

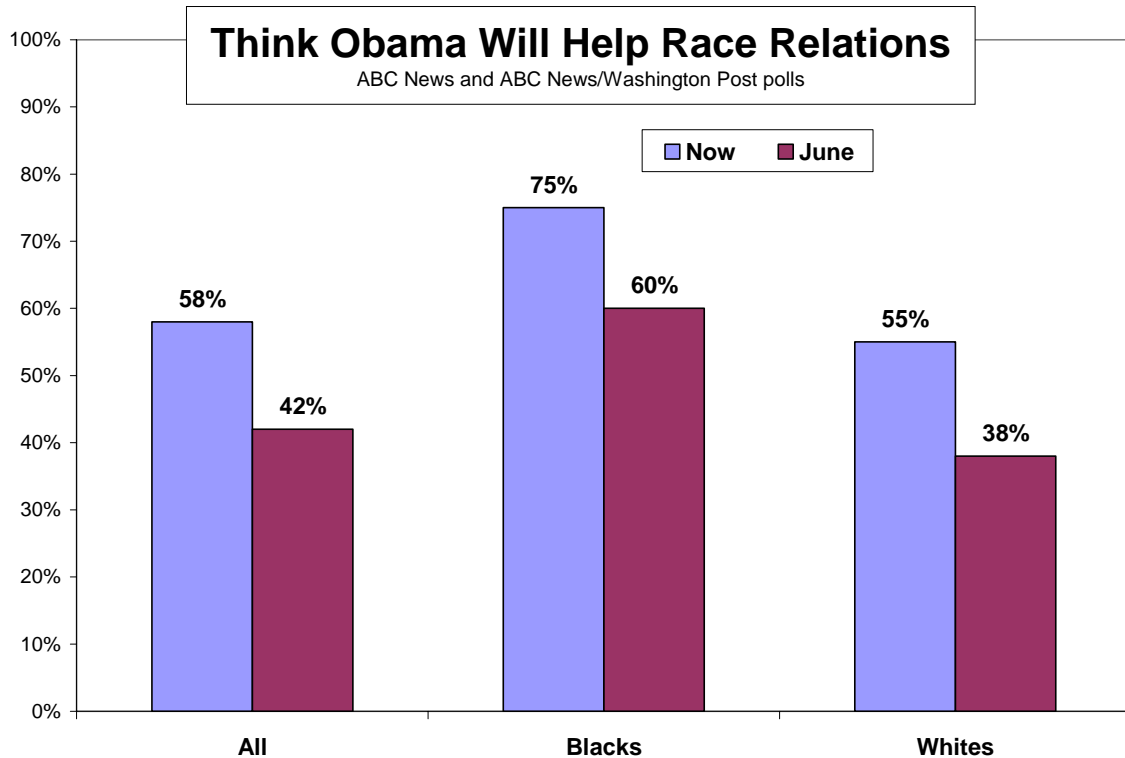
ABC NEWS POLL: OBAMA/RACE

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Obama and Race: Bridging the Divide?

Adding to the high expectations for Barack Obama across a range of issues, nearly six in 10 Americans think his presidency will improve race relations in this country, a view that's grown substantially given his election as the 44th president.

Fifty-eight percent in this ABC News poll think Obama's presidency will help improve relations among racial groups – sharply higher than the 42 percent who said the same of his candidacy last summer.



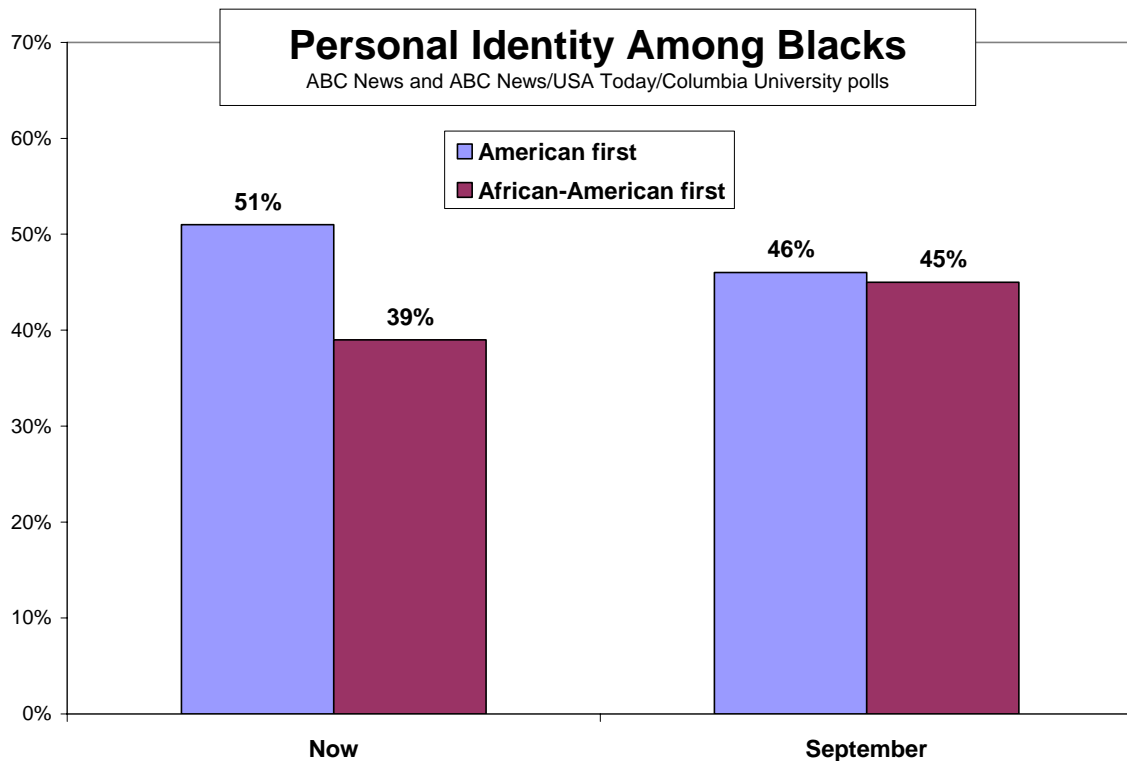
African-Americans, moreover, now say by a 12-point margin that they think of themselves as Americans first rather than as blacks first – a slight shift from a September poll in which they divided evenly on that question.

