

September 5, 2016

Our most recent national poll shows Hillary Clinton still holding a small, but not statistically significant, lead over Donald Trump.

By: R. Kelly Myers
Marlin Fitzwater Fellow, Franklin Pierce University
603.433.3982

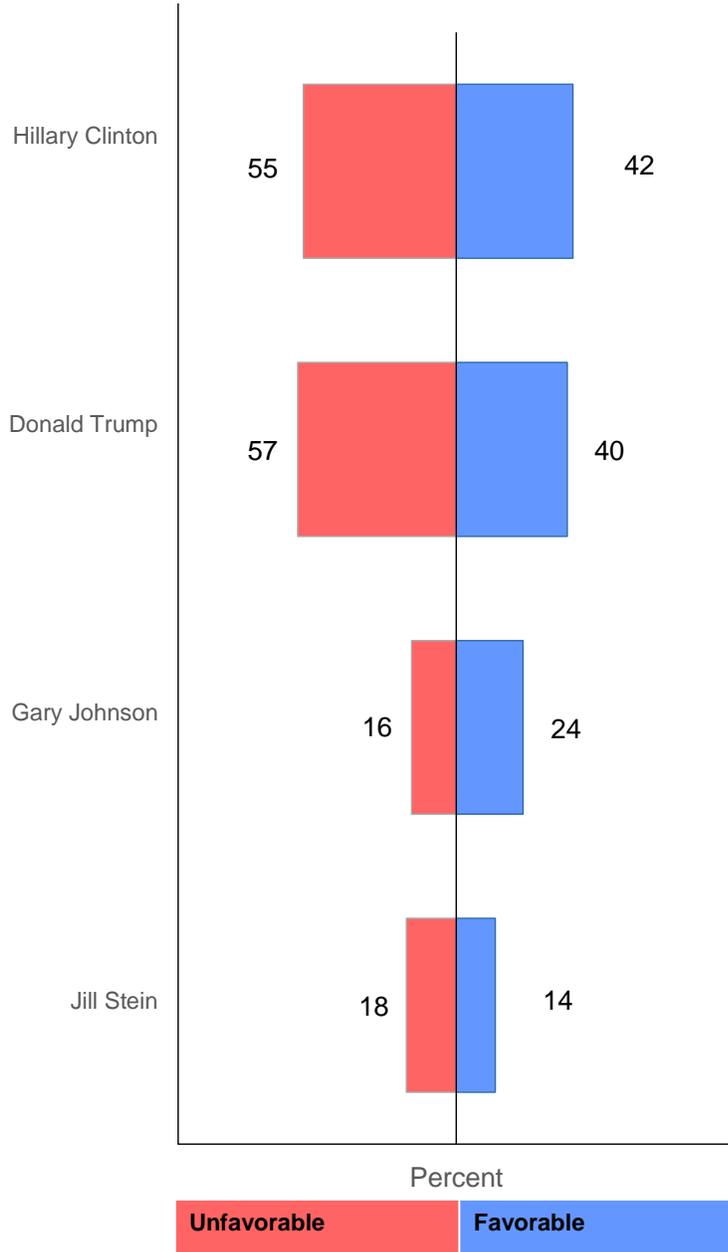
Portsmouth, NH. – Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton remain in a very tight race, with just over two months until Election Day. In fact, Hillary Clinton’s lead remains unchanged at 44-to-41 percent over her Republican challenger, Donald Trump.

However, the most recent polls indicates that a growing number of Clinton’s supporters now say that they have made a *firm choice* (88%), while only 10 percent indicate that they could still *change their mind* between now and the election. Many of Trump’s supports report that they have made a *firm choice* (81%), but 19 percent indicate that they *could still change their mind* between now and the election.

The two presidential contenders were evenly matched in July. But our most recent poll suggests that Clinton may be gaining an advantage in terms of firming up her base of support.

These results are based on a recent Franklin Pierce University / Boston Herald Poll conducted by RKM Research, August 31 – September 4, 2016. The survey is based on responses from 1,025 randomly selected likely voters. Interviews were conducted by landline and cellular telephone. The sampling margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent.

Favorability Ratings of Presidential Candidates (Sept. 4, 2016):

