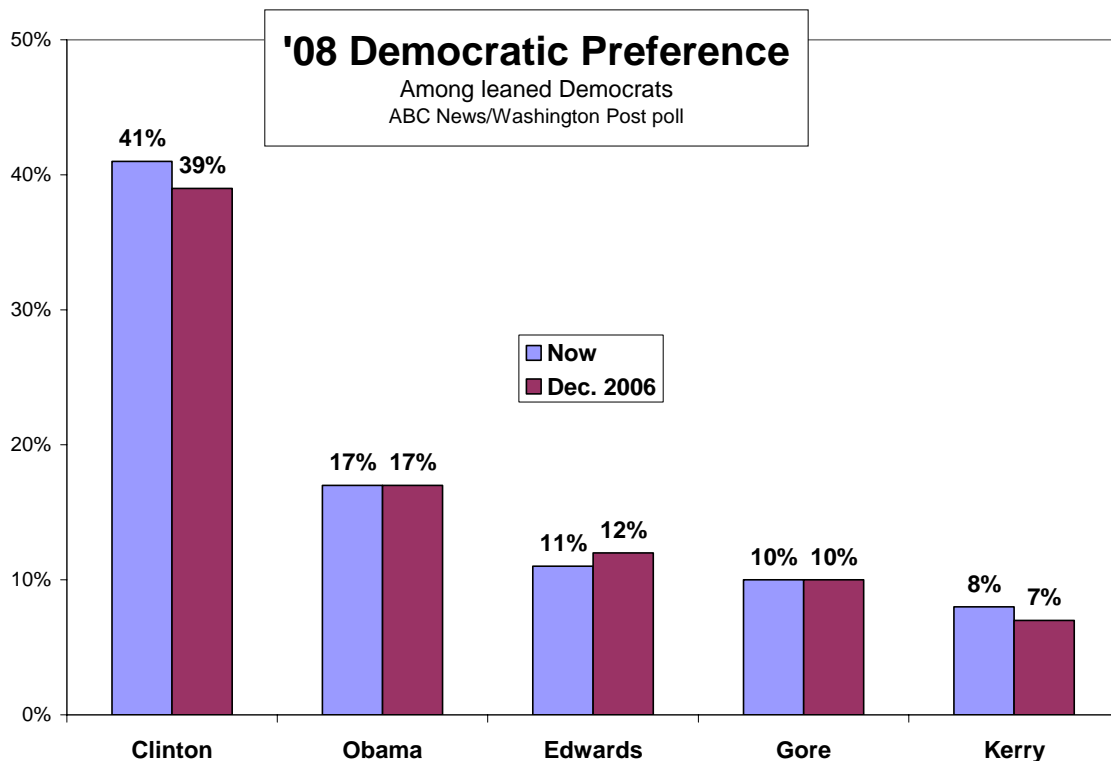


Clinton Leads '08 Dems; No Bounce for Obama

Hillary Clinton's confirmation of her presidential aspirations comes with a bonus: early frontrunner status in the race for her party's nomination.

Clinton, who announced her candidacy yesterday, holds a substantial lead in initial support from Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents – 41-17 percent over her nearest competitor, Barack Obama, in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll.

Obama, for his part, got no bounce by announcing his own interest last week; in fact his unfavorable rating has inched up from last month, and the race essentially is unchanged. Clinton's support peaks among mainline Democrats – more apt to vote in primaries – and among blacks, a natural affinity group for Obama but also a strong base for Bill Clinton during his presidency. They prefer Mrs. Clinton over Obama by 26 points, 53-27 percent.



Across the way, Rudy Giuliani holds a slight lead among Republicans, 34-27 percent vs. John McCain. Though he's often described as less conservative than much of his party, Giuliani's lead is bigger among conservative Republicans than among moderates, and, like Clinton, he does best with his party's more loyal adherents.

Head-to-head in general election preference – a mere 22 months off – Clinton and Giuliani run about evenly, and Clinton holds a slight, five-point edge over McCain, whose personal popularity has declined lately, possibly related to his support for the Iraq war.

