

Obama, the Presidency, and Diversity: The Historic, the Ordinary

John Coleman
Department of Political Science
UW-Madison

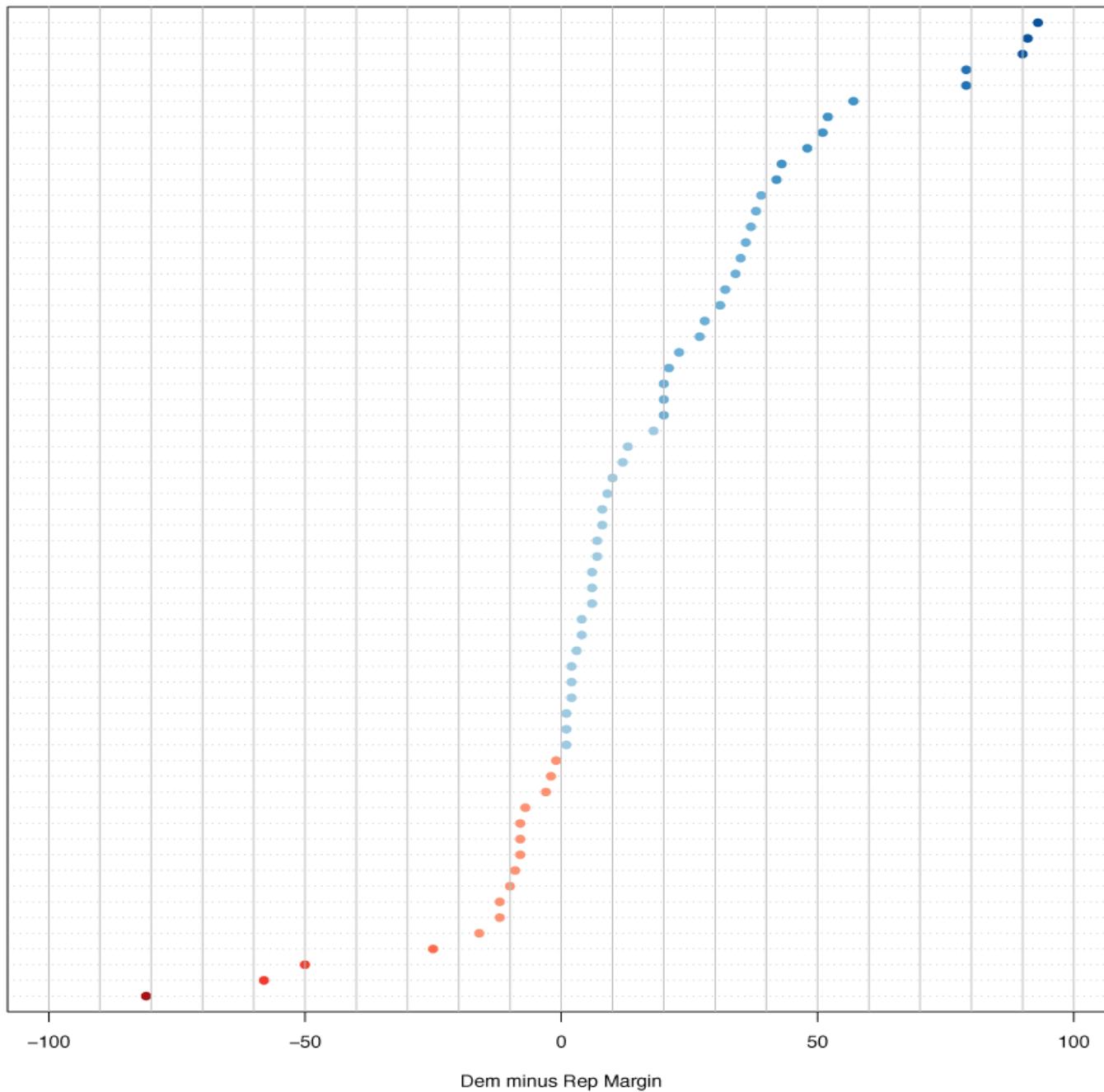
Catholic Charities, Madison
September 21, 2009