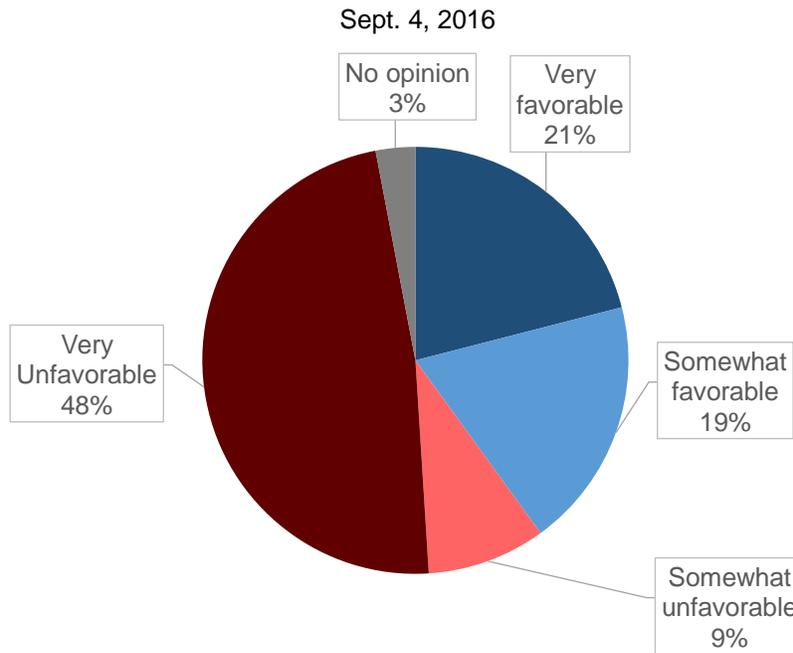
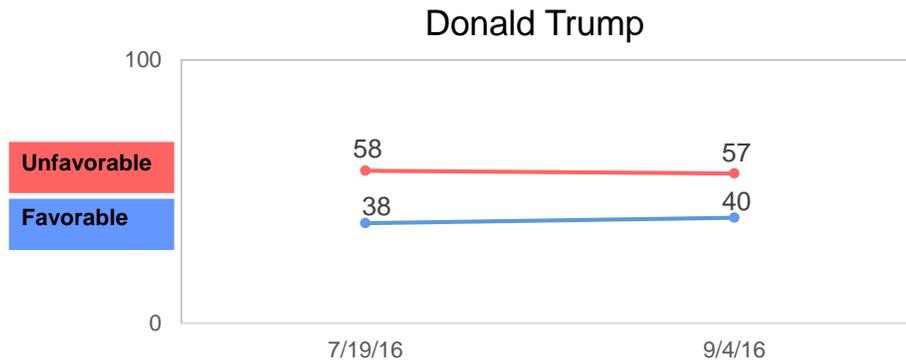


As all major polls have shown, the two presidential candidates remain very unpopular, with more than one-half of voters holding *unfavorable* views of both candidates.

Donald Trump receives a *favorable* rating of 40 percent, and an *unfavorable* rating of 57 percent. Likewise, Hillary Clinton receives a *favorable* rating of 42 percent, and an *unfavorable* rating of 55 percent.

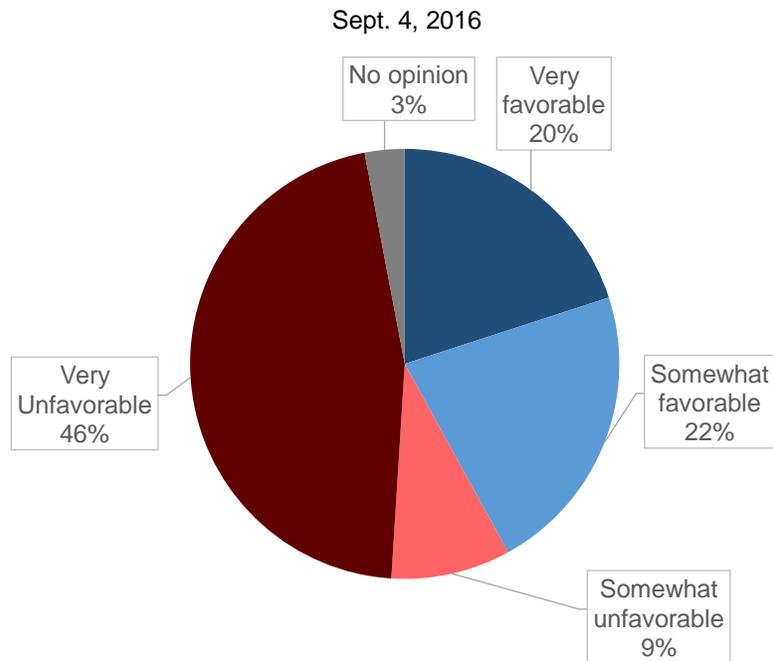
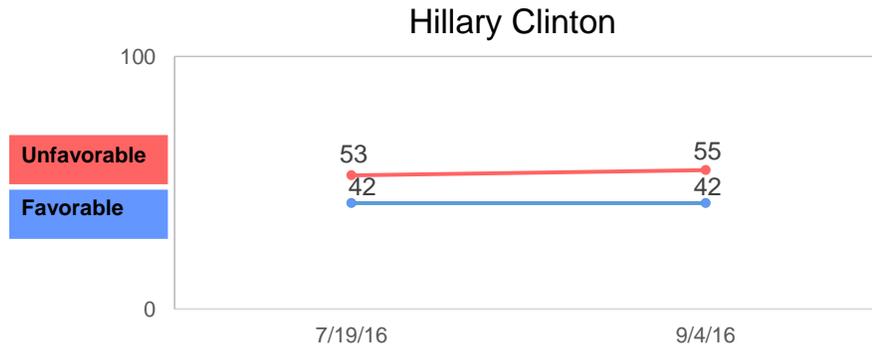
If these numbers hold through the election, it suggests that whichever candidate wins the presidency will begin their term with unprecedented unpopularity.

