

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2011

No Frontrunner in Slow-Starting GOP Race

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## Obama Tests Well at Start of Reelection Run

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## No Frontrunner in Slow-Starting GOP Race

# Obama Tests Well at Start of Reelection Run

Barack Obama currently fares as well against a generic opponent in the upcoming presidential election as George W. Bush did in April 2003, a time when Bush's job approval rating was much higher than Obama's is today. He also tests considerably better than Bill Clinton did in March 1995.

Nearly half (47%) of registered voters say they would like to see Barack Obama reelected, while 37% say they would prefer to see a Republican candidate win the 2012 election, according to the survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press conducted March 8-14 among 1,525 adults. In April 2003, 48% of registered voters said they would like to see Bush reelected in 2004; 34% said they would prefer to see a Democrat win.

At the time, the Iraq war was viewed as moving to a successful conclusion and Bush's job approval rating among the public stood at 72%. In a [survey](#) released earlier this month, 51% of the public approved of the way Obama is handling his job as president.

In part, Obama is benefitting from the fact that the GOP has yet to coalesce behind a candidate. About one-in-five (21%) Republican and Republican-leaning registered voters say they would like to see Mitt Romney win the nomination while about the same percentage (20%) chooses Mike Huckabee; 13% back Sarah Palin, 11% opt for Newt Gingrich and 8% back Ron Paul. At this early stage in the race, 15% of GOP voters have no preference.

The race for the Republican nomination has gotten off to a much slower start than the presidential race four years ago. The Pew Research Center's news interest surveys have found that the campaign is drawing far less coverage and public interest than the previous presidential campaign at this stage. During the 2008 campaign, there were nomination races in both parties.

### Obama Tops Generic GOP Rival

	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>GW Bush</b>	<b>Obama</b>
	<b>March 1995</b>	<b>April 2003</b>	<b>March 2011</b>
<i>Looking ahead to the presidential election, would you like to see...</i>	%	%	%
President reelected	29	48	47
Prefer other party	33	35	37
Prefer independent	20	NA	NA
Other/Don't know (Vol.)	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>16</u>
	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. March 1995 figures based on general public. April 2003 and March 2011 figures based on registered voters. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

### Republican Race Is Wide Open

<i>Who would you most like to see nominated?</i>	<b>All voters</b>	<b>Rep/ In R</b>
	%	%
Mitt Romney	16	21
Mike Huckabee	14	20
Sarah Palin	11	13
Ron Paul	8	8
Newt Gingrich	7	11
Tim Pawlenty	2	3
Mitch Daniels	2	2
Rick Santorum	2	2
Haley Barbour	2	2
Chris Christie (Vol.)	1	2
Other	1	1
None/DK/Too early	<u>33</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB21. Based on registered voters; voters' first choice shown. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Through the first 10 weeks of 2007, coverage of the campaign accounted for about 7% of all news coverage on average, according to an analysis of coverage by Pew Research's Project for Excellence in Journalism. Through the first 10 weeks of this year – a period that has seen a series of major international stories – coverage of the 2012 campaign has accounted for only about 1% of the newshole.

The survey finds that Barack Obama's personal favorability remains fairly strong: 58% of the public say they have a favorable opinion of him while 39% view him unfavorably. Michelle Obama's favorable ratings continue to be higher than her husband's. Currently, 69% say they have a favorable opinion of Michelle Obama, compared with 21% who have an unfavorable opinion of her.

Views of John Boehner are little changed from December, the month before he officially became speaker of the House. About a quarter (26%) say they have a favorable opinion of the Ohio Republican, 27% say they have an unfavorable opinion. Nearly half (48%) have never heard of Boehner (32%) or cannot rate him (16%).

Meanwhile, favorable ratings for Obama's two predecessors in the White House have improved considerably since 2008. Currently, 42% say they have a favorable opinion of George W. Bush while 54% have an unfavorable view. Bush's favorable ratings are at their highest point in four years and have increased from a low of 31% in April 2008.

Bill Clinton's favorable ratings have rebounded after declining during Hillary Clinton's campaign for the Democratic nomination. Currently, 67% have a favorable opinion of Clinton, up 15 points since February 2008. Clinton's current mark is in line with his ratings in 2005 and 2006.

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### Comeback Kids?

<i>Opinion of ....</i>	<b>Fav</b>	<b>Unfav</b>	<b>Can't rate/DK</b>
<b>George W. Bush</b>	%	%	%
March 2011	42	54	4=100
Sept 2010	37	57	6=100
April 2008	31	65	4=100
<b>Bill Clinton</b>			
March 2011	67	29	4=100
Feb 2008	52	42	6=100
Dec 2006	63	33	4=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14c-d.  
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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## Obama's Obstacles, Advantages

In his reelection race, Obama is running about as well as Bush did at this stage in 2003. Obama holds a 10-point lead even though opinions about the president and his party – and views of national conditions – are much less positive than they were for Bush and the GOP in April 2003, when the Iraq war was still widely seen as going well.

For most of the past year, the percent expressing positive views of national conditions has remained below 30% (22% in the new survey). In April 2003, fully half of Americans (50%) said they were satisfied with the way things were going in the country.

