were more interested in politics this year than they were in 2008, and 34 percent said less. In 2008 those responses in June were 60 and 20 percent.

Source: Fox, June 2012.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from the previous page)

Matching Up the Candidates

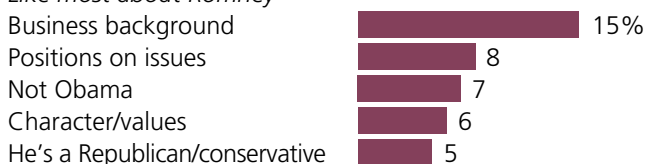
Q: What do you like most about . . . ?

Volunteered responses (top five responses shown)

Like most about Obama



Like most about Romney



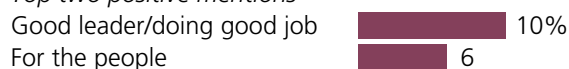
Source: Fox, June 2012.

Q: What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about _____ as president . . . ?

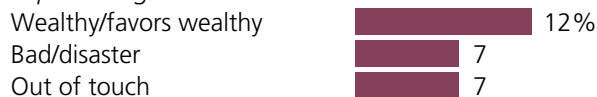
Volunteered responses

Obama

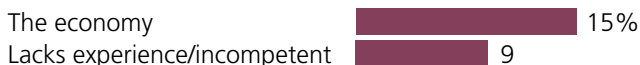
Top two positive mentions



Top two negative mentions



Romney



Source: NBC/Wall Street Journal, June 2012.

Q: Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think each applies or doesn't apply to _____.

	—Characteristic or quality applies to—	
	Barack Obama	Mitt Romney
Is likeable	81%	64%
Is honest and trustworthy	60	50
Changes his positions on issues for political reasons	60	61
Understands the problems Americans face in their daily lives	58	46
Is a strong and decisive leader	53	55
Shares your values	53	45
Can manage government effectively	45	53
Has a clear plan for solving the country's problems.	40	38

Note: In another Gallup question when asked whether five characteristic or qualities applied more to Barack Obama or Mitt Romney, Obama had a 29-point advantage on likeability (60 percent for Obama, 31 percent for Romney), 10 points on caring about the needs of people like you (51 to 41 percent), 9 points on being a strong and decisive leader (49 to 40 percent), and a 2-point advantage on agreeing with you on issues you care about (47 to 45 percent). Romney had a 3-point advantage on managing the government effectively, 46 to 43 percent. Source: Gallup, June 2012.



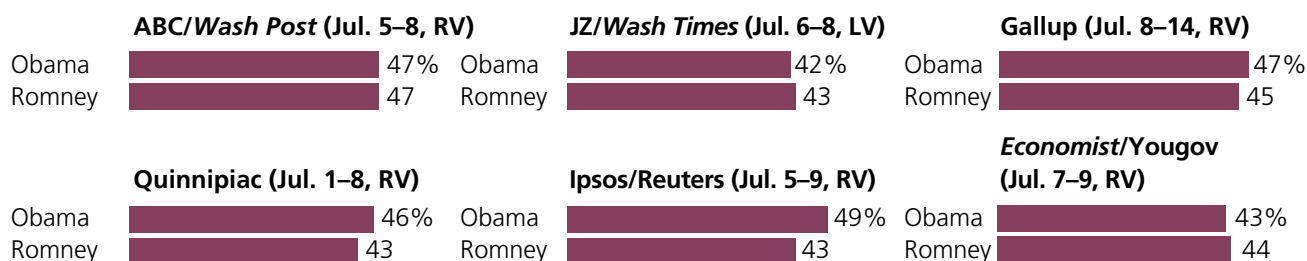
Drawing the November Battle Lines

In the early July ABC News/*Washington Post* poll, registered voters split evenly about their choice for president. In only two of 13 earlier questions on the race, were the candidates separated by more than the poll's margin of error. In an early July release, Frank Newport of Gallup noted that "The presidential race has exhibited a general tendency this year to regress to parity—each candidate has averaged about 46% support since Gallup Daily tracking began April 11."