Favorability Ratings of Donald Trump Compared Over Time:



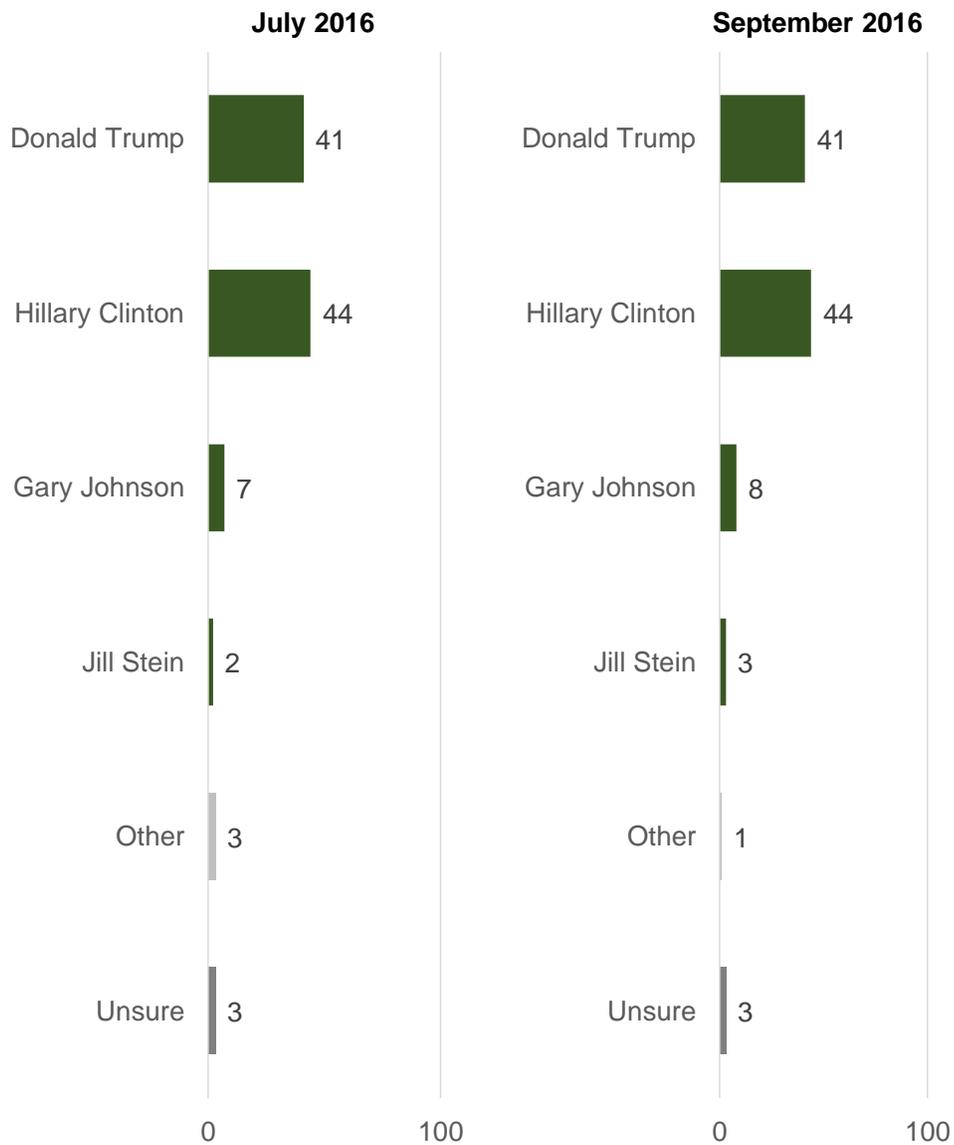
The unpopularity of the two leading presidential candidates is exacerbated by the intensity of voter sentiment. Nearly one-half of voters (48%) hold *very unfavorable* views of Donald Trump. Forty percent of voters hold *very favorable* (21%) or *somewhat favorable* (19%) views of the candidate.

Favorability Ratings of Hillary Clinton Compared Over Time:



Hillary Clinton also has her own favorability issues. Similar to Donald Trump, slightly less than one-half of voters (46%) hold *very unfavorable* views of her. Forty-two percent of voters hold *very favorable* (20%) or *somewhat favorable* (22%) views of the candidate.

If the election for US President were held today, which of the candidates would you vote for?