While Obama is viewed favorably today (58%), Bush's favorable ratings in April 2003 were much higher (72%). More than six-in-ten (63%) viewed the GOP favorably in April 2003; today 48% have a favorable opinion of the Democratic Party.

Yet Obama and his party hold several advantages. For one thing the Republican Party's image is fairly negative. Just 42% have a favorable opinion of the GOP while 51% view the party unfavorably. The public currently has a mixed view of the Democratic Party (48% favorable vs. 45% unfavorable).

Moreover, the Democratic Party currently holds a seven-point lead over the Republican Party in party affiliation (32% to 25%) in Pew Research surveys conducted so far this year. In early 2003, as many people affiliated with the GOP (31%) as with the Democratic Party (31%).

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### Presidential Reelection Scorecard

	<b>Clinton March 1995*</b>	<b>GW Bush April 2003</b>	<b>Obama March 2011</b>
<b>Generic ballot</b>	%	%	%
Like to see president reelected	29	48	47
Prefer other party's candidate	33	35	37
Prefer independent	20	NA	NA
Other/Don't know	18	18	16
<b>President's job rating</b>			
Approve	44	72	51
Disapprove	44	22	39
<b>Favorable ratings:</b>			
<b>President</b>			
Favorable	55	72	58
Unfavorable	42	25	39
<b>Republican Party</b>			
Favorable	67	63	42
Unfavorable	27	31	51
<b>Democratic Party</b>			
Favorable	50	57	48
Unfavorable	44	36	45
<b>State of nation</b>			
Satisfied	23	50	22
Unsatisfied	74	41	73
<b>Party affiliation</b>			
Republican	34	31	25
Democrat	29	31	32
Independent	33	31	37

PEW RESEARCH CENTER. Mar. 8-14, 2011. Obama job rating, party favorability ratings from Feb. 22-Mar. 1. Generic ballot figures for Bush and Obama based on registered voters; for Clinton based on general public. Other measures based on general public. Party affiliation data year-to-date, based on multiple surveys.

\* Clinton favorability from February 1995, state of the nation from April 1995, party favorability from December 1994.

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Comparisons between Obama and Clinton at a similar point in his reelection bid are difficult, because of the prospect that Clinton would face a three-way race with a viable independent candidate, Ross Perot. Still, while Obama holds a clear lead in the generic ballot, in March 1995 Clinton ran about even with unnamed Republican: 29% of all Americans said they would like to see Clinton reelected, 33% said they would prefer an unnamed Republican and 20% said they would prefer an independent candidate.

In many ways, Clinton's position at the start of the 1996 campaign was far weaker than Obama's is today. The Republican Party's favorable ratings were 17 points higher than the Democrats' (67% to 50%). In addition, the GOP held an edge (34% to 29%) over the Democrats in party affiliation, based on surveys conducted in February and March 1995.

## Obama Holds Narrow Lead among Independents

As the 2012 campaign begins to take shape, Obama leads among many of the same groups that supported him strongly in the 2008 election – minorities, young people and low-income Americans.

However, as in 2008, Obama trails among white voters: 36% say they would like to see Obama reelected while 47% say they would prefer to see a Republican candidate win.

According to 2008 exit polls, Obama lost the white vote to John McCain by 43% to 55%.

Among independent voters, 40% say they would like to see Obama reelected, while 34% would prefer to see a Republican win the White House. At this point, roughly a quarter of independents (26%) offer no opinion. In the 2008 election, Obama outpolled McCain among independents, 52% to 44%.

### Prefer Obama or Republican?

<i>Looking ahead to 2012, would you prefer to see...</i>	<b>Barack Obama reelected</b> %	<b>Republican candidate win</b> %	<b>Other/DK</b> %
<b>All Voters</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16=100</b>
Men	42	39	18=100
Women	51	35	14=100
White	36	47	17=100
Black	92	1	8=100
Hispanic	66	16	18=100
18-29	53	34	13=100
30-49	45	39	17=100
50-64	47	35	18=100
65+	45	39	18=100
<i>Household income</i>			
\$75,000+	41	46	14=100
\$30k to \$74,999	46	39	15=100
<\$30,000	54	29	17=100
Republican	6	84	10=100
Democrat	84	7	10=100
Independent	40	34	26=100
<i>Tea Party</i>			
Agree	9	73	18=100
Disagree	82	8	10=100
No opinion	43	39	18=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB20. Based on registered voters. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## Republicans at the Starting Line

With Republicans still deciding whether to jump into the race for the party's 2012 presidential nomination, none of the most frequently mentioned potential candidates yet stands out as a front-runner.

Romney and Huckabee generally garner the most support across the ideological spectrum of Republicans and Republican leaners.

But Palin nearly matches Huckabee among those independents who say they lean Republican (18% for Huckabee, 16% for Palin), while 13% of GOP leaners say Paul is their top choice. Paul, best known for strong libertarian views, fares better among these GOP-leaning independents than he does among self-described Republicans (5%).

Among those who say they agree with Tea Party movement, 24% say Romney would be their first choice, 19% say Huckabee, 15% say Gingrich, 13% say Paul and 12% say Palin.