Newport went on to note that "Obama's 47% approval rating average for the week of June 25–July 1 puts him exactly where George W. Bush was in a July 8–11, 2004 . . . Obama's approval rating remains below those of Bill Clinton in late June 1996 (52%) and Ronald Reagan in late June/early July 1984, (53%) both of whom went on to win handily in November. But the president's ratings continue to be well above the dismal ratings range earned by George H.W. Bush in late June 1992 (38%) and Jimmy Carter in late June 1980 (31%). Both of these presidents lost their re-election bids."

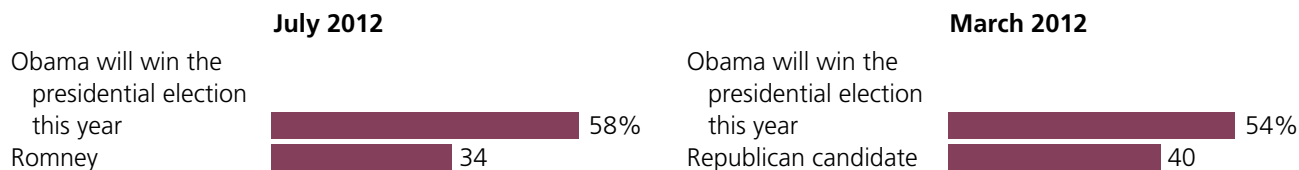
Heated Trial Heats in July

Would vote for



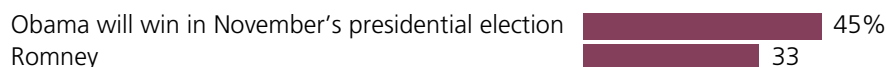
Reading the Tea Leaves

Q: Just your best guess, who do you think . . . ?



Source: ABC/*Washington Post*, latest that of July 2012.

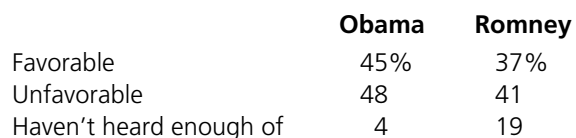
Q: Regardless of whom you support, who do you think . . . ?



Source: JZ Analytics/*Washington Times*, July 2012.

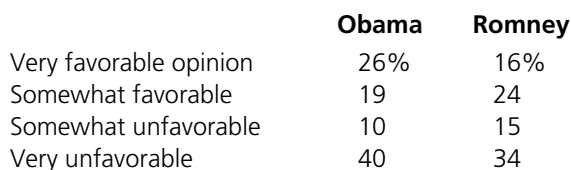
Personalities

Q: Is your opinion of . . . ?



Source: Quinnipiac, July 2012.

Q: Do you have a . . . ?



