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Partisan Shifts in Views of the Nation, but Overall Opinions Remain Negative

Just 26% say ‘their side’ wins more often than it loses in politics

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Partisan Shifts in Views of the Nation, but Overall Opinions Remain Negative

Just 26% say ‘their side’ wins more often than it loses in politics

Republicans have become far more upbeat about the country and its future since before Donald Trump’s election victory. By contrast, Democrats have become much less positive. As a result, opinions among the public overall have shown little change – and remain about as negative they were in Barack Obama’s final year in office.

This is the case on several different opinions: about whether life in the U.S. has gotten better or worse for “people like you” over the past 50 years; prospects for the next generation of Americans; and views of current national conditions.

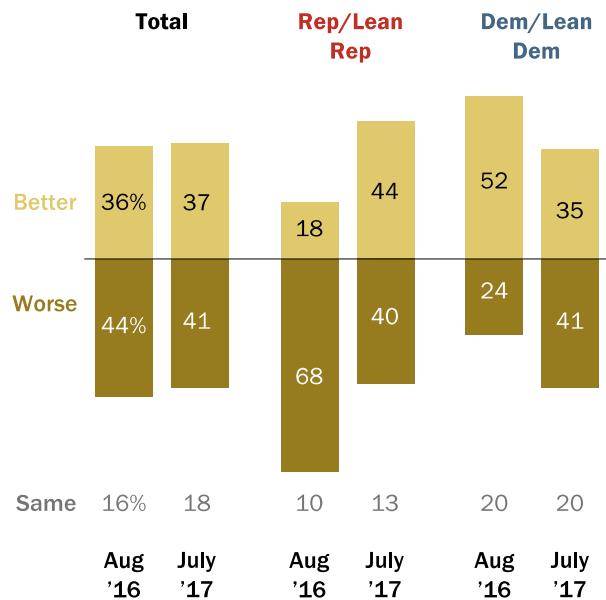
In addition, just 26% of the public say that, on the issues that matter to them, their side has been winning more often than it is losing; 62% say their side loses more often than it wins. This, too, is virtually unchanged from two years ago.

The national survey, conducted June 27-July 9 among 2,505 adults, finds that Republicans are much more positive than they were [a year ago](#) when comparing life today to the distant past.

Currently, 44% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents say that for people like them, life today is better than it was 50 years ago; last August just 18% said this. The share of Republicans who see life today as worse than it was a half-century ago has fallen from 68% to 40%. Small numbers continue to say life for people like them is about the same (10% then, 13% today).

Shifting partisan views on how life has changed for ‘people like you’

Is life in America today is better, worse, or about the same as it was fifty years ago for people like you? (%)



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted June 27-July 9, 2017.

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Democrats have moved in the opposite direction, though the change has been somewhat less pronounced. About a third of Democrats and Democratic leaners (35%) say life now is better for people like them than it was 50 years ago, down from 52% a year ago.

The partisan gap on this measure, which was substantial last year, is much more modest today. Republicans are now 9 percentage points more likely than Democrats to view life as better for people like them (44% vs. 35%). Last year, 52% of Democrats said life was better for people like them, compared with just 18% of Republicans.