Fundamentals of the 2008 Election

- The economy / consumer confidence
- Right direction / wrong track
- Unpopular Republican president
- Dissatisfaction with the situation in Iraq
- A shift away from Iraq and toward domestic issues
- Lots of mobilization, high voter turnout during the nomination
- Party identification and registration trending Democratic
- Hard for a party to win three consecutive elections: Repubs 1980-1988 are the only example since FDR

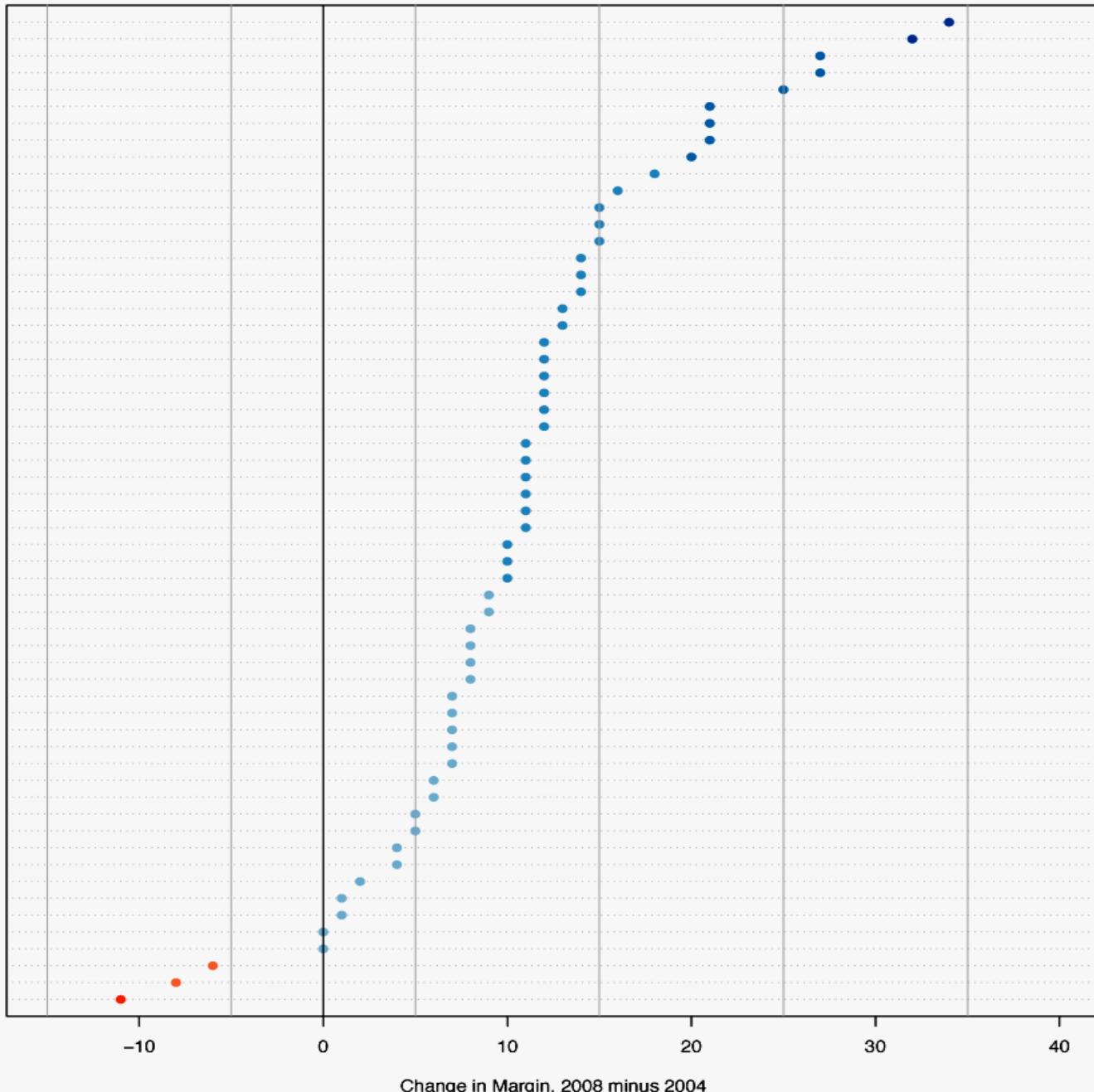
Group Voting Margins (Dem minus Rep) in 2008