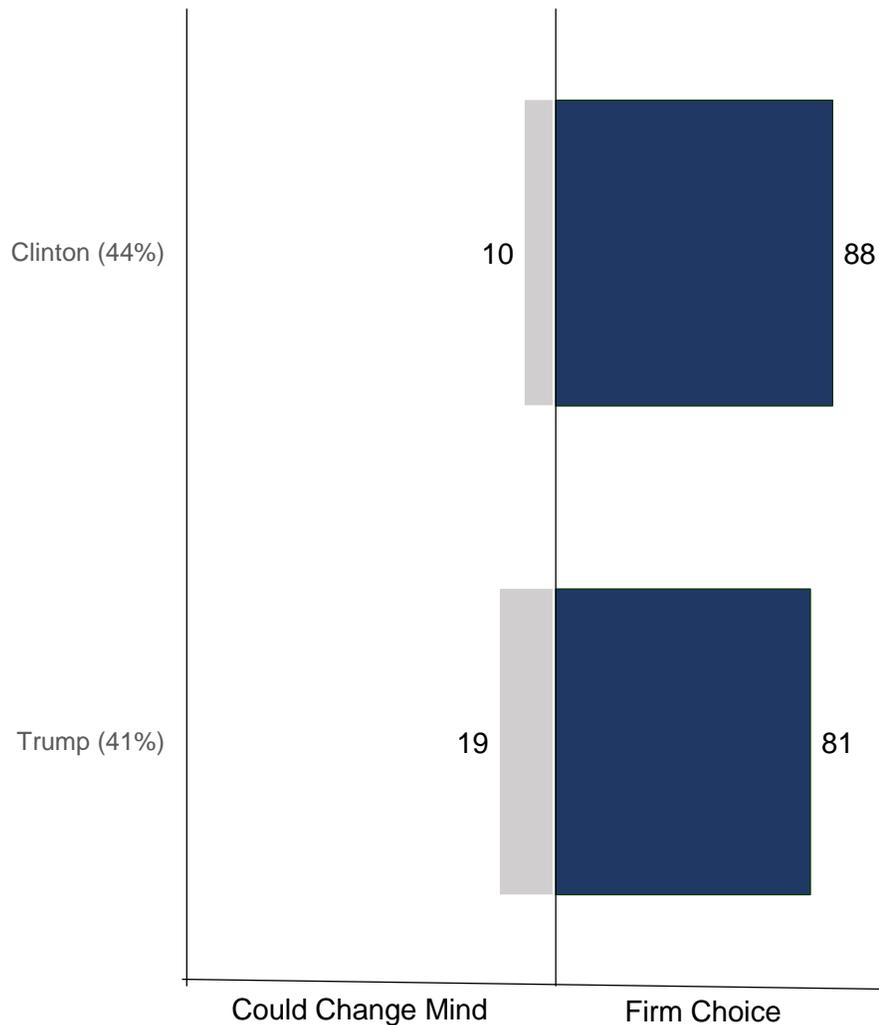


Among: All voters (includes “forced choice” responses)

If the election were held today, voters are most likely to vote for *Hillary Clinton* (44%) or *Donald Trump* (41%). Few voters said that they would vote for Libertarian candidate *Gary Johnson* (former Governor of New Mexico) (8%), Green Party candidate *Jill Stein* (3%) or some *other* candidate (1%). Only three percent of voters remain *unsure* who they would vote for if the election were held today. These results remain largely unchanged since the July administration of the poll.

The margin of difference between Clinton and Trump is just 2.3 points, well within the margin of sampling error of the poll.

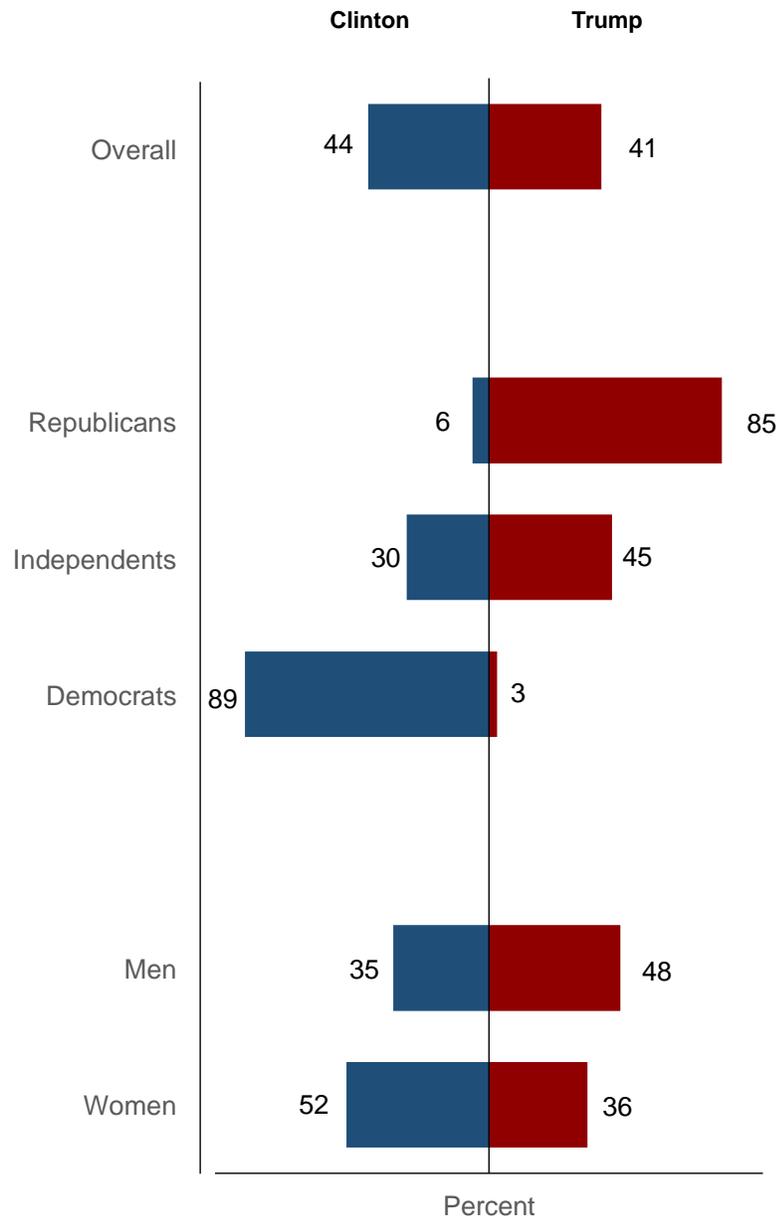
Firmness of Presidential Vote Choice:



At this later stage in the race, support for both candidates is firming up. Only 10 percent of Clinton supporters, and 19 percent of Trump supporters, said that they *could change their mind* between now and Election Day.

Much has been made of the high unfavorable ratings of both leading candidates. A closer analysis of the results reveals some interesting findings. If voters view Clinton favorably and Trump unfavorably (39% of all voters), 96% of these voters are voting for Clinton. Similarly, if voters view Trump favorably and Clinton unfavorably (37% of all voters), 93 percent of these voters are voting for Trump. But among voters who view both candidates unfavorably (17% of all voters), Independent Party nominee Gary Johnson gets 30 percent of the vote. But more telling, Trump (29%) out-polls Clinton (19%) by 10-points among voters who do not like either one of them. If voters continue to be turned off by both leading candidates, Johnson has the most to gain. But it could also work more to Trump's advantage than Clinton's.

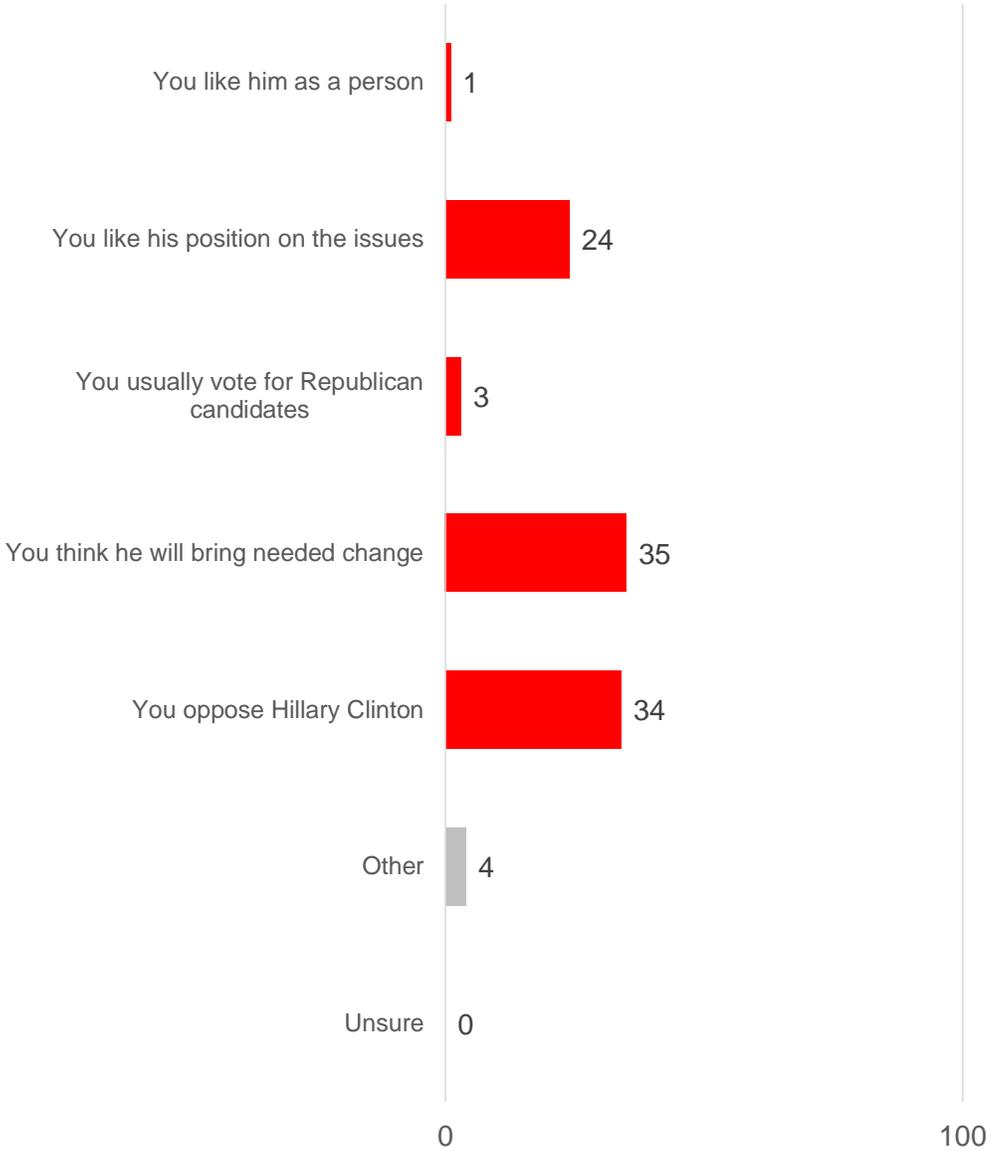
Presidential Vote Choice Compared by Selected Characteristics



As expected, presidential vote choice is strongly linked with party registration. Eighty-nine percent of Democrats said that they would vote for Hillary Clinton, and 85 percent of Republicans said that they would vote for Donald Trump. More Independents said that they would vote for Trump (45%) than Clinton (30%).