### Republicans View the Possible GOP Field

<i>Who would you most like to see nominated as GOP candidate?</i>	<b>All Rep/Lean R</b>	<i>Party ID</i>		<i>Ideology</i>		<i>Tea Party</i>	
		<b>Rep</b>	<b>Lean Rep</b>	<b>Cons</b>	<b>Mod/Lib</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree/No opin</b>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Mitt Romney	21	21	21	20	23	24	19
Mike Huckabee	20	22	18	20	22	19	21
Sarah Palin	13	11	16	13	11	12	14
Newt Gingrich	11	13	10	12	12	15	9
Ron Paul	8	5	13	9	8	13	5
Tim Pawlenty	3	4	1	4	1	4	2
Mitch Daniels	2	3	2	3	1	1	3
Rick Santorum	2	1	3	2	1	2	1
Haley Barbour	2	2	1	2	2	3	*
Chris Christie	2	1	3	1	2	2	2
Other	1	1	0	1	0	*	1
None	5	5	3	4	7	1	7
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	538	336	202	376	153	249	280

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB21. Based on Republican and Republican leaning registered voters; voters' first choice shown. Includes those who lean to a candidate. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Looking at family income within Republican and GOP-leaning registered voters, Romney garners more support from households earning at least \$75,000 a year (27%) than those earning less than that amount (18%). Palin attracts greater support from households earning less than \$75,000 (17% vs. 7%).

At this point, age does not seem to be much of a factor, though Gingrich gets more support from Republican voters 65 and older (17%) than among those under 40 (7%).

## Romney Fares Better among Affluent Republicans

<i>Who would you most like to see nominated as GOP candidate?</i>	<b>All Rep/Lean R</b>	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Family income</i>		<i>Age</i>		
		<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>\$75k plus</b>	<b>Under \$75k</b>	<b>18-39</b>	<b>40-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Mitt Romney	21	21	21	27	18	18	20	27
Mike Huckabee	20	18	22	16	23	22	20	18
Sarah Palin	13	12	14	7	17	9	15	12
Newt Gingrich	11	11	12	14	9	7	12	17
Ron Paul	8	10	7	7	10	12	8	5
Tim Pawlenty	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Mitch Daniels	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	3
Rick Santorum	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	2
Haley Barbour	2	3	*	3	1	0	2	2
Chris Christie	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	1
Other	1	1	*	1	*	0	1	1
None	5	4	5	7	3	7	4	3
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	538	287	251	190	290	103	261	171

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB21. Based on Republican and Republican leaning registered voters; voters' first choice shown. Includes those who lean to a candidate. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.



Three-in-ten among those who attend church weekly (30%) say their first choice is Huckabee, much greater support than for any other potential candidate. Huckabee also leads among white evangelical Republicans: 29% say their first choice is Huckabee, compared with 16% who favor Palin and 15% for Romney. Huckabee holds a comparable lead among white Catholic Republicans and leaners.

The preferences of Republican and GOP-leaning voters by religion, income and other factors are based on the voters' first choice for the nomination. Including their second choice does not change the overall picture: Among Republican and Republican-leaning registered voters, 35% say Huckabee would be their first or second choice, 31% choose Romney, 27% choose Palin and 23% choose Gingrich. Paul is the first or second choice of 16%.

## Huckabee Leads among GOP Evangelicals

<i>Who would you most like to see nominated as GOP candidate?</i>	<b>All Rep/Lean R</b>	<i>Church attendance</i>		<i>Denomination (among whites)</i>		
		<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Less often</b>	<b>Evang Prot</b>	<b>Main Prot</b>	<b>Cath-olic</b>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Mitt Romney	21	17	24	15	22	16
Mike Huckabee	20	30	13	29	15	27
Sarah Palin	13	13	13	16	13	6
Newt Gingrich	11	11	12	11	16	16
Ron Paul	8	5	11	7	9	8
Tim Pawlenty	3	4	3	3	1	3
Mitch Daniels	2	4	2	3	3	2
Rick Santorum	2	2	1	3	2	2
Haley Barbour	2	1	2	1	0	2
Chris Christie	2	*	3	0	2	5
Other	1	0	1	1	1	1
None	5	4	5	3	4	5
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	538	257	278	182	140	91

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB21. Based on Republican and Republican-leaning registered voters; voters' first choice shown. Includes those who lean to a candidate. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## Scant Coverage of Campaign So Far

At a time when the media and the public are tracking major breaking stories on the international and domestic fronts, the early steps in the 2012 campaign have yet to capture much attention. In early 2007, with nomination fights underway in both parties, coverage was significantly higher. Interest was higher as well – especially among Democrats – as Obama, an African American, and Hillary Clinton, a woman, proved to be strong contenders for the party’s nomination.

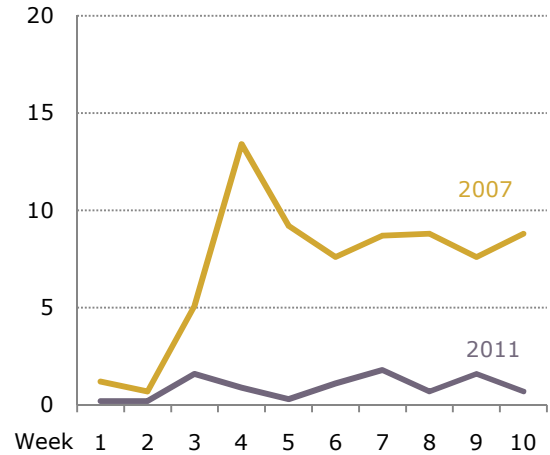
While coverage of the presidential campaign accounted for 7% of newshole, on average, during the first 10 weeks of 2007, so far in 2011, campaign news has accounted for just 1% of coverage, according to the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism.

