

POLITICS '92: A DATA ESSAY

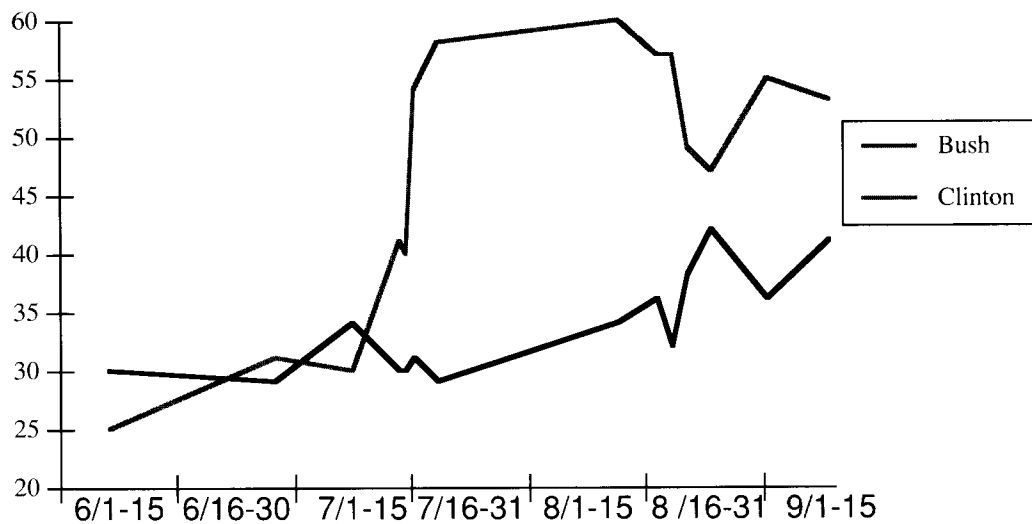
THE POLLS: ONE SUMMER OF VOLATILITY

Editor's Note: We've been hearing a lot of talk—and getting a lot of questions from journalists, students, and others—about all the bouncing around in poll trial heat numbers this past summer. We decided not to focus on the various explanations here, though, but rather to present "just the facts" of what the national polls have been showing. More of these data will be found on page 14.

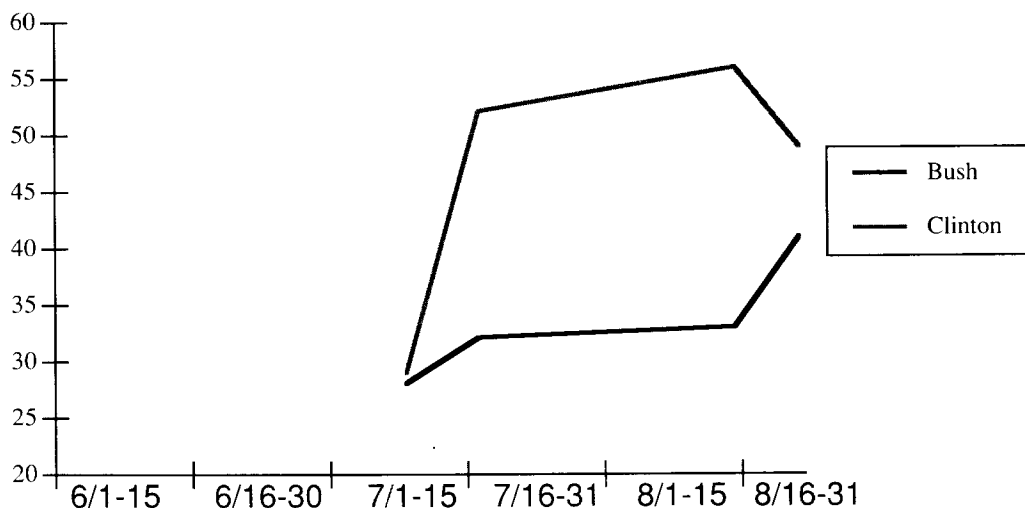
We do think that the national polls have been doing a good job, and telling a fairly consistent story—one survey organization to another that is—in a very difficult polling environment. It's difficult because so many people are, in effect, cross-pressured and hadn't—in the time covered here—proceeded very far toward a final decision. One of the hardest things to measure in survey research is an opinion that really hasn't formed, or a decision not yet reached.