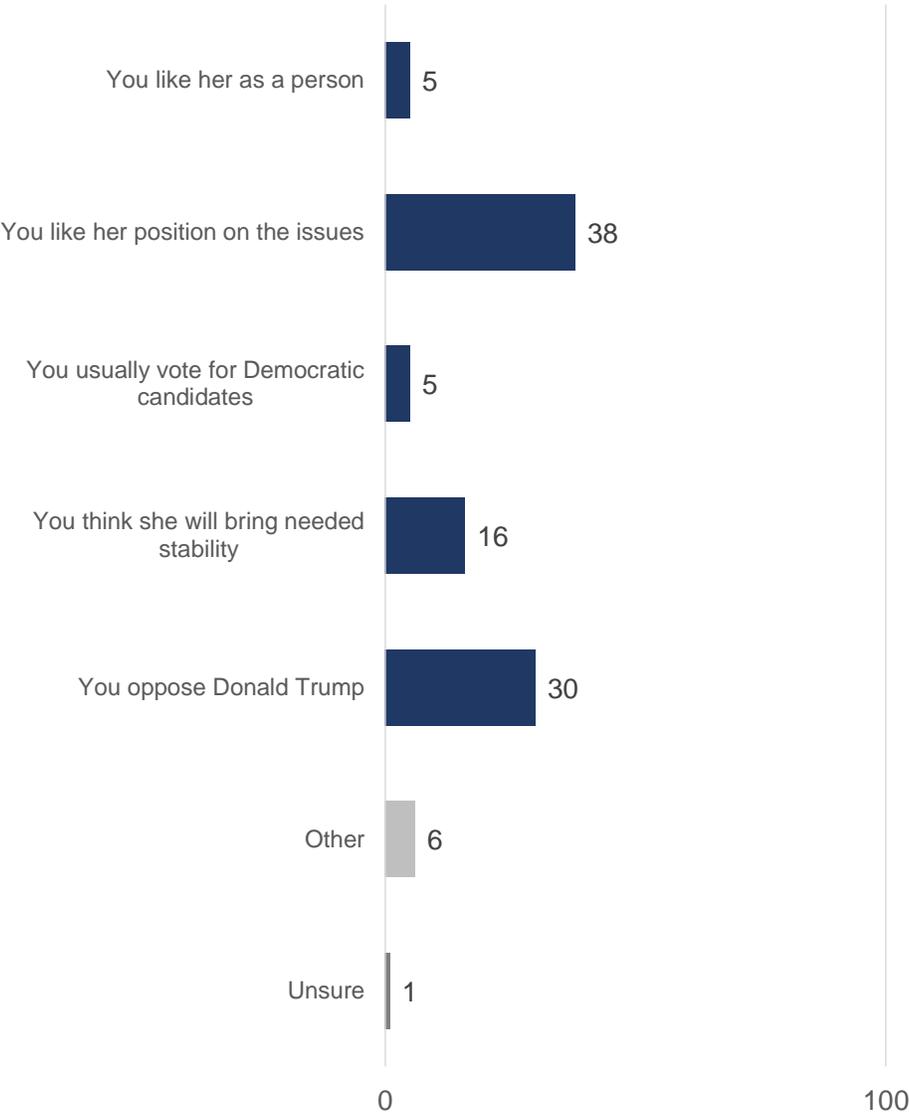
Clinton holds a 16-point edge over Trump among women voters, while Trump holds a 13-point advantage among male voters.

Primary Reason for Voting for Donald Trump?
(Among Trump Voters: n = 424)



Trump voters were asked about their primary reason for voting for Donald Trump. Voters were most likely to cite the belief *that he will bring needed change* (35%) or the fact that they *oppose Hillary Clinton* (34%) as reasons for voting for him.

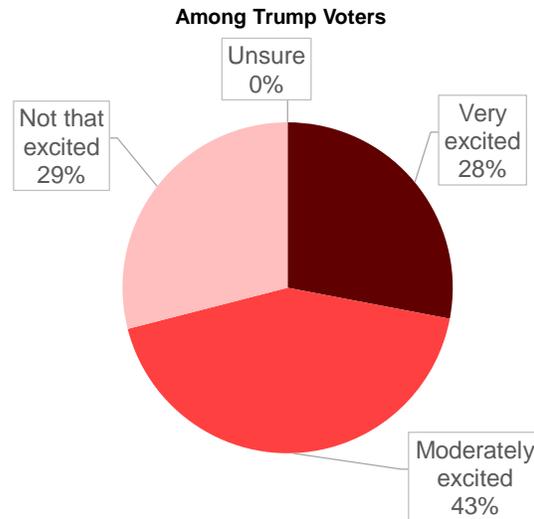
Primary Reason for Voting for Hillary Clinton?
(Among Clinton Voters: n = 448)