The public has expressed only modest interest in the 2012 campaign. In a recent News Interest Index survey, conducted March 10-13, 15% of the public said they were following news about the 2012 presidential candidates very closely. During a comparable week in March 2007, 24% said they were following the campaign very closely.

As many Republicans are now paying close attention to the campaign as in early 2007 (19% very closely). But substantially more Republicans say they are not following campaign news at all closely: Currently, 33% say they are following news about the 2012 candidates “not at all closely,” up from just 19% four years ago.

## Campaign Coverage Has Yet To Ramp Up

Percent of news coverage devoted to presidential campaign



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Project for Excellence in Journalism. Coverage of presidential campaign for first 10 weeks of 2007 & 2011.

## Modest Public Interest in 2012 Presidential Candidates

Following news about possible presidential candidates...

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<b>March 10-13, 2011</b>	%	%	%	%
Very closely	15	19	15	13
Fairly/Not too closely	47	48	52	45
Not at all closely	38	33	34	42
Don't know	0	0	0	0
	100	100	100	100
<b>March 9-12, 2007</b>				
Very closely	24	19	30	22
Fairly/Not too closely	53	62	55	53
Not at all closely	23	19	17	25
Don't know	*	0	1	*
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER News Interest Index surveys.

## Favorability Ratings of the President and First Lady

Barack Obama's overall favorability rating remains positive; 58% hold a favorable view of the president, while 39% take an unfavorable view. There has been little change in favorability ratings of Barack Obama since the summer of 2010.

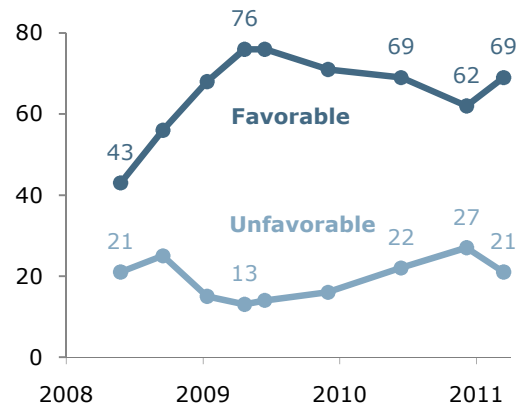
Compared with other recent presidents, Barack Obama is rated about the same as Bill Clinton at a comparable point in his presidency and is seen less favorably than George W. Bush at the outbreak of the Iraq War, about two years into his first term.

Nearly nine-in-ten Democrats (88%) say they have a favorable view of Obama, compared with 22% of Republicans and 54% of independents.

Nearly seven-in-ten Americans (69%) hold a favorable view of First Lady Michelle Obama; just 21% hold an unfavorable view. Michelle Obama's favorability rating has rebounded from a modest dip in December 2010 and now matches her rating from June 2010.

Three-quarters of women (75%) view Michelle Obama favorably as do 67% of independents. Even among Republicans, about as many hold a favorable view (44%) of Michelle Obama as an unfavorable opinion (43%).

### Michelle Obama Favorability



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14b.

## Boehner Not Widely Known

Two months after he became House speaker, John Boehner is still not widely known. About a quarter (26%) views him favorably, while 27% view him unfavorably. However, 48% cannot rate or have not heard of Boehner.

Among Republicans, 42% view Boehner favorably, 15% unfavorably; 43% do not offer an opinion. Those who agree with the Tea Party movement view Boehner favorably by a 49%-11% margin. By contrast, a majority of those who disagree with the Tea Party hold an unfavorable view of Boehner (53%).

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### Mixed Opinions of John Boehner

	<b>Fav</b>	<b>Unfav</b>	<b>Never heard/Can't rate/DK</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Total	26	27	48=100
Republican	42	15	43=100
Democrat	17	36	47=100
Independent	25	27	48=100
<i>Tea Party</i>			
Agree	49	11	39=100
Disagree	13	53	35=100
No opinion	24	21	55=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14e.  
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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## Bill Clinton Rebounds

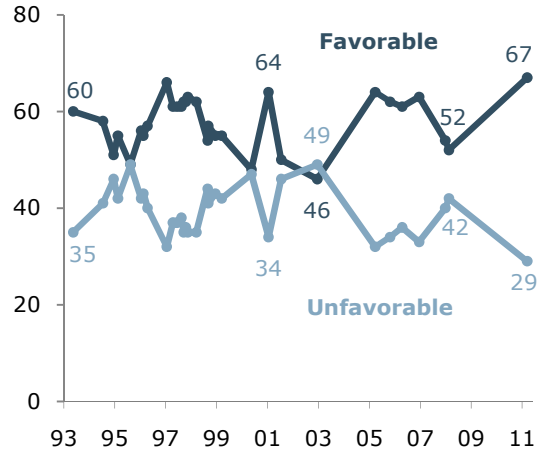
Bill Clinton's favorability rating has rebounded since February 2008 to match all-time highs. In the current survey, 67% hold a favorable opinion of the former president, while 29% have an unfavorable view. Since February 2008 – during the contentious Democratic primary battle between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama – Bill Clinton's overall favorability ratings have climbed 15 points.

