

AEI Political Report

Midterm Election Update

As we head into the home stretch of the 2006 election campaigns, anti-incumbent sentiment is unusually high. Many polls suggest that Democrats are more fired up about going to the polls this November than Republicans.

Q: *Would you like to see . . . ?*

Would like to see your member of Congress reelected



Note: October 1990 sample is from a Gallup survey. Samples are registered voters.

Source: PSRA/Pew Research Center.

Q: *Compared to previous elections, are you . . . ?*

More enthusiastic about voting than usual



Note: Sample is registered voters.

Source: Gallup/USA Today, August 2006.

Election Watch

AEI's Election Watch is back by popular demand. There will be two sessions this fall:

- September 21, 2006 (breakfast preview)
- November 9, 2006 (post-election luncheon debriefing)

Join panelists Norman Ornstein, Karlyn Bowman, and John Fortier for up-to-date and essential analysis. For information about registering for the program, see www.aei.org/electionwatch.

Bill and Hillary

Hillary Clinton is a polarizing political figure. She also divides the sexes. Women warm to her, men don't. Women and men give her husband virtually identical high favorable ratings. Only 30 percent nationally say she would be a better candidate than her husband was in 1992.

Q: *As I read each name, please say if you . . . ?*

Have a favorable opinion of Bill Clinton



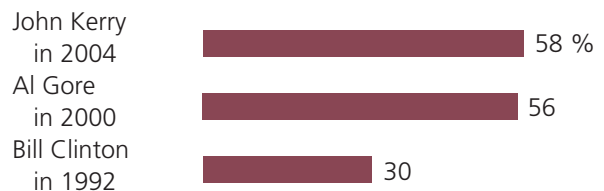
Have a favorable opinion of Hillary Clinton



Source: Gallup/USA Today, June 2006.

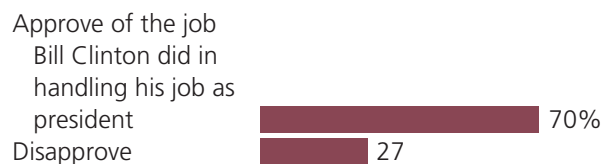
Q: *Do you think . . . ?*

Hillary Clinton would make a better candidate than...



Source: Gallup/USA Today, July 2006.

Q: *Based on what you remember from President Clinton's administration, do you . . . ?*

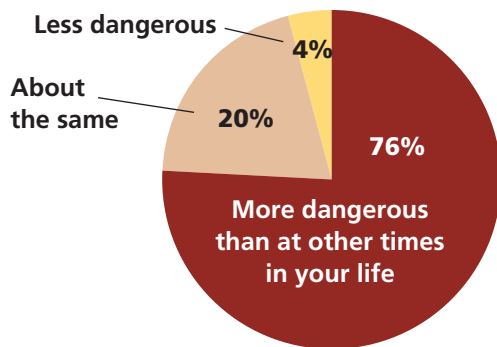


Source: SRB/Time, July 2006.

September 11th: A Five-Year Retrospective

Americans describe the world as more dangerous than at other times in their lives, and large numbers expect another terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Few Americans think the terrorists are winning what Americans believe will be a long war, but they are split over whether the United States and its allies are winning or neither side is. Americans believe that the administration has made the country safer, but the president's marks on handling the issue have come down. Concern about civil liberties has also risen since the period immediately after 9/11. The possible explanations: a reduced fear factor, Americans' long-held suspicions of federal government power, and/or actions by the administration.

Q: In your opinion, would you say the world today is . . . ?



Note: Sixty-seven percent of men and 83 percent of women said "more dangerous."

Source: Gallup/USA Today, July 2006.

Q: Do you think . . . ?

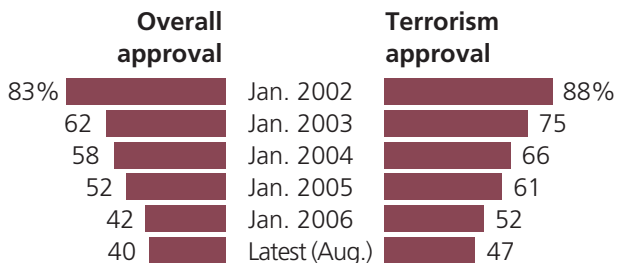
The policies of the Bush administration have made the U.S.



Source: CBS News, August 2006.

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling terrorism?



Note: Last point in each month shown.

Source: ABC News/Washington Post.