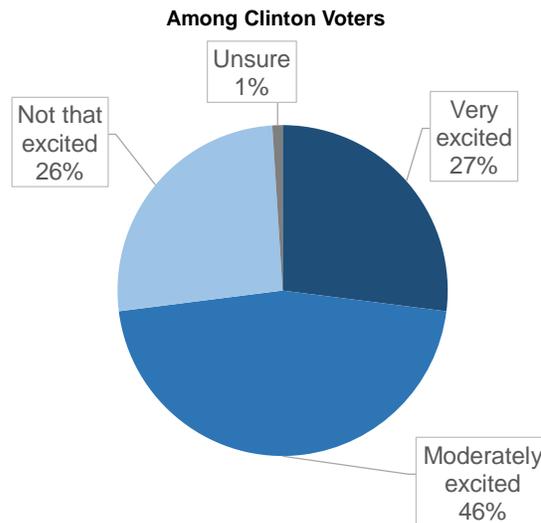
Clinton voters were asked about their primary reason for voting for Hillary Clinton. Voters were most likely to say that they plan to vote for her because they *like her position on the issues* (38%) or that they *oppose Donald Trump* (30%).

Presidential Vote Choice Excitement

How excited are you that Donald Trump is the Republican Party's choice to be president in this year's election?



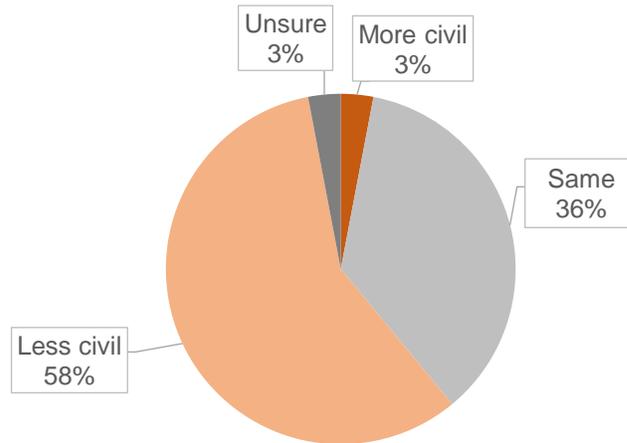
How excited are you that Hillary Clinton is the Democratic Party's choice to be president in this year's election?



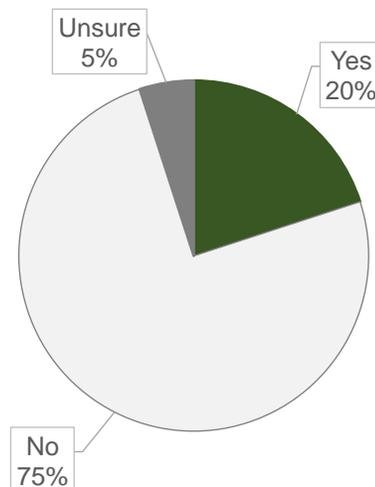
Voters were asked how excited they are about their candidate's nomination. Seventy-one percent of Trump voters said that they are *very* (28%) or *moderately excited* (43%) about his candidacy. Similarly, 73 percent of Clinton voters said that they are *very* (27%) or *moderately excited* (46%) about her candidacy.

Presidential Race Civility and Influence

Do you think that the candidates in this year's presidential race are acting more or less civil – or polite – than presidential races in the past, or is it about the same?



Is the presidential contest between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton influencing who you will vote for in other election races in your state, such as US Senate, House of Representatives or Governor?

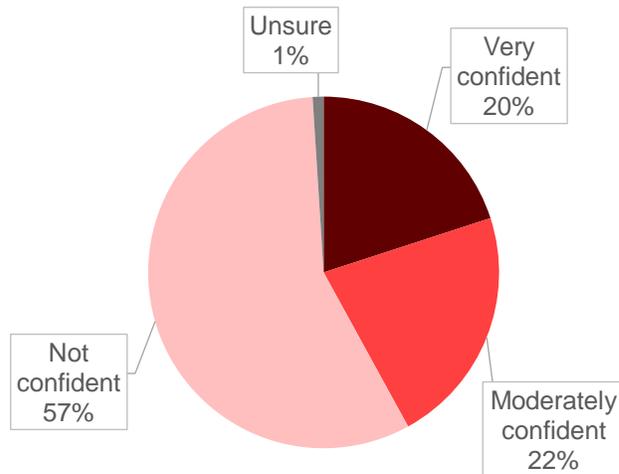


Voters were asked if they think the candidates in this year's presidential race are acting more or less civil than in past races. Voters were most likely to report that the current race is *less civil* (58%), while approximately one-third (36%) said it is about the *same*.