Obama and the Republicans also run close – suggesting that when Americans look beyond the broadly unpopular George W. Bush, the 50-50 nation reasserts itself.

Clinton has challenges for a general election race. She's the most polarizing of top potential candidates: While three-quarters of Democrats have a favorable opinion of her, three-quarters of Republicans view her unfavorably – and independents split roughly down the middle. While enough people like her to elect her (54 percent), her unfavorable rating, at 44 percent, is the highest of the group, and 15 points higher than Giuliani's.

STARS – Early frontrunner status is where it usually is at this stage of a campaign, with the best-known candidates; what Clinton, Giuliani (and McCain to an extent) have in common is star power. While that can be disparaged as mere name recognition, there's something to it: A little-known Republican with a well-known name – George W. Bush – took the very early lead for his party's nomination in the 2000 race, and rode it to the White House.

Still, it takes substance to sustain a candidate, and early leaders don't always prevail. In the 1992 Democratic race, early favorites were Mario Cuomo, who ultimately didn't run, and Jerry Brown, who did, but weakly. Bill Clinton started as an unknown, with support in the single digits. His subsequent presidency paved the way for his wife's candidacy now – just as the first President Bush paved the way for his son.

The proviso in all this: The elections are a long way off, and much can change. That's what campaigns are for.

DEM NOM – Clinton's lead for her party's nomination is fueled in part by her own natural affinity group, Democratic women: Nearly half support her, as do 30 percent of Democratic men. As noted, she also has 53 percent support from blacks, a core of the party, double Obama's support in this group.

Nearly half of committed Democrats favor Clinton, compared with three in 10 Democratic-leaning independents. And her support is broadly based ideologically – virtually identical among moderate and liberal Democrats, and better still among (much less numerous) conservative Democrats.

This survey tested all commonly mentioned possible Democratic contenders – a dozen in all – which makes Clinton's 41 percent support particularly impressive.

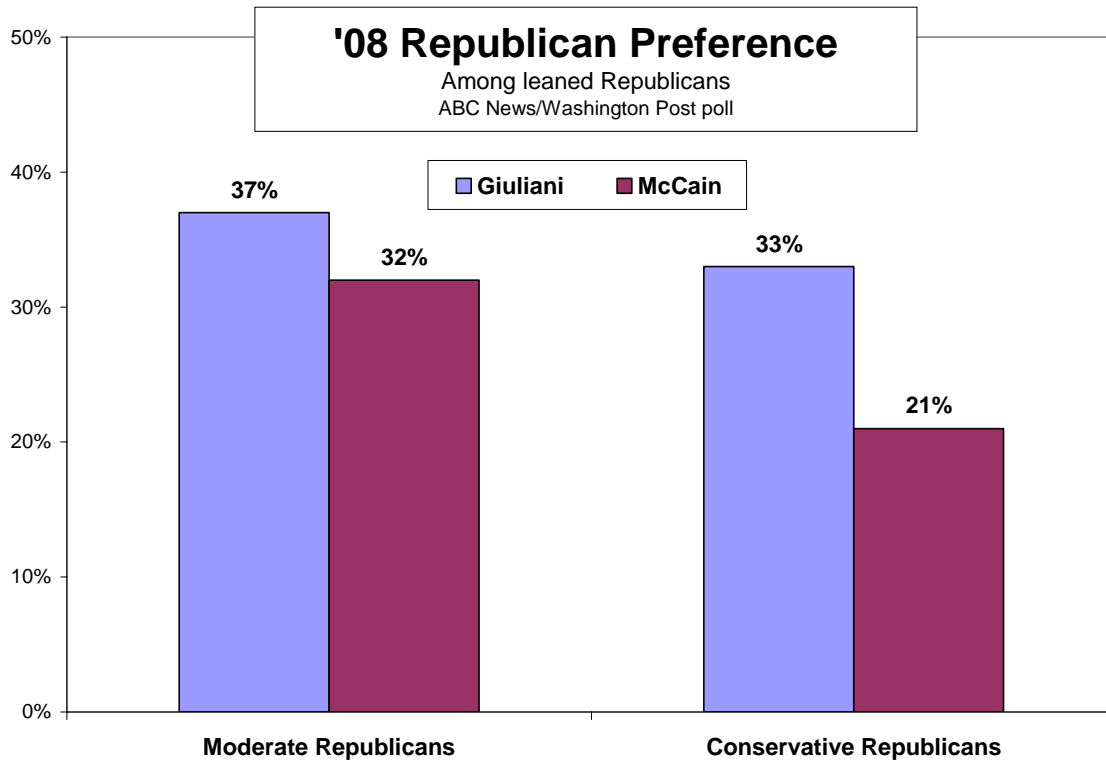
	Democratic primary preference		
	Clinton	Obama	Edwards
All leaned Democrats	41%	17%	11%