Obama's inauguration as the first African-American president will be laden with symbolism. He'll be sworn in the day after Martin Luther King Day, on the same Bible on which Abraham Lincoln took the oath of office March 4, 1861.

IMPROVE – The sense that Obama will improve race relations has grown equally among whites and blacks alike, although it remains higher overall among blacks. Republicans remain more skeptical than others – but also show the biggest increase in this view, a very large 25-point jump compared with last June’s level.

Think Obama will help race relations			
	1/09	6/08	Change
All	58%	42%	+16 points
Blacks	75	60	+15
Whites	55	38	+17
Republicans	43	18	+25
Democrats	75	57	+18
Independents	53	44	+9

Similarly, two-thirds of Americans – including blacks and whites equally – say Obama’s election represents progress for all blacks in America, not just a single case of individual accomplishment. This view, however, has ebbed slightly since September, particularly so among African-Americans. Then 79 percent saw Obama’s nomination as a sign of progress for blacks more generally; today 64 percent see his election that way.



PRIDE and IDENTITY – A majority of blacks, 55 percent, say Obama’s election makes them “more proud” to be an American. Fewer whites but still one in three (32 percent) say the same. And in a related result, a bare majority of blacks, 51 percent, now say they think of themselves first as Americans – a slight increase from 46 percent in September.

Then blacks divided evenly, 46-45 percent, on whether their nationality or their race defined them more; now more pick their nationality, by 51-39 percent. (Older blacks, age 50 and up, call themselves Americans first by a 2-1 margin. Those under 50 split.)

As well as among blacks, pride related to Obama's election peaks among Democrats, at 57 percent, compared with 30 percent of independents and 20 percent of Republicans. It's also 19 points higher among those who see his election as progress for all blacks.

Challenges, in any case, remain: About a third of Americans, including whites and blacks alike, say they have at least some feelings of racial prejudice. (That's about the norm in previous polls, back up after dropping just before the election.) Far fewer, though, say those are strong prejudices – 5 percent overall.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Dec. 19, 2008 – Jan. 4, 2009, among a random national sample of 1,146 adults, including an oversample of African Americans, for a total of 236 black respondents. Results for the full sample have a 3-point error margin; for blacks, 6.5 points; and for whites, 3.5 points; click [here](#) for a detailed description of sampling error. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by Social Science Research Solutions at ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. Do you think Barack Obama's election as president (represents progress for all blacks in America more generally), or do you think it (is only a single case that does not reflect broader progress for blacks overall)?

		Progress for all blacks	Only a single case	No opinion
1/4/09	All	65	22	13
	Blacks	64	22	14
	Whites	66	20	14
9/14/08*	All	71	19	10
	Blacks	79	12	9
	Whites	71	19	10
8/22/08*	All	71	21	8
	Blacks	76	19	5
	Whites	71	21	8

* "...Obama's nomination for president..."

2. Does Obama's election as the first black president make you more proud to be an American, less proud, or does it not affect your feelings about being an American?

		More proud	Less proud	Does not effect	No opinion
1/4/09	All	37	4	57	1
	Blacks	55	1	43	*
	Whites	32	4	63	1
9/14/08*	All	39	2	58	1
	Blacks	51	*	47	1
	Whites	36	2	61	1
8/22/08*	All	36	2	60	1
	Blacks	64	4	32	*
	Whites	32	2	64	1

* "...Obama's nomination as the first black presidential candidate..."

3. Do you think Obama's presidency will do more to (help) or more to (hurt) race relations in this country, or won't it make much of a difference?

		Help	Hurt	Won't make much difference	No opinion
1/4/09	All	58	7	28	7
	Blacks	75	3	18	3
	Whites	55	7	31	8
6/15/08*	All	42	15	40	3
	Blacks	60	8	31	2
	Whites	38	17	43	2

* "...Obama's candidacy..."

4. In your own personal identity do you think of yourself as (RESPONDENT'S RACE) first, as (an American) first, or what?

		Own race first	American first	Both (vol.)	Other (vol.)	No opinion
1/4/09	All	12	78	3	4	3
	Blacks	39	51	3	3	5
	Whites	5	87	2	3	3
9/14/08	All	15	79	2	3	1
	Blacks	45	46	5	3	1
	Whites	4	91	*	4	1

5. If you honestly assessed yourself, would you say that you have at least some feelings of racial prejudice? IF YES: Would you say those are strong feelings or not strong?

		----- Yes -----					
		NET	Strong	Not strong	No	No opinion	
1/4/09	All	35	5	30	64	1	
	Blacks	38	6	32	60	2	
	Whites	34	3	31	65	1	
10/24/08	All LV	15	3	12	84	1	
	Blacks LV	21	9	12	77	1	
	Whites LV	15	2	13	84	1	
6/15/08	All	30	NA	NA	69	2	
	Blacks	34			65	1	
	Whites	30			69	1	
10/19/99*	All	34			66	*	

Blacks	40			60	1
Whites	32	"	"	67	*
* "some racist feelings"					

END