Black Women
 Black
 Black Men
 Liberal
 Dem
 Jewish
 No Religion
 Other Religion
 Inc \$0–15k
 Gay
 Big City
 First Time Voter
 Latino Women
 Attend Never
 Latino
 Other Race
 Age 18–29
 Non-Gun Owner
 Latino Men
 ED: LT HS
 Asian
 Inc \$15–30k
 Moderate
 Small City
 Union
 Attend Yearly
 ED: MAPhd
 Female
 Inc \$30–50k
 Non-Veteran
 Catholic
 Straight
 Ind
 Attend Monthly
 Decide Earlier
 ED: HS
 Inc \$200k+
 Age 30–44
 Non-Union
 ED: AA
 Inc \$75–100k
 Not First Time Voter
 Suburbs
 ED: BA
 Decide Last 3 Days
 Age 45–64
 Male
 Inc \$50–75k
 Inc \$150–200k
 Inc \$100–150k
 White Women
 Rural
 Small Town
 Age 65+
 Protestant
 Veteran
 Attend Weekly
 White
 White Men
 Gun Owner
 White Evangelical
 Conservative
 Rep



Group Change in Voting Margins (Dem minus Rep) 2008 minus 2004

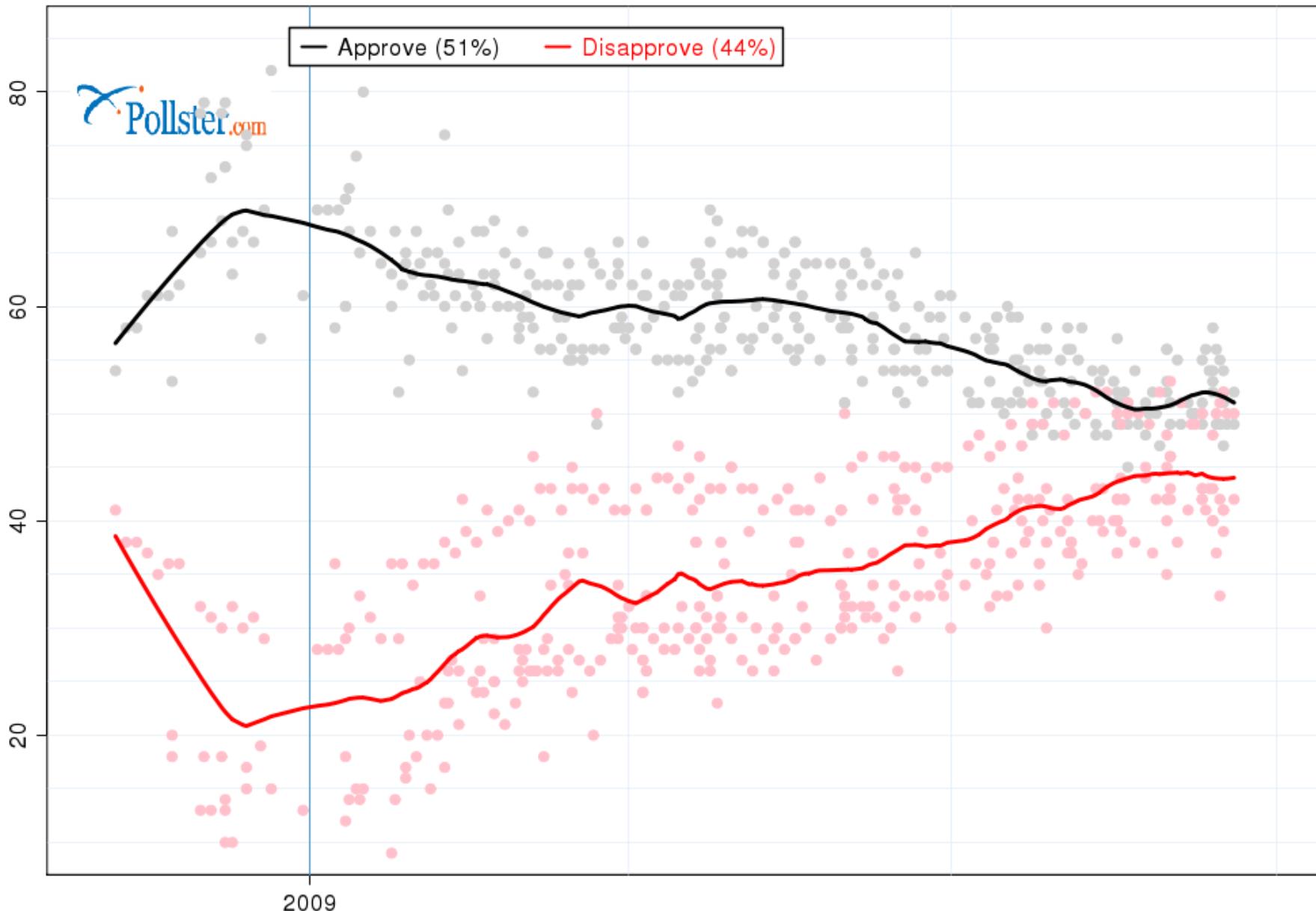
Inc \$200k+
 First Time Voter
 ED: LT HS
 Latino
 Age 18–29
 Big City
 Inc \$0–15k
 Other Race
 Small City
 Non-Gun Owner
 No Religion
 Straight
 Non-Union
 Asian
 Catholic
 Inc \$150–200k
 Black
 Inc \$75–100k
 Age 30–44
 Decide Earlier
 Moderate
 ED: AA
 Inc \$100–150k
 Inc \$50–75k
 Male
 Rural
 Attend Never
 Attend Yearly
 Conservative
 ED: HS
 Inc \$30–50k
 Attend Weekly
 Protestant
 Female
 Non-Veteran
 White Men
 Attend Monthly
 Jewish
 ED: BA
 Inc \$15–30k
 Suburbs
 White Evangelical
 Liberal
 Ind
 ED: MAPhd
 Veteran
 Rep
 Not First Time Voter
 White
 Age 45–64
 White Women
 Gun Owner
 Union
 Dem
 Other Religion
 Age 65+
 Small Town
 Decide Last 3 Days
 Gay