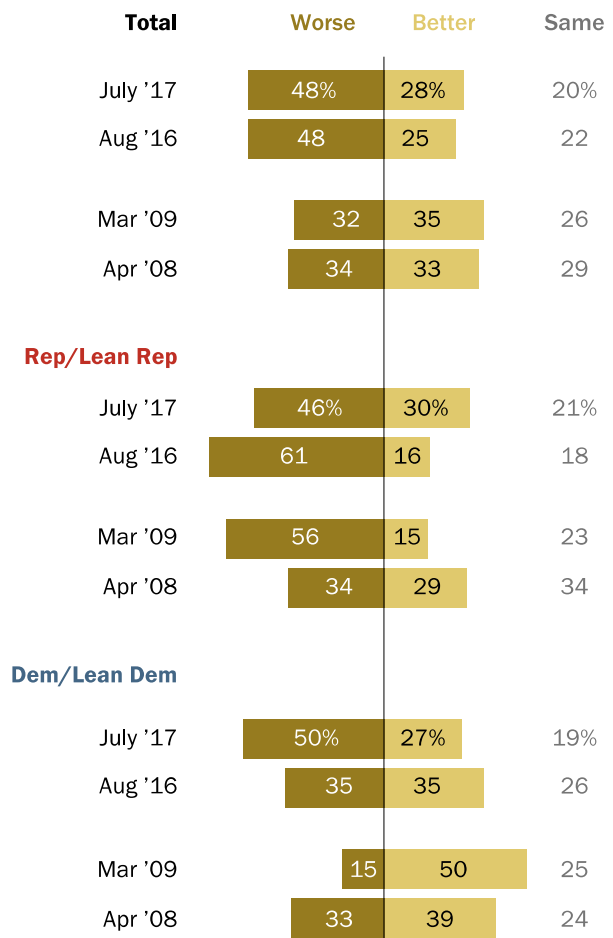
Partisans also continue to have contrasting expectations for the next generation. Again, overall opinions have changed little since last year. And more people say the future for the next generation of Americans will be worse today (48%) than did so in either 2009 (32%) or 2008 (34%), during the economic recession.

Among members of both parties, more say prospects for the next generation will be worse than better. Among Republicans, 46% say the future for the next generation will be worse, while 30% say it will be better and 21% about the same. Still, this represents a sharp improvement in opinion among Republicans since last year, when 61% said the future would be worse and just 16% better (18% said about the same).

Democrats, who were divided on the next generation's prospects a year ago, have become more negative: 50% say the next generation's future will be worse (up from 35% last year),

In both parties, more say future for next generation will be worse than better

Will the future of the next generation of Americans be better, worse, or about the same as life today? (%)



Note: Don't know responses not shown. Partisans do not include leaners in 2008 and 2009. Basing 2016/2017 data on partisans does not significantly change results.

Source: Survey conducted June 27-July 9, 2017. Data from 2008 and 2009 from CBS/New York Times.

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while 27% say it will better (down from 35%).

There was a similar partisan shift in expectations for the future of the next generation after the 2008 election. In April 2008, just a third of Republicans (34%) said they expected the future to be worse, but 56% said this in March 2009, after Barack Obama's victory. Among Democrats, on the other hand, expectations for the future improved: 50% said they expected the nation's future to be better in March 2009, up from 39% who said this before the November election.

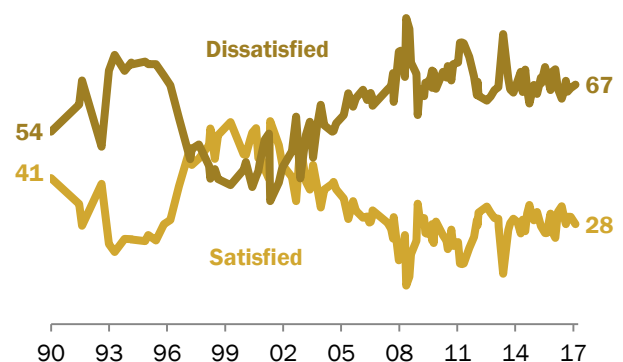
Still, Republicans are not nearly as optimistic about the future for the next generation today as Democrats were in early 2009 (30% "better" among Republicans now vs. 50% among Democrats in March 2009).

National satisfaction remains low

A 67% majority of the public says they are dissatisfied with how things are going in this country today, compared with 28% who say they are satisfied. This represents little change over the past year. In fact, the share of Americans expressing satisfaction with national conditions has been no more than about 30% for well more than a decade.

Among the public, continued dissatisfaction with national conditions

% saying they are ____ with the way things are going in this country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted June 27-July 9, 2017.