At 67%, Bill Clinton's favorable rating is as high as it has been in Pew Research surveys dating back to November 1991. In January 2001, as Clinton left office, a comparable 64% viewed him favorably.

The rise in favorable views of Clinton has taken place across most demographic groups, including a significant increase among Republicans. In the current survey, 40% of Republicans view Bill Clinton favorably, up 24 points from February 2008. Two-thirds (66%) of independents have a favorable view of Clinton, up 13 points from three years ago. Democrats have been more stable in their views; 89% view Bill Clinton favorably, up seven points from February 2008.

Bill Clinton also receives an overwhelmingly positive rating from blacks, 88% of whom hold a favorable opinion of him.

### Bill Clinton's Favorability



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14d.

### Clinton Viewed More Positively

% favorable	Dec 2006	Feb 2008	Mar 2010	08-11 Change
	%	%	%	
Total	63	52	67	+15
Republican	31	16	40	+24
Democrat	89	81	89	+7
Independent	61	53	66	+13
Men	63	51	69	+18
Women	63	54	66	+12
White	58	48	61	+13
Black	90	79	88	+9
18-29	73	67	70	+3
30-49	60	54	68	+14
50-64	61	45	67	+22
65+	62	46	64	+18
<i>Family income</i>				
\$75,000+	65	48	63	+15
\$30k-\$74,999	60	50	70	+20
<\$30,000	67	64	72	+8

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14d.

## Bush Viewed Unfavorably, But Ratings Improve

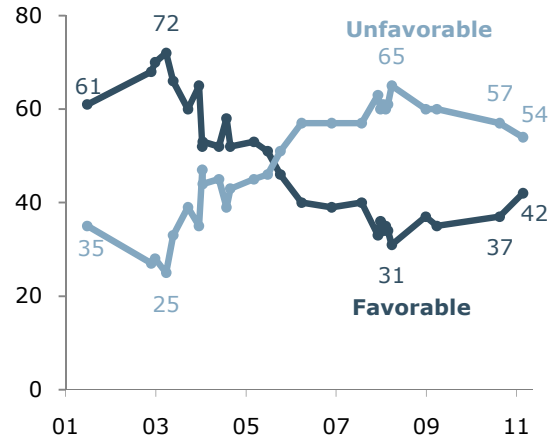
George W. Bush continues to be viewed more unfavorably (54%) than favorably (42%); however this rating reflects a modest improvement in views and marks the first time in several years that Bush's favorability has edged into the 40s.

In April 2008, just 31% viewed Bush favorably. Since then, ratings have improved: to 37% in September of 2010 and then up to 42% in the current survey.

Since September, favorable opinions of Bush have increased among independents and Republicans. Currently, 43% of independents view Bush favorably, up from 33% in September. About eight-in-ten Republicans (81%) hold a positive view of Bush, up seven points from the fall.

By contrast, favorable views of Bush among Democrats are little changed from September. And while Bill Clinton receives some positive ratings from members of the opposite party, Bush continues to receive very poor ratings from Democrats: 82% view him unfavorably; just 16% take a favorable view.

### George W. Bush's Favorability



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14c.

### Bush's Favorability Rises Among Republicans, Independents

% favorable	April 2008	Sept 2010	Mar 2011	10-11 change
Total	31	37	42	+5
Republican	70	74	81	+7
Democrat	10	13	16	+3
Independent	24	33	43	+10

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-14, 2011. QB14c.

## About the Surveys

Most of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 8-14, 2011 among a national sample of 1,525 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (1,005 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 520 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 242 who had no landline telephone). The survey was 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; both 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://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2010 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 within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,525	3.0 percentage points
Republicans	382	6.5 percentage points
Democrats	503	5.5 percentage points
Independents	570	5.0 percentage points
All registered voters	1,251	3.5 percentage points
Rep/Rep leaning RVs	538	5.5 percentage points

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

Some of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 10-13, 2011 among a national sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (670 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 331 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 154 who had no landline telephone). The survey was 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; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. 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.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status based on extrapolations from the 2010 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 within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,001	4.0 percentage points
Republicans	260	7.5 percentage points
Democrats	284	7.0 percentage points
Independents	329	6.5 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.



## About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS  
2011 MARCH POLITICAL TYPOLOGY  
FINAL TOPLINE**

Survey B: March 8-14, 2011 N=1525

**Q.B2 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 3-13**

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B14 As I read some names, please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each person. First, **[INSERT NAME; RANDOMIZE]** would you say your overall opinion of... **[INSERT NAME]** is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[NEXT NAME]**?