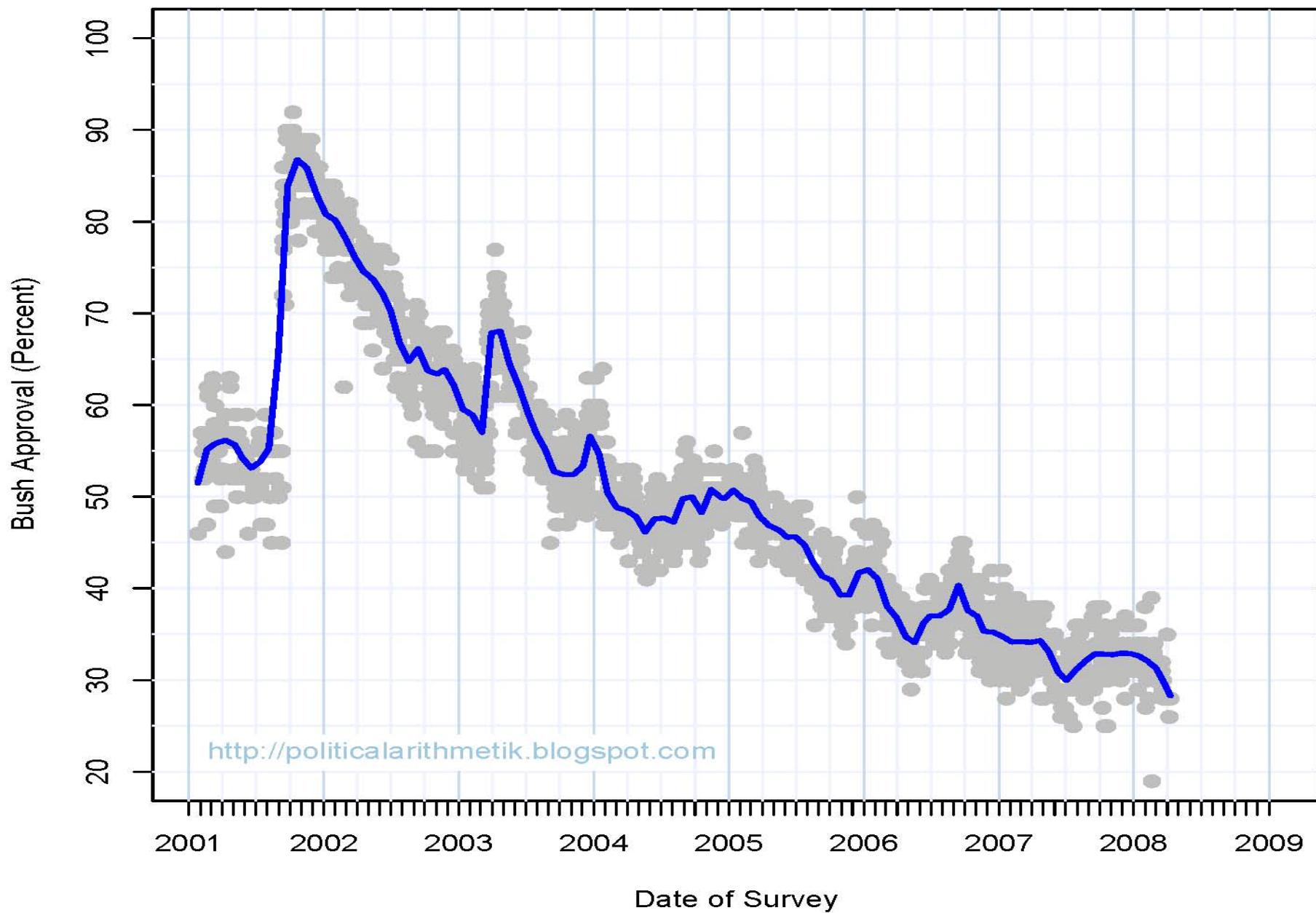
Mixed Signals Facing Every President

- Head of state vs. head of government
- Leader vs. responsive follower
- Flexible vs. decisive
- Open administration vs. in control
- Average Joe vs. high private expectations
- Which issues, which order, which positions?