Mainline Democrats	47	15	10
Dem.-leaning independents	30	19	14
Liberal Democrats	44	19	13
Moderate Democrats	42	13	13
Men	30	15	14
Women	49	18	9
Whites	35	17	15
Blacks*	53	27	4

*Combined data from 12/11/06 and 1/19/07 polls.

REP NOM – On the Republican side, conventional wisdom suggests Giuliani is insufficiently conservative to survive his primaries, and it’s likely many Republicans today are judging him more on his reputation as a strong post-9/11 leader than on his positions on specific issues. Nonetheless McCain had his own difficulties with conservatives in 2000, and Giuliani leads McCain among conservative Republicans by 33 to 21 percent. It’s among moderates that they’re closer, 37-32 percent.

Giuliani and McCain also run about evenly among evangelical white Protestants, a core Republican group with whom McCain’s had strained relations.



Most important, though, is Giuliani’s advantage among committed Republicans, who, like their Democratic counterparts, are more apt to vote in primaries. Giuliani holds a 10-point advantage over McCain among this group; McCain, by contrast, runs quite competitively among independents who lean Republican. That was the case in 2000; his problem was that, outside of New Hampshire, not enough of them showed up to vote.

Given sample sizes, Giuliani’s overall seven-point advantage over McCain among leaned Republicans is not significant at the customary 95 percent confidence level. Instead it’s 82 percent likely that Giuliani has a real lead in the contest.

FAVES – Any look ahead should include these politicians’ favorability ratings, the most basic measure of a public figure’s popularity. Here Giuliani tops the chart; 61 percent of Americans view him favorably overall, just 29 percent unfavorably – a very strong 2-1 ratio. Bill Clinton has the same favorable score, but somewhat higher negatives.

After 15 years in the public spotlight, Hillary Clinton is universally recognized; just three percent of Americans have no opinion of her, vs. 10 percent for Giuliani, 16 percent for McCain and 25 percent for Obama. And, as noted, 54 percent have a favorable impression of her.

Yet 44 percent view her unfavorably, led by 63 percent of conservatives, 76 percent of Republicans (still 75 percent including independents who lean Republican) and 86 percent of conservative Republicans (for whom the phrase “vast right-wing conspiracy” may still burn). About as many people overall have a “strongly” unfavorable opinion of her (30 percent) as strongly favorable.

Clinton doesn’t need conservative Republican votes. But independents divide by a close 51-46 percent in favorable vs. unfavorable opinions of her. Men divide by 48-49 percent, compared with a much more positive 59-39 percent division among women. And whites split about evenly in their basic view of Clinton, 50-47 percent.

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
Giuliani	61%	29	10
Bill Clinton	61	37	2
Hillary Clinton	54	44	3
McCain	49	35	16
Obama	45	29	25

Obama’s gotten a little gain in recognition, but in the wrong direction. Last month 33 percent of Americans had no opinion of him; that’s dropped by eight points, to 25 percent. But his favorable ratings are flat: instead it’s his unfavorable score that’s inched up, from 23 percent to 29 percent. While nearly six in 10 blacks rate Obama favorably, that soars to 85 percent for Clinton.