—ECL—

ABC News/
Washington
Post

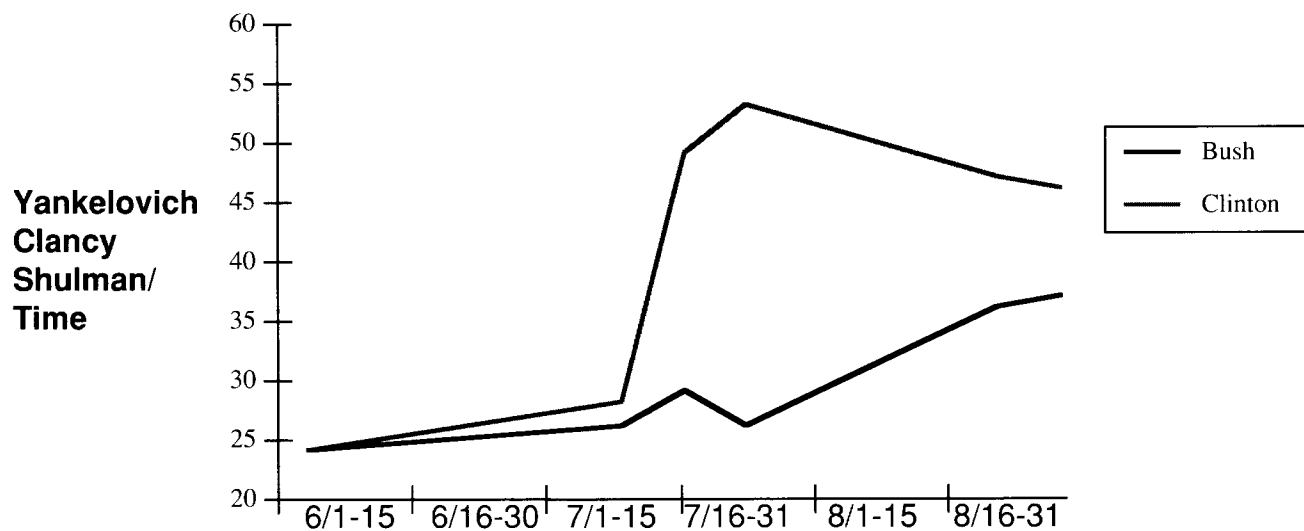
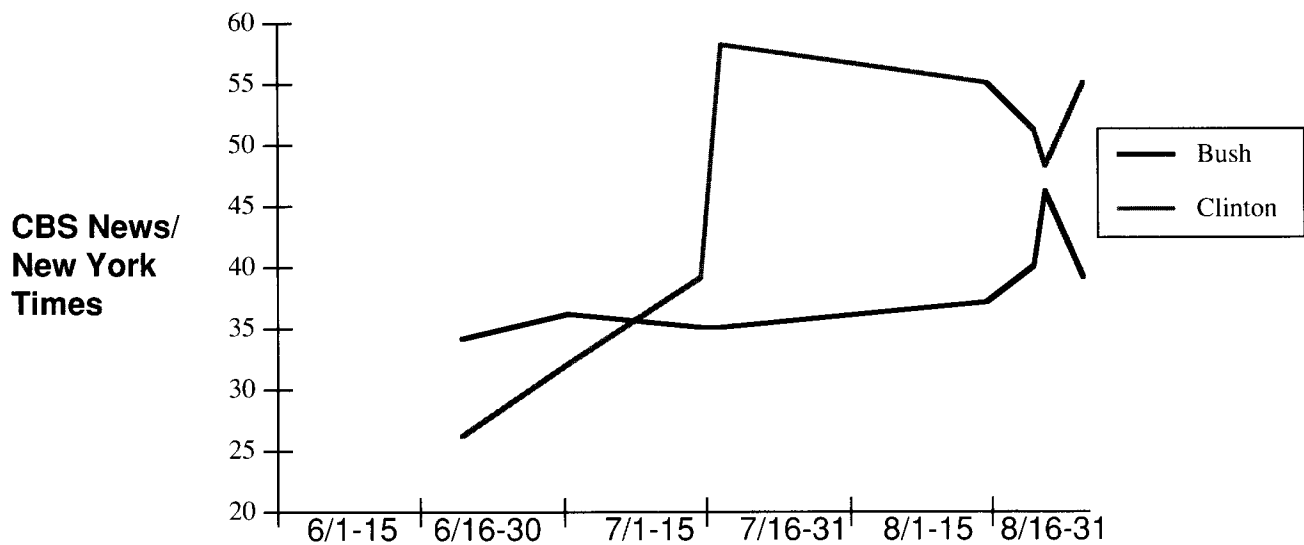


LA Times



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THE POLLS: ONE SUMMER OF VOLATILITY/cont.