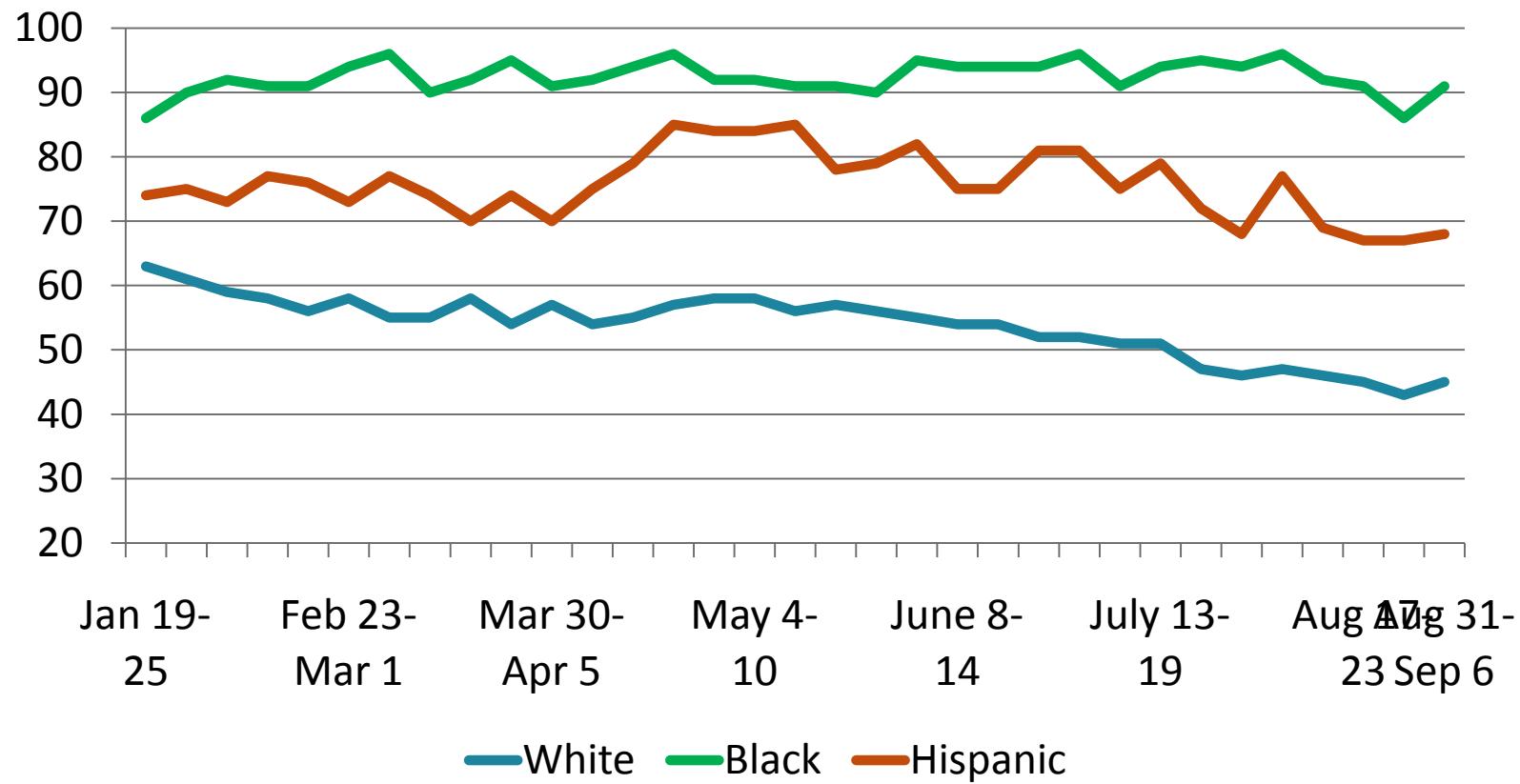
President Barack Obama Job Approval Latest Poll: 09/19/2009