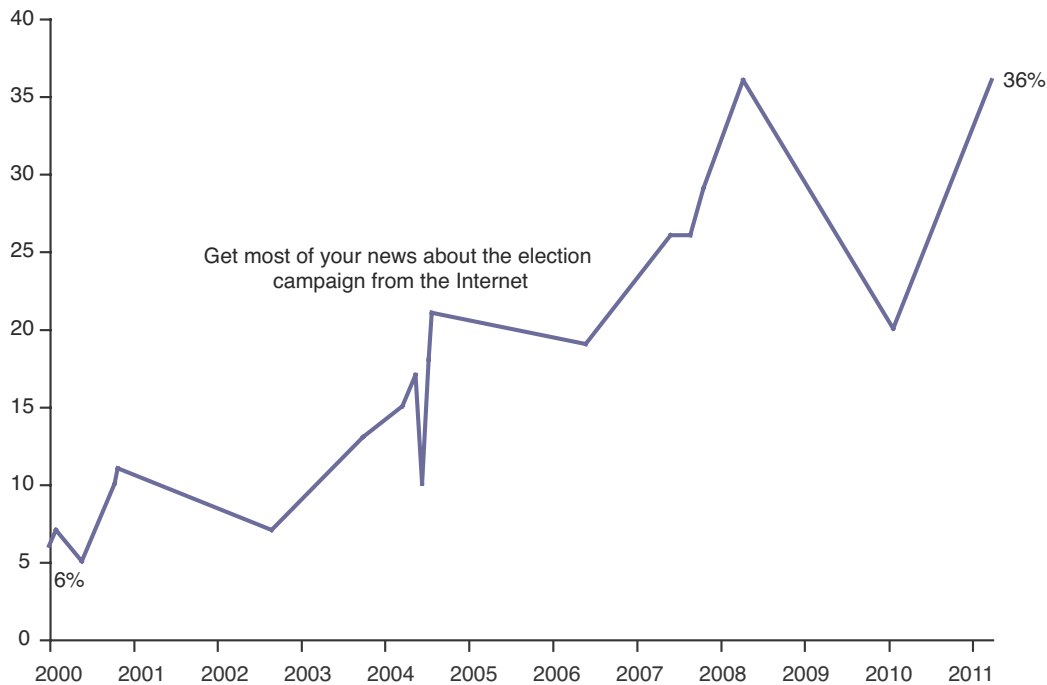
Source: *Economist/Yougov*, July 2012.

Campaign Communications

Thirty-six percent told Pew researchers in February that they were getting most of their news about the campaign from the Internet. Fifty-four percent of young people gave that response.

In the newly released National Center for Health Statistics survey, 34 percent of households had wireless phones only, up from 17.5 percent in 2008. Nearly six in ten 25- to 29-year-olds today live in wireless-only households. These numbers present a big challenge for campaigns and pollsters as they try to reach people.

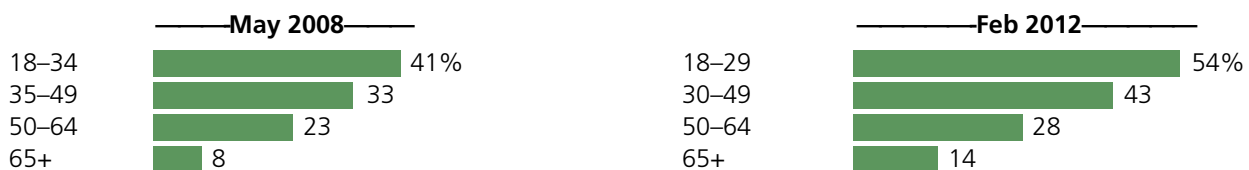
Q: [How have you been getting/how did you get] most of your news about the election campaign? From . . . ?



Note: Question wording varied slightly. November 2000 question asked of registered voters.
Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of February 2012.

Marching Forward

Have been getting/get most of your news] about the election campaign from the Internet



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of February 2012.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from the previous page)

The Real Junkies

Q: Did you follow the _____ election night returns on the Internet or not?

Followed returns on the Internet

November 2004	19%
November 2008	23
November 2010	28

Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of 2010.

Household Phone Status

	Landline w/ wireless	Landline w/o wireless	Wireless only
Jan–June, 2008	58.5%	20.6%	17.5%
Jul–Dec, 2008	59.6	17.4	20.2
Jan–June, 2010	58.1	12.9	26.6
Jul–Dec, 2010	55.0	12.9	29.7
Jan–June, 2011	55	11.2	31.6
Jul–Dec, 2011	53.4	10.2	34