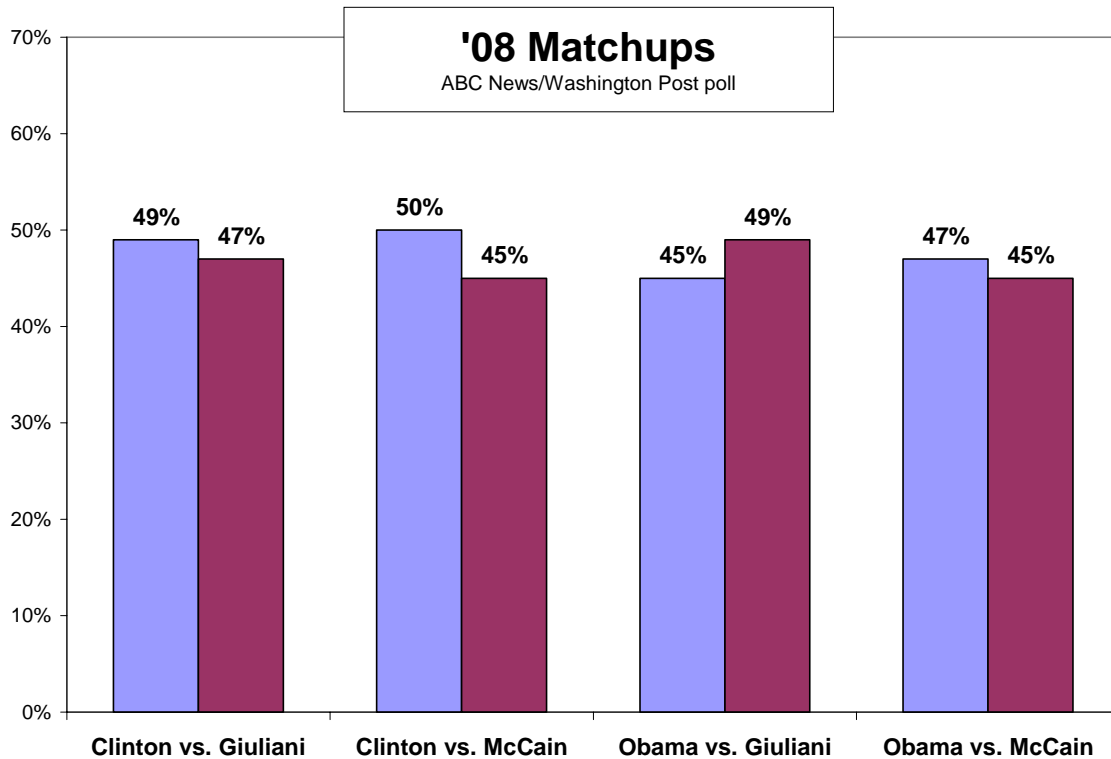
	Whites	Blacks*
Hillary Clinton		
Favorable	50%	85%
Unfavorable	47	12

No opinion	3	3
Barack Obama		
Favorable	48%	59%
Unfavorable	26	19
No opinion	26	23

*Combined data from 12/11/06 and 1/19/07 polls.

McCain is rated favorably by 49 percent of Americans – down by 10 points since last spring – and unfavorably by 35 percent, up six. The decline has occurred disproportionately among Democratic men and among liberal Democrats. But McCain’s rating also is down by 13 points among people who oppose the war in Iraq – an unpopular conflict that he’s staunchly defended.

2008 MATCHUPS – Preferences for a general election that’s nearly two years off probably say more about underlying partisan preferences – which are important – as about specific candidate choices. And they suggest that presidential preferences in the pending post-Bush era continue to look very closely divided. The key reason is that independents – the quintessential swing group – split about evenly between Democratic and Republican candidates.



Overall Clinton and Giuliani run 49-47 percent, essentially a dead heat. The gender gap is impressive: Clinton leads among women, 56-41 percent; Giuliani among men, 54-42 percent. Independents split 50 percent for Giuliani, 45 percent for Clinton.

It's 50-45 percent overall in a Clinton-McCain contest; while that's not a significant difference at the customary 95 percent confidence level, it's 89 percent probable that Clinton has an edge. Obama and McCain, for their part, run about evenly, 47-45 percent; and in their matchup Giuliani has 49 percent to 45 percent for Obama, not much of a difference given polling tolerances. And with many miles to go.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Jan.16-19, 2007, among a random national sample of 1,000 adults. The results have a three-point error margin overall, four points for leaned Democrats and five points for leaned Republicans. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer and Peyton M. Craighill.