**[IF NECESSARY:** would you say your overall opinion of **[NAME]** is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?]  
**[INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
a. Barack Obama								
Mar 8-14, 2011	58	22	36	39	20	19	*	3
Dec 2-5, 2010	54	26	29	43	25	18	*	2
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	53	21	32	43	23	20	*	5
Jun 10-13, 2010	56	27	30	39	20	19	0	4
Oct 28-Nov 30, 2009	65	33	32	30	16	14	*	5
Jun 10-14, 2009	72	37	35	25	11	14	*	3
Apr 14-21, 2009	73	38	35	24	10	14	*	3
Jan 7-11, 2009	79	40	39	15	4	11	0	6
Mid-October, 2008	66	33	33	28	13	15	*	6
Late September, 2008	65	33	32	30	11	19	*	5
Mid-September, 2008	62	28	34	34	15	19	*	4
Late May, 2008	51	23	28	40	21	19	*	9
April, 2008	52	21	31	42	21	21	*	6
March, 2008	56	21	35	34	18	16	1	9
Late February, 2008	57	24	33	34	16	18	1	8
Early February, 2008	58	19	39	30	13	17	2	10
January, 2008	56	20	36	33	13	20	3	8
Late December, 2007	54	16	38	30	12	18	5	11
August, 2007	48	14	34	26	10	16	13	13
b. Michelle Obama								
Mar 8-14, 2011	69	30	39	21	9	12	1	9
Dec 2-5, 2010	62	30	31	27	15	12	1	10
Jun 10-13, 2010	69	31	38	22	9	12	1	9
Oct 28-Nov 30, 2009	71	33	38	16	8	8	1	11
Jun 10-14, 2009	76	36	39	14	5	9	1	9
Apr 14-21, 2009	76	36	40	13	4	9	1	10
Jan 7-11, 2009	68	28	40	15	4	11	2	15
Mid-September, 2008	56	23	33	25	11	14	2	17
Late May, 2008	43	14	29	21	8	13	4	32
c. George W. Bush								
Mar 8-14, 2011	42	12	31	54	27	27	*	4
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	37	10	27	57	34	24	*	6
Mid-April, 2009	35	9	26	60	33	27	*	5
January, 2009	37	9	28	60	35	25	0	3
April, 2008	31	9	22	65	42	23	*	4
March, 2008	34	8	26	61	37	24	0	5
Late February, 2008	35	10	25	60	39	21	0	5

## Q.B14 CONTINUED...

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
Early February, 2008	34	9	25	61	39	22	*	5
January, 2008	36	11	25	60	37	23	0	4
Late December, 2007	33	10	23	63	41	22	0	4
August, 2007	40	12	28	57	34	23	*	3
December, 2006	39	12	27	57	34	23	*	4
April, 2006	40	15	25	57	35	22	*	3
Late October, 2005	46	17	29	51	29	22	*	3
July, 2005	51	22	29	46	25	21	0	3
Late March, 2005	53	23	30	45	27	18	0	2
Mid-October, 2004 (RVs)	56	26	30	42	23	19	*	2
Early October, 2004 (RVs)	57	27	30	40	20	20	0	3
September, 2004	52	25	27	43	24	19	*	5
August, 2004	58	27	31	39	22	17	0	3
June, 2004	52	19	33	45	22	23	*	3
Early February, 2004	53	21	32	44	25	19	0	3
Gallup: Jan 29-Feb 1, 2004	52	--	--	47	--	--	--	1
Gallup: Jan 2-5, 2004	65	--	--	35	--	--	--	*
Gallup: Oct 6-8, 2003	60	--	--	39	--	--	--	1
Gallup: Jun 9-10, 2003	66	--	--	33	--	--	--	1
April, 2003	72	37	35	25	11	14	0	3
January, 2003	70	28	42	28	10	18	0	2
December, 2002	68	35	33	27	11	16	0	5
July, 2001	61	22	39	35	14	21	*	4
January, 2001	60	24	36	33	12	21	0	7
May, 2000	58	18	40	31	12	19	1	10
March, 1999 <sup>1</sup>	61	21	40	21	7	14	4	14
November, 1997	54	13	41	18	6	12	9	19
d. Bill Clinton								
Mar 8-14, 2011	67	27	40	29	10	18	1	3
February, 2008	52	20	32	42	22	20	*	6
Late December, 2007	54	22	32	40	20	20	0	6
December, 2006	63	29	34	33	16	17	1	3
April, 2006	61	27	34	36	18	18	0	3
Late October, 2005	62	26	36	34	18	16	*	4
Late March, 2005	64	24	40	32	13	19	0	4
December, 2002	46	17	29	49	27	22	*	5
July, 2001	50	20	30	46	27	19	0	4
January, 2001	64	23	41	34	17	17	0	2
May, 2000	48	17	31	47	28	19	*	5
March, 1999	55	21	34	42	23	19	*	3
December, 1998	55	23	32	43	24	19	0	2
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	52	15	37	44	24	20	0	4
Early September, 1998	57	18	39	41	23	18	0	2
Late August, 1998	54	18	36	44	24	20	0	2
March, 1998	62	22	40	35	16	19	*	3
November, 1997	63	19	44	35	14	21	0	2
October, 1997	62	15	47	36	16	20	*	2
September, 1997	62	18	44	35	14	21	0	3
August, 1997	61	16	45	38	17	21	0	1
April, 1997	61	17	44	37	16	21	*	2
January, 1997	66	17	49	32	14	18	*	2
October, 1996 (RVs)	57	12	45	41	19	22	0	2
June, 1996	61	16	45	37	14	23	*	2

<sup>1</sup> In March 1999 and November 1997 the category was listed: "Texas Governor George W. Bush."