Report highlights: Phone Facts

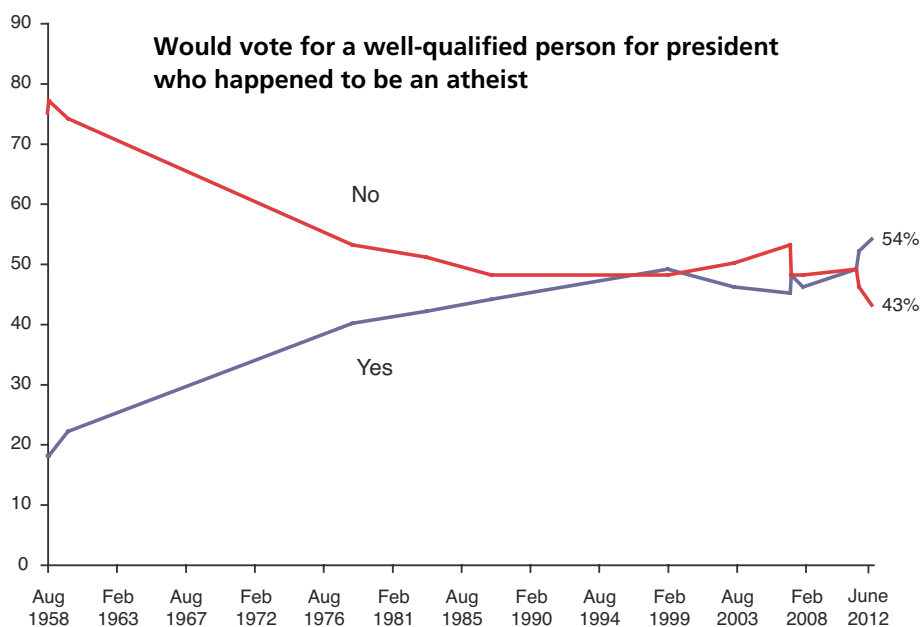
- Nearly one in six American homes received all or almost all calls on wireless telephones despite also having a landline.
- Nearly six in ten 25 to 29-year-olds live in households with only wireless phones.
- More than half of all adults renting their home had only wireless telephones.
- Adults living in the Midwest (33.5 percent), South (33.6 percent), and West (30.3 percent) were more likely than adults living in the Northeast (18.8 percent) to be living in households with only wireless telephones.

Source: Stephen J. Blumberg, Ph.D., and Julian V. Luke, "Wireless Substitution, Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey" (survey, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia, December 21, 2011).

Atheists in the Oval Office

In 2011 for the first time, a majority of Americans told Gallup that they would vote for a generally well-qualified atheist for president. The question was first asked in 1958. Still, the proportion willing to vote for an atheist is lower than for the other groups Gallup examined.

Q: Between now and the 2012 political conventions there will be discussions about the qualifications of presidential candidates—their education, age, religion, race, and so on. If your party nominated a generally well-qualified person for president who happened to be _____, would you vote for that person?

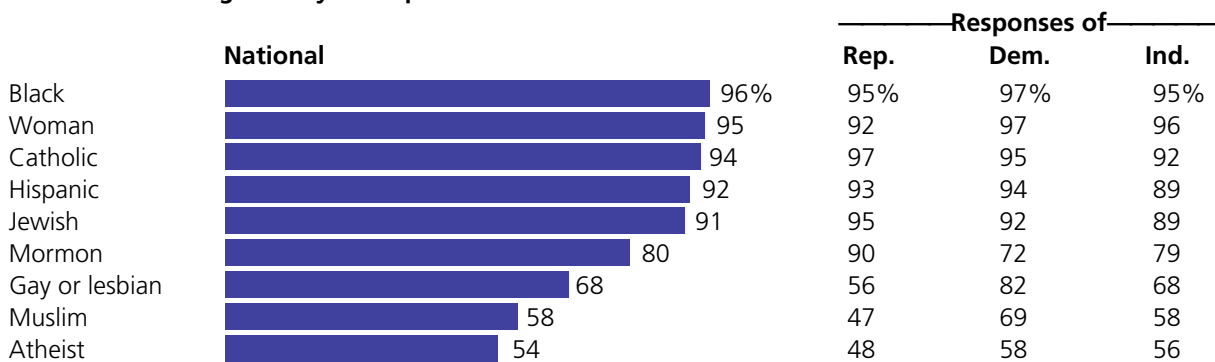


Source: Gallup, latest that of June 2012. Pew, June 2003.

