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# Most Trump, Clinton Backers Say Spouses Share Their Vote Preferences

*More in mixed political relationships say they argue about election*

**FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:**

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# Most Trump, Clinton Backers Say Spouses Share Their Vote Preferences

*More in mixed political relationships say they argue about election*

As the 2016 campaign enters its final weeks, very few voters who support either Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton expect their spouse or partner to cross the aisle and vote for the other candidate.

Overall, 78% of registered voters who support Trump for president say their spouse or partner also intends to vote for Trump, while just 3% say their partner is planning to vote for Clinton.

The numbers are almost identical among Clinton supporters: 77% say their partner also backs Clinton, compared with just 3% who say their partner is supporting Trump.

Comparable shares of both candidates' supporters— 15% of those who favor Trump and 14% who back Clinton— say they do not know the voting preferences of their spouse or partner.

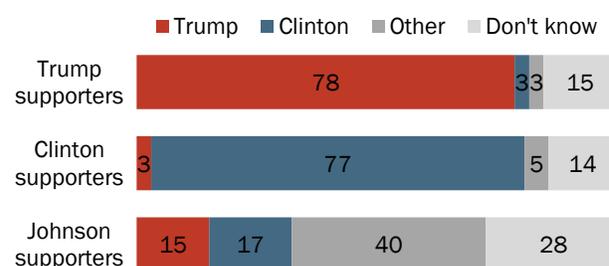
The new survey was conducted online September 27 to October 10 on the nationally representative [American Trends Panel](#) of 3,616 registered voters, including 2,405 voters who are either married or living with a partner. It was largely completed before the release of a videotape from 2005 showing Trump making lewd comments about women.

The survey finds that a large majority of voters (78%) say they talk about politics with their spouse or partner at least somewhat often, with 44% saying the topic comes up very often. Half of Trump supporters and 45% of Clinton supporters say politics comes up very often in conversation with their significant other.

Voters who support Libertarian Gary Johnson for president are far less likely than Trump or Clinton voters to talk politics with their spouse or partner, and are less likely to know how their spouse is voting next month. Just 18% of Johnson supporters say they talk about politics very

## Few Trump, Clinton backers expect spouse or partner to vote the other way

*% saying their spouse/partner is planning to vote for ...*



Notes: Based on registered voters who are either married or living with a partner. No answer responses not shown.  
Source: Survey conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 10, 2016.

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often with their spouse or partner. While 32% of Johnson supporters say their partner is voting for either Trump (15%) or Clinton (17%), four-in-ten say he or she prefers another candidate, while 28% say they do not know how their partner is voting.

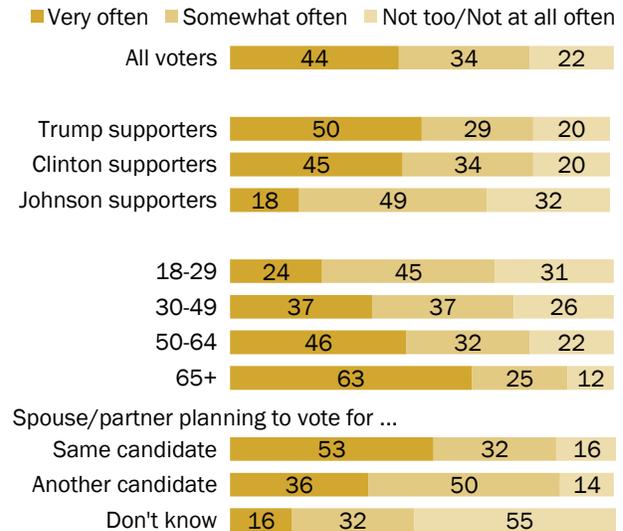
As with overall interest and engagement in politics, there are sizable age differences in how frequently politics comes up in conversation among couples. Only about a quarter of those younger than 30 (24%) say politics comes up very often in conversation, the lowest share of any age category. Among voters 65 and older, 63% say they talk about politics with their spouse or partner very often.

Given the broad agreement in voting preferences among those in relationships, it is not surprising that relatively few voters report arguing with their spouse or partner about the election.

Among all registered voters, 85% say they have not argued about the election with their spouse or partner, while just 15% have. But arguments are more common among the 11% of voters who say their spouse or partner will vote for a different candidate. About four-in-ten of these voters (41%) say they've had an argument about the election, compared with 13% of those whose partner plans to support the same candidate and 10% of those who do not know their partner's plan.

## Politics a more frequent topic of conversation among older couples

% saying they talk about politics with their spouse/partner ...



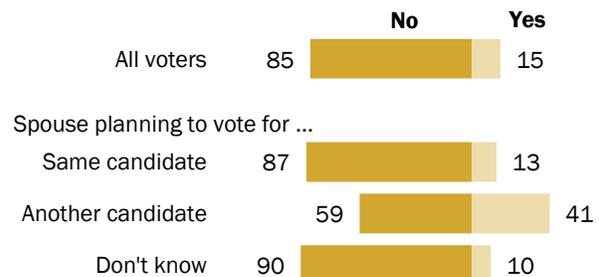
Notes: Based on registered voters who are either married or living with a partner. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 10, 2016.