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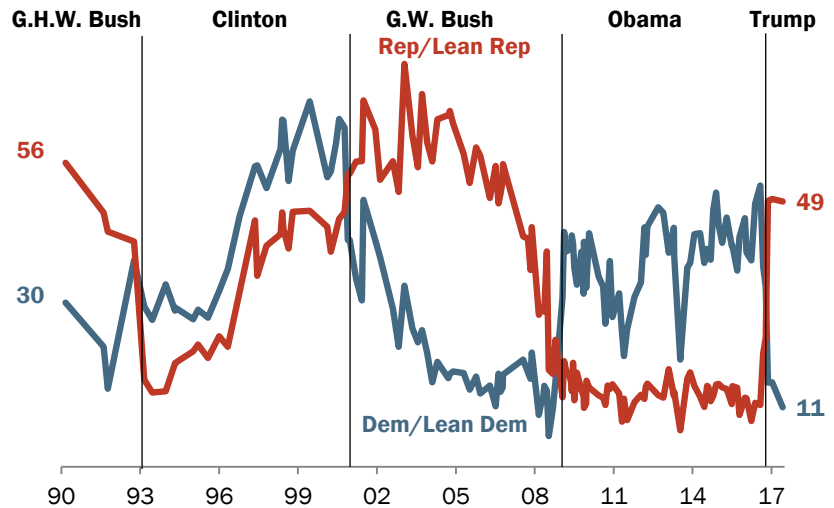
In late October, just prior to the election, only 11% of Republicans and Republican leaners said they were satisfied with how things were going, while 52% of Democrats and Democratic leaners said they were satisfied. Today, these views are nearly the reverse: 49% of Republicans now say they are satisfied, while just 11% of Democrats agree.

There have been only modest changes in satisfaction with national conditions among members of either party since April or February of this year.

As has been [noted previously](#), it is typical for partisans' views of national satisfaction to shift following a change in party control of the White House, but the size of the shift among both Republicans and Democrats is more pronounced than it was in either 2001, shortly after the election of George W. Bush and 2009, following Obama's election.

Satisfaction with state of nation has risen sharply among Republicans, plummeted among Democrats

% saying they are satisfied with the way things are going in this country



Source: Survey conducted June 27-July 9, 2017.

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In politics, more Americans feel like losers than winners

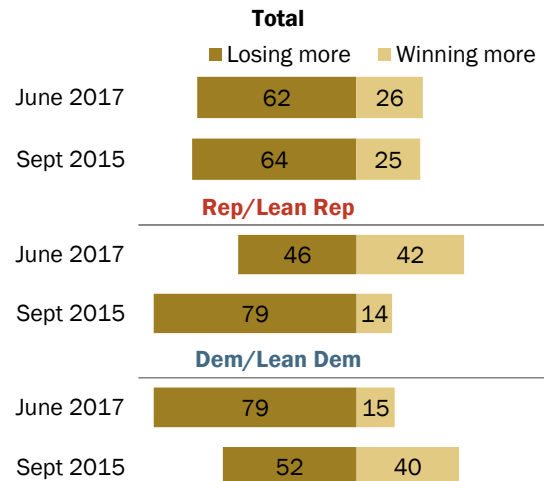
Compared with 2015, Republicans are far more likely to say that on the issues that matter to them, their side has been winning more than it has been losing.

Still, while Republicans now control the White House and both houses of Congress, just 42% say their side has been winning more often than it has been losing, while 46% say the opposite, according to separate survey conducted June 8-18 among 2,504 adults. Two years ago, fully 79% said their side was losing more often, compared with 14% who said it was winning more.

Democrats' views are now almost identical to those of Republicans in 2015. By 79% to 15%, Democrats say their side has been losing more often than it has been winning. Two years ago, 52% of Democrats said their side had been losing more often, while 40% said it had been winning more often.

Partisans trade places on whether their side is 'losing' more than 'winning'

On the issues that matter to you would you say your side has been winning more or losing more? (%)