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

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

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

1-22 held for release.

23. On another subject: do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of (NAME)?

1/19/07 - Summary Table

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opin.
a. Hillary Clinton	54	44	3
b. John McCain	49	35	16
c. Barack Obama	45	29	25
d. Rudy Giuliani	61	29	10
e. Bill Clinton	61	37	2

Trend where available:

a. Hillary Clinton

	Favorable			Unfavorable			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
1/19/07	54	31	23	44	14	30	3
12/11/06	56	27	29	40	11	29	4
5/15/06	54	29	25	42	11	31	4
3/5/06	52	27	25	46	12	33	2
6/5/05	51	NA	NA	46	NA	NA	3
6/1/03	44	15	29	48	16	32	8
9/2/99	49	NA	NA	44	NA	NA	7
6/6/99	59			35			6
3/14/99	60			36			4
2/14/99	63			31			6
11/1/98	64			31			5
8/21/98	64			28			8
8/19/98	64			32			4
4/4/98	58			33			10
1/30/98	60			30			10
1/19/98	52			39			9
3/9/97	47			44			9

9/4/96 RV	47			42			12
6/30/96	44			47			9
1/21/96	28			36			36
1/19/96	32			34			34
10/31/94	47			44			8
5/15/94	54			41			5
3/27/94	53			39			8
1/23/94	55			34			11
11/14/93	58			33			9
8/8/93	59			33			8
4/26/93	54			26			20
2/23/93	59			24			18
1/17/93	51			20			29
7/8/92	30			26			43
3/28/92	28			22			51

b. John McCain

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/19/07	49	NA	NA	35	NA	NA	16
12/11/06	50	17	33	31	20	11	19
5/15/06	55	20	35	31	20	11	14
3/5/06	59	22	38	29	18	11	12
6/5/05	57	NA	NA	32	NA	NA	11
7/30/01	57			30			12
2/27/00	60			21			19
10/31/99	36			22			41
9/2/99	22			10			68
3/14/99	20			10			69

c. Barack Obama

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/19/07	45	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	25
12/11/06	44	21	22	23	17	6	33

d. Rudy Giuliani

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/19/07	61	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	10
12/11/06	67	29	38	23	14	9	11

e. Bill Clinton

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/19/07	61	NA	NA	37	NA	NA	2
5/15/06	59	36	24	39	13	25	2
12/15/00	56	NA	NA	40	NA	NA	4
7/23/00	44	23	21	50	36	13	6
6/6/99*	52	NA	NA	44	NA	NA	4
2/14/99	57	32	25	40	29	11	3
1/30/99	54	35	19	42	30	12	3
9/28/98	48	NA	NA	47	NA	NA	5
8/23/98	45	NA	NA	49	NA	NA	6
8/21/98	56	NA	NA	40	NA	NA	4
8/19/98	39	NA	NA	57	NA	NA	4
7/12/98	54	NA	NA	40	NA	NA	6
5/12/98	54	NA	NA	42	NA	NA	4
4/4/98	55	NA	NA	39	NA	NA	6