Q: Who do you think is . . . ?

Currently winning the war against terrorism

	U.S. and its allies are	Neither side is	The terrorists are
October 2001	42%	44%	11%
August 2006	35%	44%	18%

Source: Gallup/CNN/USA Today, October 2001; Gallup/USA Today, June 2006.

Q: Do you think of the war with Iraq as . . . ?

Iraq as part of the war on terrorism

	Iraq as part of the war on terrorism	Separate
April 2003	62%	31%
August 2006	44%	51%

Source: CBS News/New York Times.

Q: What concerns you more right now—that the government . . . ?

Will fail to enact strong anti-terrorism laws

	Will fail to enact strong anti-terrorism laws	Will enact laws that excessively restrict civil liberties
December 2001	43%	45%
August 2006	39%	46%

Source: CBS News/New York Times, December 2001; CBS News, August 2006.

Q: Would you be willing to give up some of your personal freedom in order to reduce the threat of terrorism?

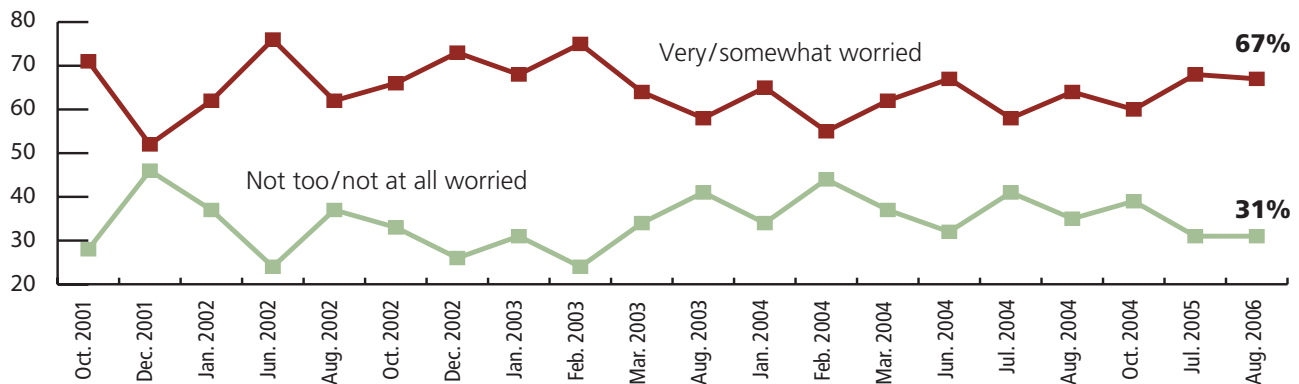
Yes

	Yes
October 2001	71%
May 2006	54%

Source: Fox News/Opinion Dynamics.

Another Terrorist Attack?

Q: How worried are you that there will soon be another terrorist attack in the United States?

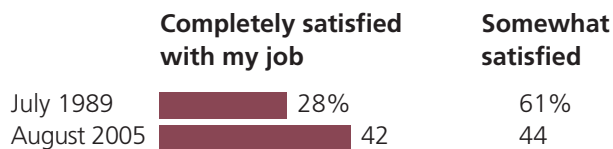


Note: Last point in each month shown. Source: PSRA/Pew Research Center.

A Labor Day Look at Work

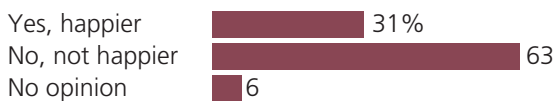
Surveys show that American workers are happy at their jobs. There has been little change in their attitudes over time. Co-workers are the most satisfying aspects of their jobs; the amount of money they earn is the least satisfying part of their jobs.

Q: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your job?



Note: Samples are employed adults. Source: The Gallup Organization.

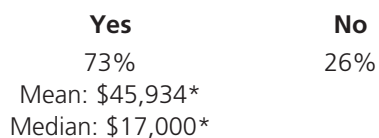
Q: Do you think you would be happier in a different job?



Note: Samples are employed adults. Source: Gallup/USA Today, July 2006.

Q: Do you think you would be happier if you made more money?

Q: How much more money per year would it take to make you happy?



Note: * Responses are for the 73 percent who said they would be happier if they made more money. Source: Gallup/USA Today, July 2006.

Q: Now I'll read a list of job characteristics. For each, please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with your current job in this regard.