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## Most voters say they have not argued with their spouse about the election

% saying they have argued with spouse/partner about the 2016 presidential election



Notes: Based on registered voters who are either married or living with a partner. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 10, 2016.

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## Men who support Clinton, women who back Trump are more likely to say spouse share's their preference

Nearly nine-in-ten men who back Clinton (89%) say their spouse or partner also supports Clinton. By contrast, only about two-thirds (68%) of women who support Clinton say their partner is also planning to vote for her. In part this is because women who support Clinton are more likely than men who support her to say they do not know who their partner will support (18% vs. 9%).

Among Trump supporters, the pattern is reversed, if somewhat less pronounced. A greater share of women than men (83% vs. 74%) say their partner or spouse also supports Trump.

These differences may largely reflect the overall gender gap in support for the two candidates.<sup>1</sup> For instance, among all voters who are married or living with a partner in the current survey and support Clinton, 56% are women while 44% are men. Conversely, 56% of married or partnered Trump supporters are men, while 44% are women.

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### Women supporting Clinton more likely not to know who spouse will support

*% saying spouse/partner will vote for ...*

	Trump %	Clinton %	Other %	Don't know %	No answer %
<b>Among Trump supporters ...</b>					
Men	74	4	4	17	1=100
Women	83	1	2	13	*=100
<b>Among Clinton supporters ...</b>					
Men	*	89	1	9	1=100
Women	4	68	8	18	1=100

Note: Based on registered voters who are married or living with a partner.

Source: Survey conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 10, 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> Although these questions are asked of all those married or living with a partner, including those in same-sex relationships, the vast majority of marriages and live-in partnerships are opposite-sex (for example, about 99% of marriages and live-in partnerships were opposite-sex in 2014, according to American Community Survey data).

## Parents, children and the 2016 election

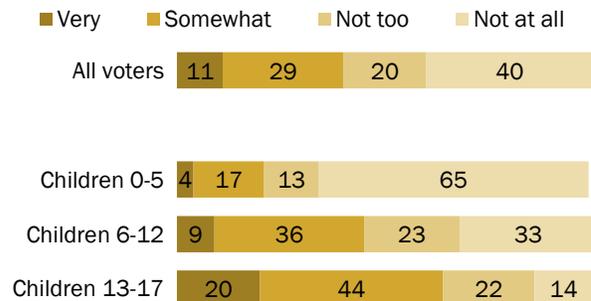
The presidential election also is a topic of discussion for parents and children, especially those in their teens. Among parents or guardians of children under 18, 11% say the election comes up very often with their children, while about three-in-ten (29%) say they talk about it somewhat often; 60% say the subject comes up not too often or not at all often.

Most voters with teenage children say they talk about the election with their children somewhat often (44%) or very often (20%). Parents of younger children talk about the election with their children much less often.

Parents and children bring the election up in conversation at nearly the same rate. About half (54%) of the parents who said they talk about the election at least somewhat often with their children say they mostly discuss it because their children bring it up. About as many (46%) say they mostly bring it up in conversation. The share that says their children mostly bring it up does not vary depending on the ages of the children.

### Most parents of teens say they are talking with them about the election

*% of parents of children under 18 who say they talk about the election \_\_\_ often with their children*



*Among parents who discuss election very or somewhat often, % who say they talk about election with their children mostly because ...*



Notes: Based on registered voters who are parents/guardians of children under 18 (N=903). No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 10, 2016.

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## Acknowledgments

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

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## Methodology

### Survey conducted September 27-October 10, 2016

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by the Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults recruited from landline and cell phone random digit dial surveys. Panelists participate via monthly self-administered Web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Abt SRBI.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted September 27-October 10, 2016 among 4,132 respondents. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 4,132 respondents is plus or minus 2.8 percentage points.

Members of the American Trends Panel were recruited from two large, national landline and cellphone random digit dial (RDD) surveys conducted in English and Spanish. At the end of each survey, respondents were invited to join the panel. The first group of panelists was recruited from the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey, conducted January 23 to March 16, 2014. Of the 10,013 adults interviewed, 9,809 were invited to take part in the panel and a total of 5,338 agreed to participate.<sup>2</sup> The second group of panelists was recruited from the 2015 Survey on Government, conducted August 27 to October 4, 2015. Of the 6,004 adults interviewed, all were invited to join the panel, and 2,976 agreed to participate.<sup>3</sup>

The ATP data were weighted in a multi-step process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original survey selection probability and the fact that in 2014 some panelists were subsampled for invitation to the panel. Next, an adjustment was made for the fact that the propensity to join the panel and remain an active panelist varied across different groups in the sample. The final step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on a number of dimensions. Gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region parameters come from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey. The county-level population density parameter (deciles) comes from the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census. The telephone service benchmark is comes from the July-December 2015 National Health Interview Survey and is projected to 2016. The volunteerism benchmark comes from the 2013

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<sup>2</sup> When data collection for the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey began, non-internet users were subsampled at a rate of 25%, but a decision was made shortly thereafter to invite all non-internet users to join. In total, 83% of non-internet users were invited to join the panel.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents to the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey who indicated that they are internet users but refused to provide an email address were initially permitted to participate in the American Trends Panel by mail, but were no longer permitted to join the panel after February 6, 2014. Internet users from the 2015 Survey on Government who refused to provide an email address were not permitted to join the panel.