**Q.B14 CONTINUED...**

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
April, 1996	57	16	41	40	16	24	0	3
February, 1996	55	20	35	43	21	22	0	2
January, 1996	56	13	43	42	15	27	0	2
August, 1995	49	13	36	49	20	29	0	2
February, 1995	55	14	41	42	17	25	0	3
December, 1994	51	17	34	46	22	24	0	3
July, 1994	58	15	43	41	16	25	*	1
May, 1993	60	18	42	35	12	23	0	5
July, 1992	59	17	42	34	9	25	0	7
June, 1992	46	10	36	47	14	33	1	6
May, 1992	53	11	42	42	10	32	*	5
March, 1992	53	10	43	40	11	29	1	6
February, 1992	59	15	44	31	7	24	2	8
January, 1992	37	9	28	15	4	11	27	21
November, 1991	30	5	25	10	2	8	39	21
e. John Boehner								
Mar 8-14, 2011	26	7	19	27	11	16	32	16
Dec 2-5, 2010	28	8	20	25	12	14	34	12
Jun 10-13, 2010	12	3	9	22	8	15	54	12
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON<sup>2</sup>:</b>								
<b>Nancy Pelosi</b>								
Dec 2-5, 2010	29	10	20	55	35	19	9	6
Jun 10-13, 2010	27	5	22	50	28	23	14	8
Jun 10-14, 2009	35	8	28	41	25	16	15	8
December, 2007	25	6	19	38	19	19	20	17
<b>Dennis Hastert</b>								
December, 2002	18	3	15	12	9	3	52	18
<b>Newt Gingrich</b>								
October, 1998	41	8	33	49	23	26	1	9
Early September, 1998	42	7	35	48	20	28	3	7
Late August, 1998	43	5	38	52	19	33	2	3
March, 1998	36	6	30	49	20	29	6	9
November, 1997	30	6	24	59	24	35	4	7
August, 1997	30	6	24	62	27	35	2	6
April, 1997	28	5	23	64	28	36	3	5
January, 1997	28	4	24	65	26	39	2	5
August, 1995	30	9	21	54	25	29	4	12
February, 1995	41	12	29	37	15	22	10	12
December, 1994	25	7	18	28	13	15	30	17
July, 1994	14	2	12	12	4	8	65	9
<b>Thomas Foley</b>								
March, 1991	42	13	29	10	7	3	23	25
May, 1990	20	3	17	9	6	3	45	26

**Q.B15, Q.17 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****Q.B16 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****NO QUESTIONS 18-19**

<sup>2</sup> Trends for Pelosi, Hastert, Gingrich and Foley shown only for when they occupied the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives.

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B20 Looking ahead, would you like to see Barack Obama re-elected president in 2012 or would you prefer that a Republican candidate win the election? **[INTERVIEWER: IF R SAYS "OTHER" OR "SOMEONE ELSE," PROBE ONCE: "If you had to choose, would you like to see Barack Obama re-elected or would you prefer that a Republican candidate win the election?"]**

	Obama <u>re-elected</u>	Prefer <u>Republican</u>	(VOL.) <u>Other/DK</u>
Mar 8-14, 2011	48	35	16

**TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:**

*Looking ahead to the general election in November, would you like to see George W. Bush re-elected president in 2004 or would you prefer that a Democratic candidate win the election?*  
**[INTERVIEWER: IF R SAYS "OTHER" OR "SOMEONE ELSE," PROBE ONCE: "If you had to choose, would you like to see George W. Bush re-elected or would you prefer that a Democratic candidate win the election?"]**

	Bush <u>re-elected</u>	Prefer <u>Democrat</u>	(VOL.) <u>Other/DK</u>
Mid-January, 2004	44	40	16
Early January, 2004	43	43	14
December, 2003	47	38	15
October, 2003	40	44	16
September, 2003	44	43	13
August, 2003	40	39	21
Mid-July, 2003	45	37	18
April, 2003	46	35	19
Gallup: Late March, 2003 <sup>3</sup>	51	36	13
Gallup: Mid-March, 2003	45	42	13

*Looking ahead, would you like to see Bill Clinton re-elected or would you prefer that a Republican candidate or an Independent candidate be elected President?*

	Clinton <u>re-elected</u>	Prefer <u>Republican</u>	Prefer <u>independent</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
October, 1995	31	28	22	19
August, 1995	29	32	23	16
March, 1995	29	33	20	18
December, 1994	28	35	15	22
December, 1993	28	22	12	38

*Would you like to see George Bush re-elected President in November or would you prefer that a Democratic candidate win the election?*

	G.H.W. Bush <u>re-elected</u>	Prefer <u>Democrat</u>	(VOL.) <u>Other/DK</u>
February, 1992	40	48	12
January, 1992	42	42	16
November, 1991	41	43	16

<sup>3</sup> The March 2003 trends are from Gallup and were worded: "If George W. Bush runs for re-election in 2004, in general are you more likely to vote for Bush or for the Democratic Party's candidate for president?"