(continued on the next page)

(continued from the previous page)

Would vote for a generally well-qualified . . .

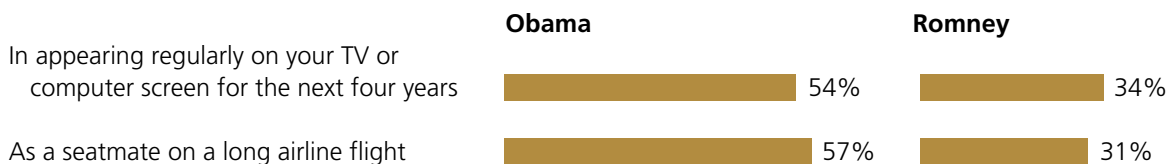


Source: Gallup, latest that of June 2012.

Poll Potpourri

How Long a Flight?

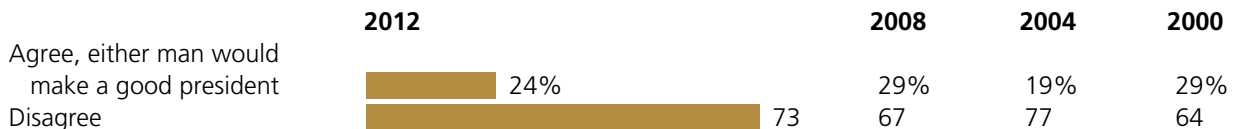
Q: Which candidate do you think would be best . . . ?



Source: Bloomberg, June 2012.

It's One or the Other

Q: Some people feel it is difficult to choose between [Barack Obama and Mitt Romney] because either one would make a good president. Do you . . . ?



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of June 2012.

It Really Matters








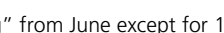
Q: As far as making progress on the important issues facing the country is concerned, does it really matter who wins the ____ presidential election, or will things be pretty much the same regardless of who is elected?

	2012	2008	2004	2000	1976
Really matters who wins	 63%	63%	67%	50%	45%
Things will pretty much be the same	 34	32	29	44	46

Note: All questions asked in June by Pew. The 1976 question was asked by the Opinion Research Corporation and was asked in August.
Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of June 2012.

The Campaign Thus Far

Q: How would you describe . . . ?

	2012	2008	2004	2000	1996
Presidential campaign has been interesting	 34%	59%	33%	28%	21%
Dull	 56	35	57	65	73
Too long	 56%	65%	52%	NA	NA
Not too long	 35	29	42	NA	NA
Informative	 40%	54%	48%	NA	NA
Not informative	 52	41	46	NA	NA
Negative	 53%	43%	45%	NA	NA
Not too negative	 37	51	46	NA	NA

Note: All points for "interesting" from June except for 1996 which is from July. For the question on the campaign's length, 2008 question is from April. For the question about whether the campaign has been too negative, 2008 question is from September. For the question about whether the campaign has been too negative, 2008 point is for September.
Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of June 2012.

Still a Shining City on a Hill?

Q: Since the earliest days of the country, many have called the United States a "shining city on a hill," meaning a country that all others want to be like. Do you think . . . ?

United States is still a shining city on a hill	45%
Is not	50

Note: Sample is registered voters.
Source: Fox, June 2012.

Q: Ideally if you had the opportunity, would you like to move permanently to another country or would you prefer to continue living in this country?

Would like to move permanently to another country	14%
---	-----

Top destinations: United States	23%
UK	7
Canada	7

Note: Gallup data collected between 2008 and 2010 in 146 countries (representing 90 percent of the world's population).
Source: Gallup, 2008–2010.