Current Population Survey Volunteer Supplement. The party affiliation benchmark is the average of the three most recent Pew Research Center general public telephone surveys. The Internet access benchmark comes from the 2015 Pew Survey on Government. Respondents who did not previously have internet access are treated as not having internet access for weighting purposes. The frequency of internet use benchmark is an estimate of daily internet use projected to 2016 from the 2013 Current Population Survey Computer and Internet Use Supplement. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish, but the Hispanic sample in the American Trends Panel is predominantly native born and English speaking.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

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*Survey conducted September 27-October 10, 2016*

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
All registered voters	3,616	2.9 percentage points
Registered voters who are married or living with a partner	2,405	3.6 percentage points
<i>Among registered voters who are married or living with a partner</i>		
Trump supporters	1,027	5.5 percentage points
Clinton supporters	1,096	5.4 percentage points
Johnson supporters	197	12.6 percentage points
Registered voters who are parents and guardians of children under 18	903	5.9 percentage points

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Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The September 2016 wave had a response rate of 80% (4,132 responses among 5,185 individuals in the panel). Taking account of the combined, weighted response rate for the recruitment surveys (10.0%) and attrition from panel members who were removed at their request or for inactivity, the cumulative response rate for the wave is 2.8%.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves are removed from the panel. These cases are counted in the denominator of cumulative response rates.

## Appendix: Topline questionnaire

2016 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL

WAVE 21 SEPTEMBER

FINAL TOPLINE

September 27 – October 10, 2016

TOTAL N=4,132<sup>1</sup>

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

#### ASK ALL:

MARITAL Which of these best describes you?

Sept 27-

Oct 10

2016

46	Married
11	Living with a partner
12	Divorced
2	Separated
6	Widowed
22	Never been married
1	No Answer

#### ASK THOSE NOT MARRIED OR LIVING WITH A PARTNER (MARITAL=3-99) [N=1,443]:

MAR2 Are you currently in a committed romantic relationship, or not?

Sept 27-

Oct 10

2016

28	Yes
70	No
2	No Answer

#### ASK THOSE MARRIED, LIVING WITH A PARTNER, OR IN COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP (MARITAL=1,2 OR MAR2=1) [N=3,053]:

PARTNERTLK How often do you talk with your (IF MARRIED (MARITAL=1): spouse/IF COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP (MARITAL=2 OR MAR2=1): partner) about politics?

Sept 27-

Oct 10

2016

34	Very often
35	Somewhat often
23	Not too often
9	Not at all often
0	No Answer

<sup>1</sup> The Wave 21 survey was administered exclusively in web mode. The survey included N=147 previous mail mode panelists that were converted to web and were provided an internet-enabled tablet if necessary.

**ASK THOSE MARRIED, LIVING WITH A PARTNER, OR IN COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP (MARITAL=1,2 OR MAR2=1) [N=3,053]:**

PARTNERSPT Do you happen to know who your (IF MARRIED (MARITAL=1): spouse/IF COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP (MARITAL=2 OR MAR2=1): partner) is planning to vote for in the presidential election? [RANDOMIZE ORDER OF OPTIONS 1 AND 2]

Sept 27-	
Oct 10	
<u>2016</u>	
35	Hillary Clinton
31	Donald Trump
8	Other candidate
25	Don't know
1	No Answer

**ASK THOSE MARRIED, LIVING WITH A PARTNER, OR IN COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP (MARITAL=1,2 OR MAR2=1) [N=3,053]:**

ARGUESPT Have you ever gotten into an argument with your (IF MARRIED (MARITAL=1): spouse/IF COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP (MARITAL=2 OR MAR2=1): partner) about the 2016 presidential election?

Sept 27-	
Oct 10	
<u>2016</u>	
16	Yes
84	No
0	No Answer

**ASK PARENTS/GUARDIAN OF CHILD UNDER 18 ((SONS\_W21=1-3 or DAUGHTERS\_W21=1-3) OR IF SONS\_W21 AND DAUGHTERS\_W21 ARE NOT ASKED, F\_KIDS1\_FINAL=1) [N=1,060]:**

For the next few questions, please think about your child or children who are under 18.

CHILDTLK1 How often, if at all, do you talk about the 2016 election with your children?

Sept 27-	
Oct 10	
<u>2016</u>	
8	Very often
24	Somewhat often
21	Not too often
47	Not at all often
0	No Answer

**IF AT LEAST SOMEWHAT OFTEN (CHILDTLK1=1,2) [N=494]:**

CHILDTLK2 When you talk about the election with your children, is this mostly because:  
**[RANDOMIZE]**

Sept 27-

Oct 10

2016

45

You bring it up in conversation

55

Your child(ren) brings it up in conversation

0

No Answer