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

Q.B21 As I name some possible Republican candidates for president in 2012, please tell me which one, if any, you would most like to see nominated as the Republican Party's candidate? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE] [PROBE IF NECESSARY: As of today, who would you say you LEAN toward?]**

Mar 8-14 <u>2011</u>		Nov 4-7 <u>2010<sup>4</sup></u>
14	Mitt Romney	13
13	Sarah Palin	15
13	Mike Huckabee	15
8	Ron Paul	9
6	Newt Gingrich	6
2	Mitch Daniels	--
2	Tim Pawlenty	4
2	Rick Santorum	2
2	Haley Barbour	3
1	Chris Christie <b>(VOL.)</b>	--
1	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	4
21	None <b>(VOL.)</b>	14
2	Too early to tell <b>(VOL.)</b>	--
12	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	14

**ASK IF HAS FIRST CHOICE (Q.B22=1-10):**

Q.B22 Who, if anyone, would be your second choice for the Republican nomination in 2012? **[READ OPTIONS IF NECESSARY, ELIMINATING NAME CHOSEN IN Q.B12]**

Mar 8-14, 2011			
<u>First choice</u>	<u>Second choice</u>	<u>Total</u>	
13	12	25	Mike Huckabee
14	9	23	Mitt Romney
13	8	21	Sarah Palin
8	7	15	Ron Paul
6	7	13	Newt Gingrich
2	3	5	Tim Pawlenty
2	2	4	Rick Santorum
2	2	4	Mitch Daniels
2	2	3	Haley Barbour
1	*	1	Chris Christie <b>(VOL.)</b>
1	2	3	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>
21	8	21	None <b>(VOL.)</b>
2	1	2	Too early to tell <b>(VOL.)</b>
12	4	12	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>
--	35	35	No first choice

**Q.B34, Q.B71-Q.B74 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 23-32, 36, 39-46, 48-67, 69-70, 75-89**

**Q.33, Q.B35, Q.37, Q.B38, Q.B47, Q.B68, Q.B90-Q.B92 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

<sup>4</sup> In November 2010, the question read, "Now I am going to read you the names of some possible candidates for the Republican nomination for President in 2012. After I read all the names, please tell me which one you would most like to see nominated as the Republican Party's candidate for President or if there is someone else you support."

**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
Mar 8-14, 2011	24	33	38	3	*	2	17	15
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	24	33	37	3	*	3	15	16
Feb 2-7, 2011	24	31	39	3	*	2	16	16
Jan 5-9, 2011	27	32	35	4	*	2	15	14
Dec 1-5, 2010	25	33	34	5	1	2	13	14
Nov 4-7, 2010	26	30	37	4	*	2	17	13
Oct 27-30, 2010	25	34	31	6	1	4	13	11
Oct 13-18, 2010	25	31	36	4	*	3	16	13
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	24	32	39	2	*	2	15	17
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	26	33	34	4	*	3	14	14
Jun 16-20, 2010	27	34	34	3	1	2	15	15
Apr 21-26, 2010	26	33	36	3	1	3	16	13
Mar 11-21, 2010	28	34	32	3	*	3	13	12
Mar 10-14, 2010	22	33	37	6	*	3	14	13
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
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	--	--	--	--	--

**ASK ALL:**

TEAPARTY2 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Haven't heard of</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Refused</u>	<i>Not heard of/ DK</i>
Mar 8-14, 2011	19	25	54	1	1	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	20	25	52	2	2	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 <sup>5</sup>	22	22	53	2	2	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	24	22	50	2	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	22	26	49	2	2	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	27	22	49	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	29	25	32	--	1	13
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	28	24	30	--	1	16
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	29	26	32	--	1	13
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	22	18	37	--	1	21
Jun 16-20, 2010	24	18	30	--	*	27
May 20-23, 2010	25	18	31	--	1	25
Mar 11-21, 2010	24	14	29	--	1	31

**ASK ALL SURVEY B:**

PVOTE08A In the 2008 presidential election between Barack Obama and John McCain, did things come up that kept you from voting, or did you happen to vote?

**ASK IF YES (PVOTE08A=1):**

PVOTE08B Did you vote for Obama, McCain or someone else?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1251]:**

	<u>Voted</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>McCain</u>	<u>Other candidate</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>	Did not vote	<b>(VOL.)</b> Don't remember/ <u>Ref</u>
Mar 8-14, 2011	88	46	32	5	5	12	*
Nov 4-7, 2010	89	45	33	6	4	11	1
Oct 27-30, 2010	88	44	35	4	5	10	2
Oct 13-18, 2010	89	45	35	4	4	10	1
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	89	46	34	4	4	10	1
Jan 6-10, 2010	92	44	37	4	6	8	*
Mar 31-Apr 21, 2009	93	47	34	5	7	7	*
Feb 4-8, 2009	93	48	33	4	8	7	*
Jan 7-11, 2009	93	48	35	4	6	7	*
December, 2008	93	50	32	3	9	7	*

<sup>5</sup> In the February 2-7, 2011 survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May through October, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March it was described as "the Tea Party Protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."