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SOCIAL GROUPS—TRIAL HEATS

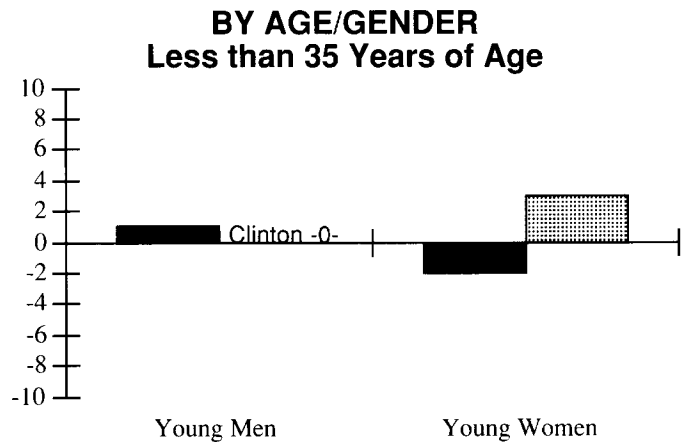
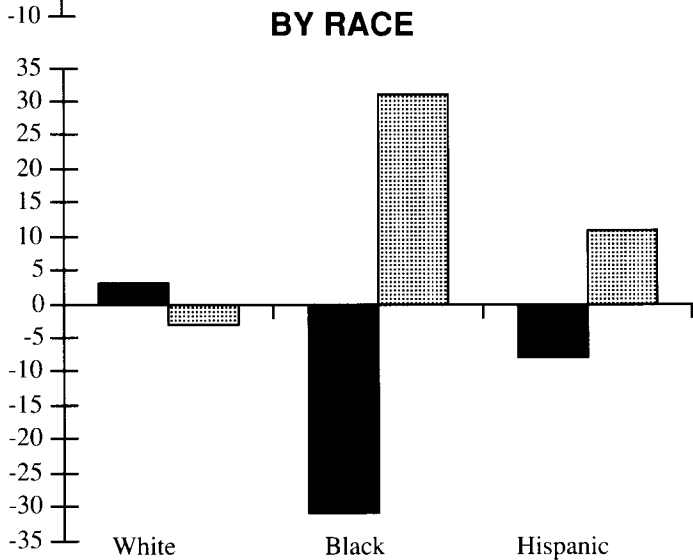
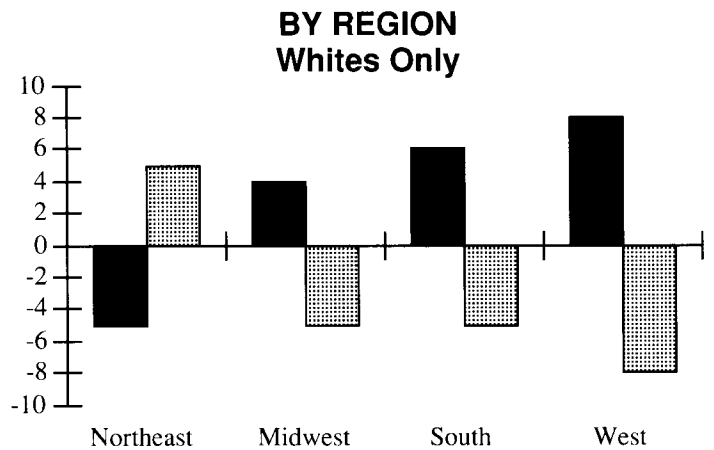
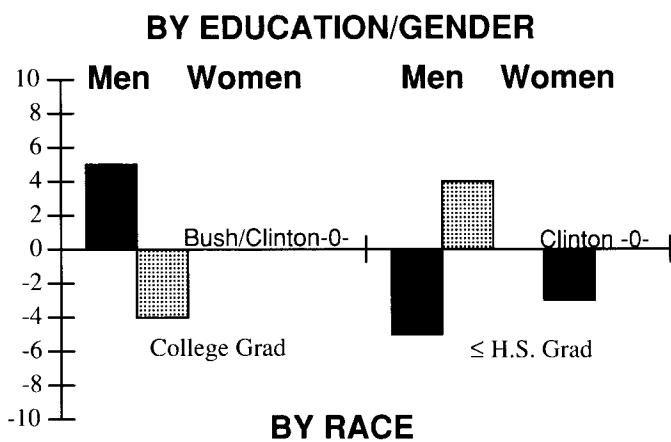
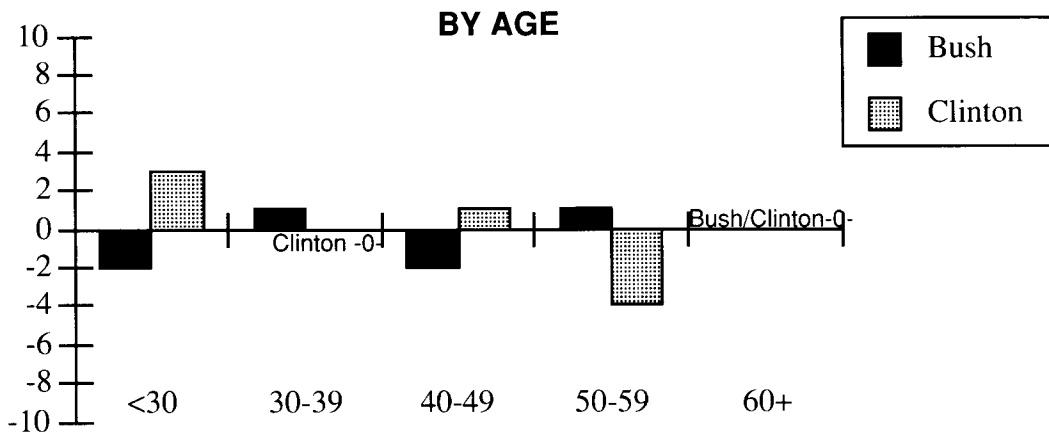
	CBS/NYT 8/23-24/92 (registered voters)		Yankelovich Clancy Shulman 8/25-27/92 (Likely Voters)	
	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Clinton</u>
EVERYONE	39%	55%	44%	49%
Gender				
Male	+1	-1	+4	-3
Female	-3	+1	-3	+4
Race				
White	+4	-4	+4	-3
Black	-22	+26	-29	+24
Age				
18-29 years	-3	+5	(18-34 yrs.) +6	-3
30-44	+5	-3	(35-49) -2	+4
45-64	-5	+3	(50+) -2	--
65+	+2	-4		
Education				
Less than High School	-11	+9	-2	+5
High School Grad	+2	-1	-1	--
Some College	+7	-8	-1	+3
College Graduate	-1	+3	+3	-3
Income				
Less than \$15,000	-8	+7	(<\$20K) -11	+13
\$15,000-\$29,999	-6	+6	(\$20K-\$34.9K) +3	-1
\$30,000-\$49,999	+5	-4	(\$35K-\$49.9K) +3	-1
\$50,000+	+6	-4	+4	-2
Region				
Northeast	-5	+4	-7	+8
Midwest	+2	-3	+3	-6
South	+5	-6	+2	-1
West	-6	+5	--	+3
Ideology				
Liberal	-10	+12	-26	+30
Moderate	-10	+8	-11	+13
Conservative	+20	-21	+21	-19
Party ID				
Republican	+32	-31	+38	-34
Democrat	-28	+30	-30	+32
Independent	+2	-6	-5	+1