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

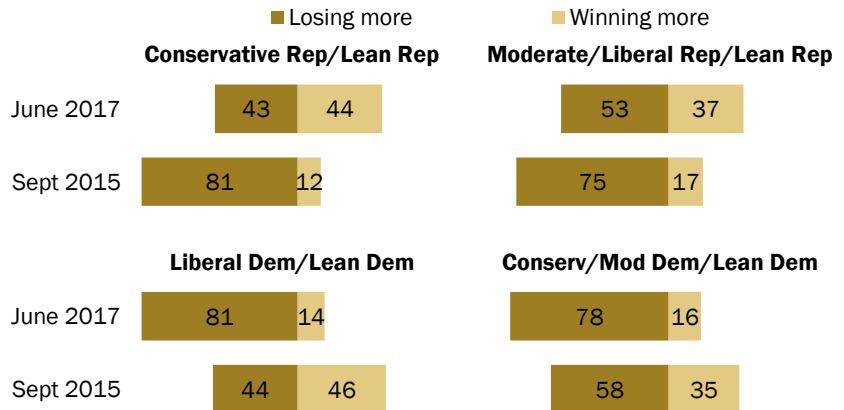
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These shifts are particularly pronounced among ideological partisans. In 2015, liberal Democrats and Democratic leaners were divided in their assessments of whether their side was losing more (44%) or winning more (46%). Today, fully 81% of liberal Democrats say they are losing more, while just 12% say they are winning.

The change has been the inverse among conservative Republicans: Today, 44% of conservative Republicans say they are winning more than they're losing, up from just 12% who said this in 2015.

Liberal Democrats' belief that their side is 'losing' identical to conservative Republicans' views in 2015

On the issues that matter to you would you say your side has been winning more or losing more? (%)



Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.
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Acknowledgements

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

Research team

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Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on two telephone polls with interviews conducted June 8-18, 2017 among a national sample of 2,504 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (628 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,876 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 1,109 who had no landline telephone), and June 27 – July 9, 2017 among a national sample of 2,505 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (627 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,878 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 1,148 who had no landline telephone). These surveys were conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; all samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2015 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2016 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

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:

<i>Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017</i>		
Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	2,504	2.3 percentage points
Republican/Lean Rep	1,050	3.5 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Dem	1,230	3.2 percentage points

<i>Survey conducted June 27-July 9, 2017</i>		
Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	2,505	2.2 percentage points
Republican/Lean Rep	1,036	3.5 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Dem	1,256	3.2 percentage points

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.

Pew Research Center undertakes all polling activity, including calls to mobile telephone numbers, in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other applicable laws.

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SUMMER 2017 POLITICAL LANDSCAPE SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE**

Phase A: June 8-18, 2017 N=2,504
Phase B: June 27-July 9, 2017 N=2,505
Combined N=5,009

QA1 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

ASK ALL PHASE B:

Q.B2 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref		Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Jul
Jun 27-Jul 9, 2017	28	67	5	20-24, 2011	17	79	4	
Apr 5-11, 2017	30	66	4	Jun 15-19, 2011	23	73	4	
Feb 7-12, 2017	30	65	5	May 5-8, 2011	30	62	8	
Jan 4-9, 2017	28	68	4	May 2, 2011	32	60	8	
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	30	65	5	Mar 8-14, 2011	22	73	5	
Oct 20-25, 2016	33	63	4	Feb 2-7, 2011	26	68	5	
Aug 9-16, 2016	31	66	3	Jan 5-9, 2011	23	71	6	
Jun 15-26, 2016	24	71	5	Dec 1-5, 2010	21	72	7	
Apr 12-19, 2016	26	70	3	Nov 4-7, 2010	23	69	8	
Mar 17-26, 2016	31	65	4	Sep 23-26, 2010	30	63	7	
Jan 7-14, 2016	25	70	5	Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	25	71	5	
Dec 8-13, 2015	25	72	3	Jun 24-27, 2010	27	64	9	
Aug 27-Oct 4, 2015	27	67	5	May 13-16, 2010	28	64	7	
Sep 22-27, 2015	27	69	4	Apr 21-26, 2010	29	66	5	
Jul 14-20, 2015	31	64	4	Apr 1-5, 2010	31	63	6	
May 12-18, 2015	29	67	4	Mar 11-21, 2010	25	69	5	
Mar 25-29, 2015	31	64	5	Mar 10-14, 2010	23	71	7	
Feb 18-22, 2015	33	62	5	Feb 3-9, 2010	23	71	6	
Jan 7-11, 2015	31	66	4	Jan 6-10, 2010	27	69	4	
Dec 3-7, 2014 (U)	26	71	3	Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	25	67	7	
Nov 6-9, 2014	27	68	4	Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	25	67	7	
Oct 15-20, 2014	29	65	6	Sep 10-15, 2009 ¹	30	64	7	
Sep 2-9, 2014	25	71	4	Aug 20-27, 2009	28	65	7	
Aug 20-24, 2014	24	72	4	Aug 11-17, 2009	28	65	7	
Jul 8-14, 2014	29	68	4	Jul 22-26, 2009	28	66	6	
Apr 23-27, 2014	29	65	6	Jun 10-14, 2009	30	64	5	
Feb 12-26, 2014	28	66	6	Apr 28-May 12, 2009	34	58	8	
Jan 15-19, 2014	26	69	5	Apr 14-21, 2009	23	70	7	
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	21	75	3	Jan 7-11, 2009	20	73	7	
Oct 9-13, 2013	14	81	5	December, 2008	13	83	4	
Jul 17-21, 2013	27	67	6	Early October, 2008	11	86	3	
May 1-5, 2013	30	65	5	Mid-September, 2008	25	69	6	
Feb 13-18, 2013 (U)	31	64	5	August, 2008	21	74	5	
Jan 9-13, 2013	30	66	4	July, 2008	19	74	7	
Dec 17-19, 2012	25	68	7	June, 2008	19	76	5	
Dec 5-9, 2012	33	62	5	Late May, 2008	18	76	6	
Oct 18-21, 2012	32	61	8	March, 2008	22	72	6	
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	31	64	5	Early February, 2008	24	70	6	
Jun 7-17, 2012	28	68	5	Late December, 2007	27	66	7	
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	29	64	7	October, 2007	28	66	6	
Apr 4-15, 2012	24	69	6					
Feb 8-12, 2012	28	66	6					
Jan 11-16, 2012	21	75	4					
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	17	78	5					
Aug 17-21, 2011	17	79	4					

¹ In September 10-15, 2009 and other surveys noted with an asterisk, the question was worded "Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?"

Q.B2 CONTINUED...

	Satis- fied	Dis- satisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref		Satis- fied	Dis- satisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref
February, 2007	30	61	9	February, 2001	46	43	11
Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7	January, 2001	55	41	4
Early January, 2007	30	63	7	October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7
December, 2006	28	65	7	September, 2000	51	41	8
Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8	June, 2000	47	45	8
Early October, 2006	30	63	7	April, 2000	48	43	9
July, 2006	30	65	5	August, 1999	56	39	5
May, 2006*	29	65	6	January, 1999	53	41	6
March, 2006	32	63	5	November, 1998	46	44	10
January, 2006	34	61	5	Early September, 1998	54	42	4
Late November, 2005	34	59	7	Late August, 1998	55	41	4
Early October, 2005	29	65	6	Early August, 1998	50	44	6
July, 2005	35	58	7	February, 1998	59	37	4
Late May, 2005*	39	57	4	January, 1998	46	50	4
February, 2005	38	56	6	September, 1997	45	49	6
January, 2005	40	54	6	August, 1997	49	46	5
December, 2004	39	54	7	January, 1997	38	58	4
Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6	July, 1996	29	67	4
July, 2004	38	55	7	March, 1996	28	70	2
May, 2004	33	61	6	October, 1995	23	73	4
Late February, 2004*	39	55	6	June, 1995	25	73	2
Early January, 2004	45	48	7	April, 1995	23	74	3
December, 2003	44	47	9	July, 1994	24	73	3
October, 2003	38	56	6	March, 1994	24	71	5
August, 2003	40	53	7	October, 1993	22	73	5
April, 2003	50	41	9	September, 1993	20	75	5
January, 2003	44	50	6	May, 1993	22	71	7
November, 2002	41	48	11	January, 1993	39	50	11
September, 2002	41	55	4	January, 1992	28	68	4
Late August, 2002	47	44	9	November, 1991	34	61	5
May, 2002	44	44	12	Gallup: Late Feb, 1991	66	31	3
March, 2002	50	40	10	August, 1990	47	48	5
Late September, 2001	57	34	9	May, 1990	41	54	5
Early September, 2001	41	53	6	January, 1989	45	50	5
June, 2001	43	52	5	September, 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5
March, 2001	47	45	8				

ASK ALL PHASE B:

Q.B3 In general, would you say life in America today is better, worse, or about the same as it was fifty years ago for people like you?