2/18/98	56	NA	NA	41	NA	NA	3
1/30/98	60	NA	NA	35	NA	NA	6
1/25/98	54	NA	NA	42	NA	NA	5
1/24/98	51	NA	NA	44	NA	NA	5
1/19/98	59	NA	NA	35	NA	NA	6
1/12/98	59	NA	NA	33	NA	NA	7
10/13/97	59	NA	NA	37	NA	NA	4
9/10/97	57	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	5
3/9/97	60	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	3
9/4/96	RV 58	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	4
6/30/96	56	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	5
10/30/95	54	NA	NA	41	NA	NA	6
7/17/95	59	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	3
6/8/95	53	NA	NA	43	NA	NA	4
3/19/95	55	NA	NA	42	NA	NA	3
10/31/94	51	NA	NA	44	NA	NA	5
5/15/94	57	NA	NA	40	NA	NA	3
3/27/94	59	NA	NA	37	NA	NA	4
1/23/94	60	NA	NA	32	NA	NA	8
11/14/93	58	NA	NA	37	NA	NA	5
11/11/93	52	NA	NA	43	NA	NA	6
8/8/93	56	NA	NA	39	NA	NA	5
4/26/93	59	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	12
2/23/93	59	NA	NA	30	NA	NA	11
1/17/93	68	NA	NA	20	NA	NA	11
10/18/92	LV 56	NA	NA	36	NA	NA	8
9/27/92	LV 55	NA	NA	36	NA	NA	9
8/23/92	RV 54	NA	NA	36	NA	NA	10
7/19/92	RV 58	NA	NA	23	NA	NA	18
7/8/92	52	NA	NA	33	NA	NA	15
6/7/92	41	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	21
3/18/92	37	NA	NA	37	NA	NA	26
3/11/92	39	NA	NA	31	NA	NA	30
2/2/92	37	NA	NA	24	NA	NA	39
1/27/92	23	NA	NA	11	NA	NA	66
10/21/91	13	NA	NA	9	NA	NA	78
*Post poll							

24. (ASKED OF LEANED DEMOCRATS) If the 2008 Democratic presidential primary or caucus in your state were being held today, and the candidates were: (Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, Barack Obama, John Kerry, Al Gore, Wesley Clark, Tom Vilsack, Bill Richardson, Joe Biden, Chris Dodd, Dennis Kucinich, or Mike Gravel), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE:

	1/19/07	12/11/06
Hillary Clinton	41	39
John Edwards	11	12
Barack Obama	17	17
John Kerry	8	7
Al Gore	10	10
Wesley Clark	1	1
Tom Vilsack	*	1
Evan Bayh	NA	1
Bill Richardson	1	2
Joe Biden	3	2
Chris Dodd	*	*
Dennis Kucinich	1	NA
Mike Gravel	*	NA
Other (vol.)	1	*
None of these (vol.)	2	2

Would not vote (vol.)	*	1
No opinion	3	4

25. (ASKED OF LEANED REPUBLICANS) If the 2008 Republican presidential primary or caucus in your state were being held today, and the candidates were: (Rudy Giuliani, John McCain, Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich, Chuck Hagel, Tommy Thompson, Mike Huckabee, Duncan Hunter, George Pataki, Sam Brownback, Tom Tancredo, Jim Gilmore, or Ron Paul), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE:

	1/19/07	12/11/06
Rudy Giuliani	34	34
John McCain	27	26
Mitt Romney	9	5
Newt Gingrich	9	12
Chuck Hagel	*	*
Tommy Thompson	1	2
Mike Huckabee	1	*
Duncan Hunter	*	1
George Pataki	2	3
Sam Brownback	1	1
Tom Tancredo	1	*
Jim Gilmore	1	NA
Ron Paul	1	NA
Other (vol.)	*	*
None of these (vol.)	2	6
Would not vote (vol.)	1	*
No opinion	9	9

26. If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Rudy Giuliani, the Republican) and (Hillary Clinton, the Democrat), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE:

	Rudy Giuliani	Hillary Clinton	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Will not vote (vol.)	No opin.
1/19/07	47	49	0	2	*	1

27. If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Rudy Giuliani, the Republican) and (Barack Obama, the Democrat), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE:

	Rudy Giuliani	Barack Obama	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Will not vote (vol.)	No opin.
1/19/07	49	45	*	3	1	2

28. If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (John McCain, the Republican) and (Hillary Clinton, the Democrat), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE:

	John McCain	Hillary Clinton	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Will not vote (vol.)	No opin.
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1/19/07 45 50 * 3 1 1

29. If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (John McCain, the Republican) and (Barack Obama, the Democrat), for whom would you vote?

NET LEANED VOTE:

	John McCain	Barack Obama	Other (vol.) *	Neither (vol.) 3	Will not vote (vol.) 1	No opin. 3
1/19/07	45	47	*	3	1	3

END