How To Read This Table and The Next Page's Data

We focus here on Bush's and Clinton's *relative strength* among the nation's social and philosophic groups. So, each candidate's backing in each group is expressed in comparison to his backing among all those interviewed in the poll. The Yankelovich Clancy Shulman survey of August 25-27 found, for example, 48% of men interviewed saying they would vote for Bush, compared to 44% of all interviewees for Bush, so the president's figure for men is +4. Similarly, 53% of women said they were for Clinton, as against 49% of the entire sample, making Clinton's standing among women +4. In the case of both surveys reported above, the percentages for each candidate include "leaners"—persons who "declared" for one or the other contender only when pushed.

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SOCIAL GROUPS—TRIAL HEATS/cont.



The above data are from Gallup surveys for USA Today and CNN of August 21-23 and August 31-September 2, 1992. **Note:** As on the preceding page, if Bush or Clinton does better among a group than among all those interviewed, his "group score" is a positive number, of the magnitude shown. If less well, of course, a negative number.

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BEYOND THE TRIAL HEATS— PROBING FOR THE CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Rating Bush and Clinton vs. Rating Bush and Dukakis

Question: In your view, which of these descriptions apply and which do not apply to [George Bush...Bill Clinton...Michael Dukakis]?

	% Bush	% saying this of Clinton/Dukakis
Someone you would be proud to have as President		
Bush vs. Clinton (August 1992)	54	52
Bush vs. Dukakis (August 1988)	56	49
Cares about the average American		
Bush vs. Clinton	52	75
Bush vs. Dukakis	57	72
A strong and decisive leader		
Bush vs. Clinton	60	51
Bush vs. Dukakis	53	51
Someone you can trust		
Bush vs. Clinton	53	50
Bush vs. Dukakis	58	53

Source: Survey by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman for Time and CNN, August 1992; and for Time only, August 1988.

Cutting the Deficit vs. Cutting Taxes

	Total % saying	Republicans % saying	Democrats % saying	Independents % saying
Which do you think is more important—reducing the budget deficit or cutting taxes?				
Deficit	59	67	55	58
Taxes	32	26	36	33
If he is re-elected, do you think George Bush will be able to cut taxes in the next four years?				
Yes	24	42	12	21
No	68	46	82	72
If he is elected, do you think Bill Clinton will raise your taxes, or will he only raise the taxes of people richer than you?				
Your taxes	53	68	41	54
People richer than you	29	15	40	28

Source: Survey by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman for Time and CNN, August 25-27, 1992.

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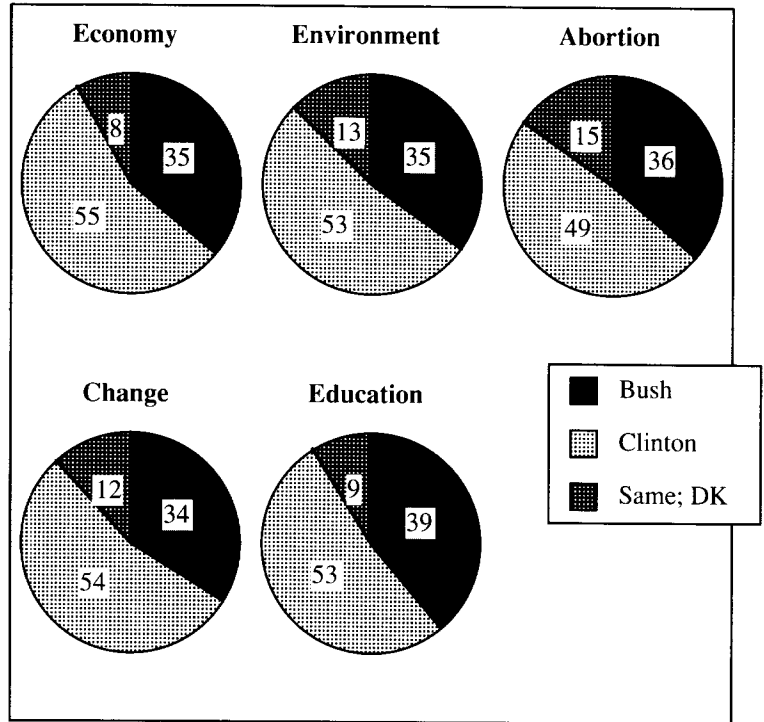
PROBING FOR THE CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES/Cont.



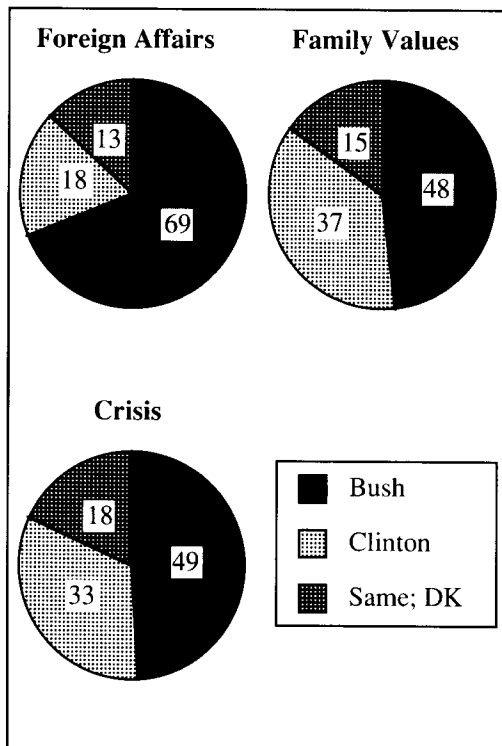
Questions: Regardless of which presidential candidate you support, please tell me if you think George Bush or Bill Clinton would do the best job as president in each of the following areas...The economy/Bringing about the changes you'd like to see/The environment/Education/Abortion/Promoting family values. (Gallup/Newsweek, August 21, 1992) Who do you think would do a better job handling foreign affairs: Bill Clinton or George Bush? (Los Angeles Times, August 20-21, 1992) Regardless of who you would vote for in November, which candidate, George Bush or Bill Clinton, would do a better job of using good judgment in a crisis? (Princeton Survey Research Associates/US News & World Report, August 6-9, 1992). Responses of registered voters.