Jun 27-Jul 9		Aug 9-16	Mar 17-26
<u>2017</u>		<u>2016</u>	<u>2016</u>
37	Better	36	35
41	Worse	44	43
18	About the same	16	15
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	7

ASK ALL PHASE B:

Q.B4 Do you think the future of the next generation of Americans will be better, worse, or about the same as life today?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	About the <u>same</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Jun 27-Jul 9, 2017	28	48	20	4
Aug 9-16, 2016	25	48	22	5

Q.B4 CONTINUED

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>About the same</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
Mar 17-26, 2016	25	49	19	7
CBS: January, 2014	20	53	25	2
CBS/NYT: September, 2012	32	42	18	8
CBS/NYT: April, 2012 (RVs)	24	47	23	6
CBS/NYT: October, 2011	21	46	29	4
CBS/NYT: October, 2010	22	51	23	4
CBS: May, 2010	20	50	25	5
CBS/NYT: February, 2010	25	46	26	3
CBS: May, 2009	25	42	28	5
CBS: March, 2009	35	32	26	7
CBS/NYT: April, 2008	33	34	29	4
CBS: June, 2007	25	48	24	3
CBS/NYT: September, 2006	30	38	28	4
CBS/NYT: October, 2002	29	39	27	5
NYT: June, 2000	40	31	26	3
CBS: February, 2000	44	27	27	3
CBS/NYT: March, 1995	16	58	20	6
CBS/NYT: November, 1994	18	57	21	4
CBS: January, 1994 ²	22	53	21	4
CBS/NYT: January, 1992	26	48	22	4
CBS/NYT: November, 1991 ³	26	43	28	3
CBS/NYT: October, 1991	20	52	25	3
CBS/NYT: March, 1991	36	26	35	3
CBS/NYT: June, 1990	28	36	31	5
CBS/NYT: June, 1989	25	52	18	5

NO QUESTIONS 5-11, 13, 16-17, 19-24**QUESTION A12, B18, B25, A26, B29 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****QUESTIONS A14-A15, B27-B28 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL PHASE A:**

Q.A30 Thinking about the way things are going in politics today ... on the issues that matter to you would you say your side has been winning more often than it's been losing, or losing more often than it's been winning?

<u>Jun 8-18 2017</u>		<u>Aug 27- Sep 13, 2015</u>
26	Winning more often than losing	25
62	Losing more often than winning	64
3	Winning as often as losing (VOL.)	3
3	Don't think about politics in this way (VOL.)	3
6	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	5

QUESTIONS B30-33, 40, B42, B46, B50-E11, A50, 51ii-pp, 51rr, B52-53, A77-A78, A127, A143, A168-A169 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**NO QUESTIONS 34-35, 38-39, 41, 43-45, 56-61, 63-76, 79, 81-125, 130-142, 144-165**

² In January 1994, question read: "Do you think the future for the next generation will be better, worse, or about the same as life today?"

³ In November 1991 and June 1990, question read: "Do you think the future generation of Americans will be better off, or worse off, or about the same as life today?" In November 1991, "same" was a volunteered response.

QUESTIONS A36-A37, 51qq, B54-B55, A62, B80, A128-A129 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Jun 8-Jul 9, 2017	25	31	39	3	1	2	16	18
Apr 5-11, 2017	24	31	42	2	1	*	17	20
Feb 7-12, 2017	23	34	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jan 4-9, 2017	25	28	41	4	*	1	18	19
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	24	33	35	5	1	3	15	16
Oct 20-25, 2016	26	33	36	3	*	2	15	17
Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	27	32	33	5	*	3	11	16
Aug 9-16, 2016	27	32	35	2	1	2	13	16
Jun 15-26, 2016	24	33	37	4	1	2	16	16
Yearly Totals								
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

QB166-B167 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:**

(U) Pew Research Center/USA Today polls