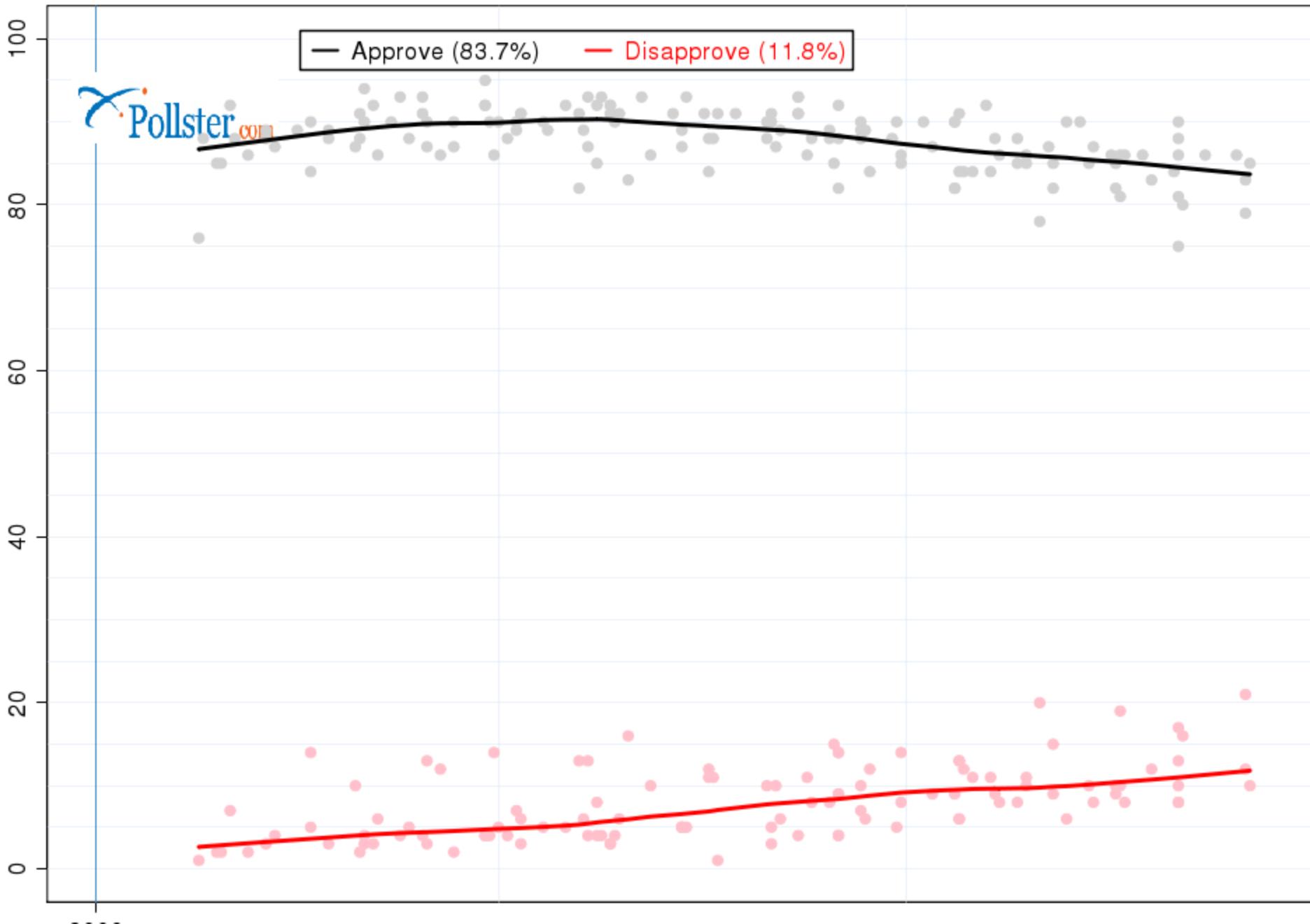
Bush approval in all polls completed through 04/09/2008
Current trend estimate is 28.3%