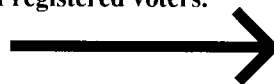
Advantage Clinton



Advantage Bush

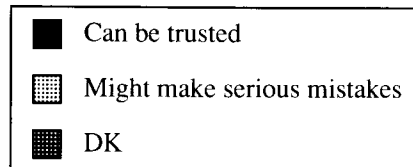
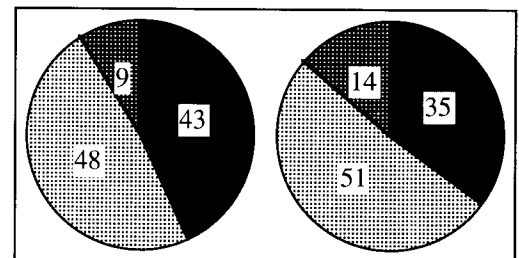


Question: Do you think (George Bush/Bill Clinton) can be trusted to deal with all the problems a president has to deal with, or are you concerned that he might make serious mistakes? (CBS News/New York Times, August 23-24, 1992). Responses of registered voters.



Bush

Clinton



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BUSH-CLINTON TRIAL HEATS: THE COMPLETE NATIONAL RECORD, 7/20-9/14

		<u>Registered Voters</u>		<u>% Clinton minus % Bush</u>
		<u>Bush</u>	<u>Clinton</u>	
Yankelovich/Time/CNN	7/22-23	26	53	+27
Gallup/Newsweek	7/23-24	37	55	+18
Princeton Survey Research Associates/Times Mirror	7/22-26	31	58	+27
Gallup	7/24-26	36	56	+20
Princeton Survey Research Associates/Times Mirror	7/29-8/2	32	57	+25
Gallup	7/31-8/2	32	57	+25
Gallup/Newsweek	8/6-7	37	54	+17
Princeton Survey Research Associates/Times Mirror	8/6-9	37	55	+18
Gallup	8/8-10	37	56	+19
ABC News/Washington Post	8/7-11	34	60	+26
Gallup	8/10-12	37	56	+19
NBC News/Wall Street Journal	8/10-12	34	54	+20
CBS News/New York Times	8/11-14	37	55	+18
Los Angeles Times	8/12-14	33	56	+23
Gallup/Newsweek	8/13-14	36	53	+17
ABC News	8/12-16	36	57	+21
Gallup/USA Today/CNN	8/17	35	58	+23
Houston Chronicle/Hotline	8/15-16	35	50	+15
Houston Chronicle/Hotline	8/17	35	51	+16
ABC News/Washington Post	8/14-18	32	57	+25
Houston Chronicle/Hotline	8/18	42	48	+6
CBS News	8/18-19	40	51	+11
Gallup	8/19-20	39	51	+12
Yankelovich/Time/CNN	8/19-20	36	47	+11
CBS News/New York Times	8/20	46	48	+2
Washington Post	8/20-21	38	49	+9
Los Angeles Times	8/20-21	41	49	+8
Gallup/Newsweek	8/21	39	53	+14
ABC News/Washington Post	8/21-23	42	47	+5
Gallup/USA Today/CNN	8/22-23	42	52	+10
CBS News/New York Times	8/23-24	39	55	+16
Yankelovich/Time/CNN	8/25-27	37	46	+9
Gallup/Newsweek	8/27-28	39	49	+10
ABC News/Washington Post	8/26-30	36	55	+19
Harris (likely voters)	8/26-9/2	45	50	+5
Gallup/USA Today/CNN	8/31-9/2	39	54	+15
NBC News	9/3-5	40	49	+9
Battleground '92 Tracking Poll ABC News/Washington Post (likely voters)	9/1-6	43	49	+6
Battleground '92 Tracking Poll	9/2-6	41	53	+12
Battleground '92 Tracking Poll	9/2-7	42	48	+6
Battleground '92 Tracking Poll	9/3-8	40	50	+10
Battleground '92 Tracking Poll	9/6-9	38	52	+14
Battleground '92 Tracking Poll	9/7-10	39	50	+11
Gallup/Newsweek	9/10-11	38	53	+15