Your relations with co-workers

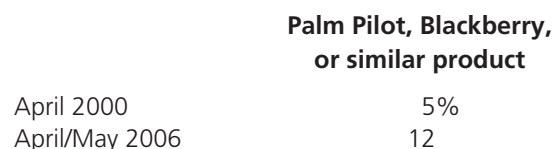


The amount of money you earn



Note: Samples are employed adults. Source: The Gallup Organization.

Q: Do you happen to have a . . . ?



Source: PSRA/Pew Research Center.

Just prior to Labor Day, AEI is releasing a new Public Opinion Study on Americans' attitudes toward work, "The State of the American Worker 2006." It can be accessed online at <http://www.aei.org/publicopinion17>.

News You Can Use

The Pew Research Center updated its massive biennial news consumption survey in April and May and released the results in late July. Below are some highlights from the survey.

- **Local news** is the biggest draw for newspaper readers. Thirty-five percent of those who read a newspaper at least sometimes say news about their city, town, or region is what is important to them.
- Four percent of Americans say they read **online blogs** regularly. This rises to 9 percent among 18–24-year-olds.
- Will **young people** adopt the newspaper reading habit as they age? That is the hope of many publishers. In the new survey, 24 percent of people under age 30 read a newspaper on a typical day, and when they do, they spend just eight minutes doing so. Fifty-eight percent of people ages 65 and older read a newspaper on a typical day. They spend twenty-five minutes perusing its pages.
- NPR's **regular listeners** were 17 percent of the Pew sample, up from 9 percent in 1994. More Democrats (22 percent) than Republicans (13 percent) regularly listen to NPR. CNN has a less pronounced Democratic tilt. Twenty-eight percent of Democrats regularly watch, compared to 19 percent of Republicans. Twenty-three percent watch Fox News regularly. Its audience skews Republican (34 percent regularly watch, compared to just 20 percent of Democrats).
- Thirty-one percent say they **never watch** the nightly network news, up from 9 percent in 1993. Fifty percent say they never listen to NPR; 63 percent, *The NewsHour*; and 55 percent, the Sunday morning news shows. Seventy-six percent say they never listen to Rush Limbaugh, 68 percent never watch *The Daily Show*, 61 percent *The O'Reilly Factor*, and 59 percent, *Larry King Live*.

AEI POLITICAL REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

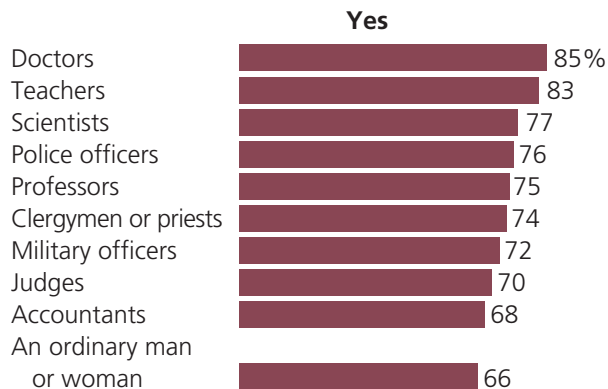
Karlyn Bowman, Resident Fellow; John Fortier, Research Fellow; Norman Ornstein, Resident Scholar; and Ben Wattenberg, Resident Fellow.

Research Assistants: Adam Foster, Editor; Matt Weil; Tim Ryan; and Joe Manzari.

Whom Do You Trust to Tell the Truth?

Since 1998, Harris Interactive has asked Americans which types of people do they trust to tell the truth. At the top of the list are doctors, teachers, scientists, police officers, and professors. At the bottom are lawyers and actors.

Q: Would you generally trust each of the following types of people to tell the truth, or not?



Toward the bottom of the list were journalists cited by 39 percent, members of Congress (35 percent), and pollsters (34 percent).

Note: Only the top ten shown. Source: Harris Interactive, July 2006.

Current Commentary

“Vote—or Else”

AEI resident scholar Norman Ornstein makes the case for mandatory voting as a means to improve voter turnout and resurrect the political center.

<http://www.aei.org/publication24764/>

“Pessimism about the Middle East Is Growing”

AEI resident fellow Karlyn Bowman discusses recent survey data on the Middle East, the attitudes of Hispanics in the United States, and more.

<http://www.aei.org/publication24718/>

“What Ails Congress”

AEI research fellow John Fortier looks at the current problems confronting Congress by analyzing two recent books, *The Broken Branch* by Norman Ornstein and Thomas Mann and *Winning the Future* by Newt Gingrich.

<http://www.aei.org/publication24789/>