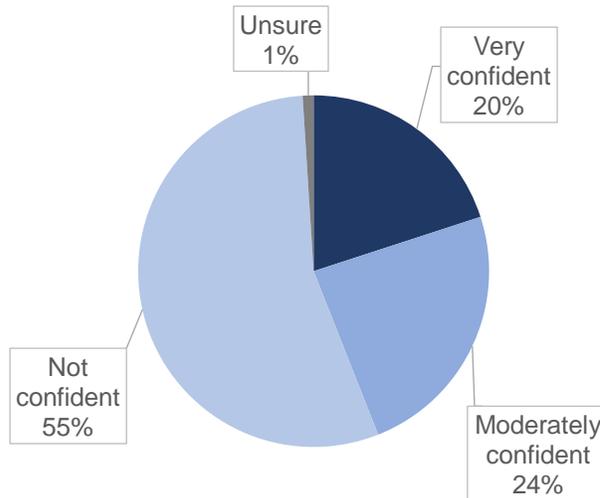
Voters were asked if the presidential contest is influencing their vote choice in other election races in their state. Three-fourths (75%) of voters reported that the presidential contest is not influencing who they will vote for in other election races.

Confidence in Candidate Traits

How confident are you that Donald Trump has the right temperament to be president of the United States?



How confident are you that Hillary Clinton has the honesty to be president of the United States?

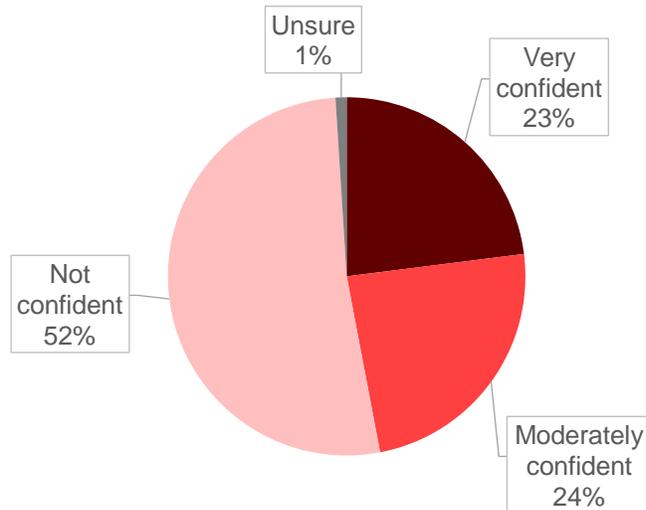


All voters were asked about their confidence in Donald Trump's temperament, and Hillary Clinton's honesty, as traits to be president of the United States. More than one-half of voters are *not confident* that Donald Trump has the temperament (57%) or Hillary Clinton has the honesty (55%) to be president of the United States.

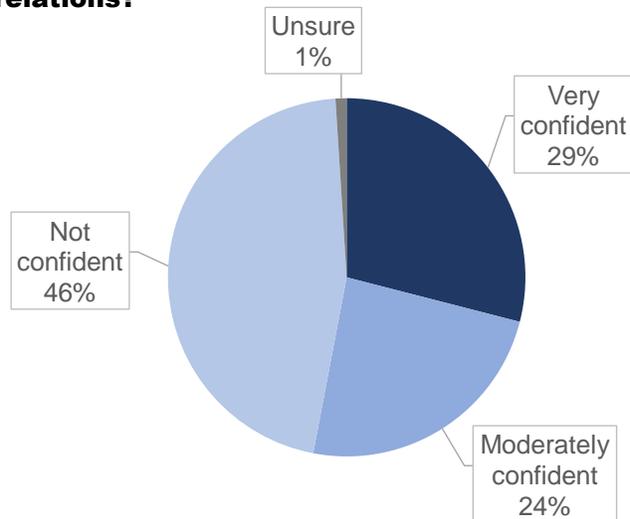
Predictably, voters' responses on this issue are strongly linked to their party identification.

Confidence in Candidates' Foreign Policy

How confident are you that Donald Trump would do a good job dealing with national security, NATO, foreign relations, ISIS and trade relations?



How confident are you that Hillary Clinton would do a good job dealing with national security, NATO, foreign relations, ISIS and trade relations?



Voters were asked about their confidence in each candidate's ability to handle foreign policy issues such as national security, NATO, foreign relations, ISIS and trade relations. More than one-half (52%) of voters are *not confident* that Trump would do a good job, and 46 percent are *not confident* that Clinton would do a good job. Again, voter responses to this question are strongly linked to their party identification.

Methodology

The results outlined in this report are based on a survey conducted by RKM Research on behalf of Franklin Pierce University and the Boston Herald. All interviews were conducted by paid, trained and professionally supervised interviewers.

The survey is based on a probabilistic sample of 1,025 likely voters in the United States. Interviews were conducted by landline and cellular telephone, August 31 – September 4, 2016. The sampling margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent.

The data are weighted to adjust for probability of selection, respondent gender, respondent age and region of the US. The four regions of the country as reported in this poll are:

East: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia and District of Columbia.

Mid-West: Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas.

South: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas

West: Montana, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, California, Oregon, Alaska, Hawaii and Washington.

In addition to sampling error, all surveys have other potential sources of non-sampling error including question wording effects, question order effects and non-response.

More information available at www.rkm-research.com (603.433.3982).