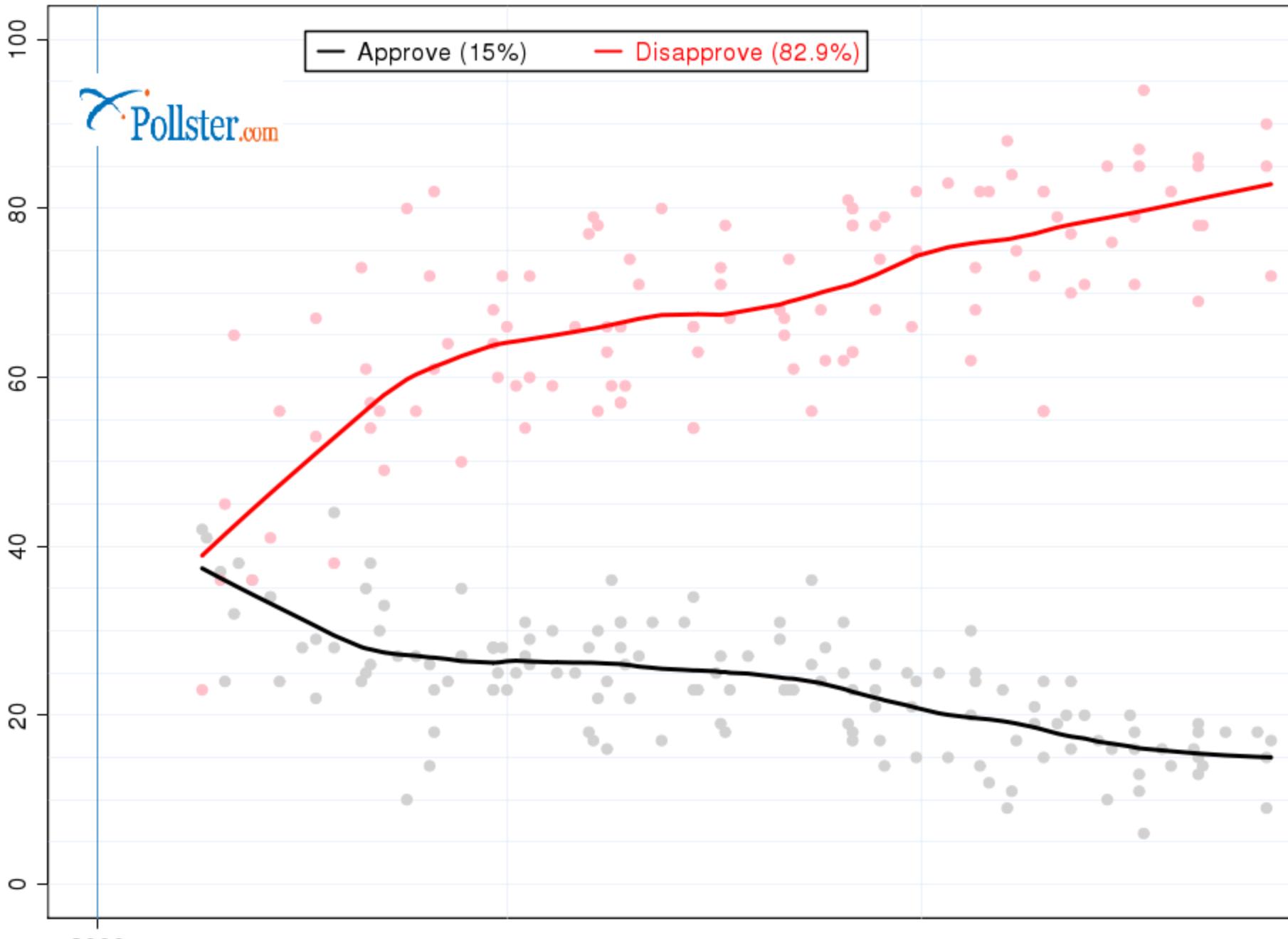
Obama Approval by Group



President Barack Obama Job Approval (Democrats)
Latest Poll: 09/16/2009



President Barack Obama Job Approval (Republicans)
Latest Poll: 09/16/2009



President Barack Obama Job Approval (INDS ONLY)
Latest Poll: 09/17/2009

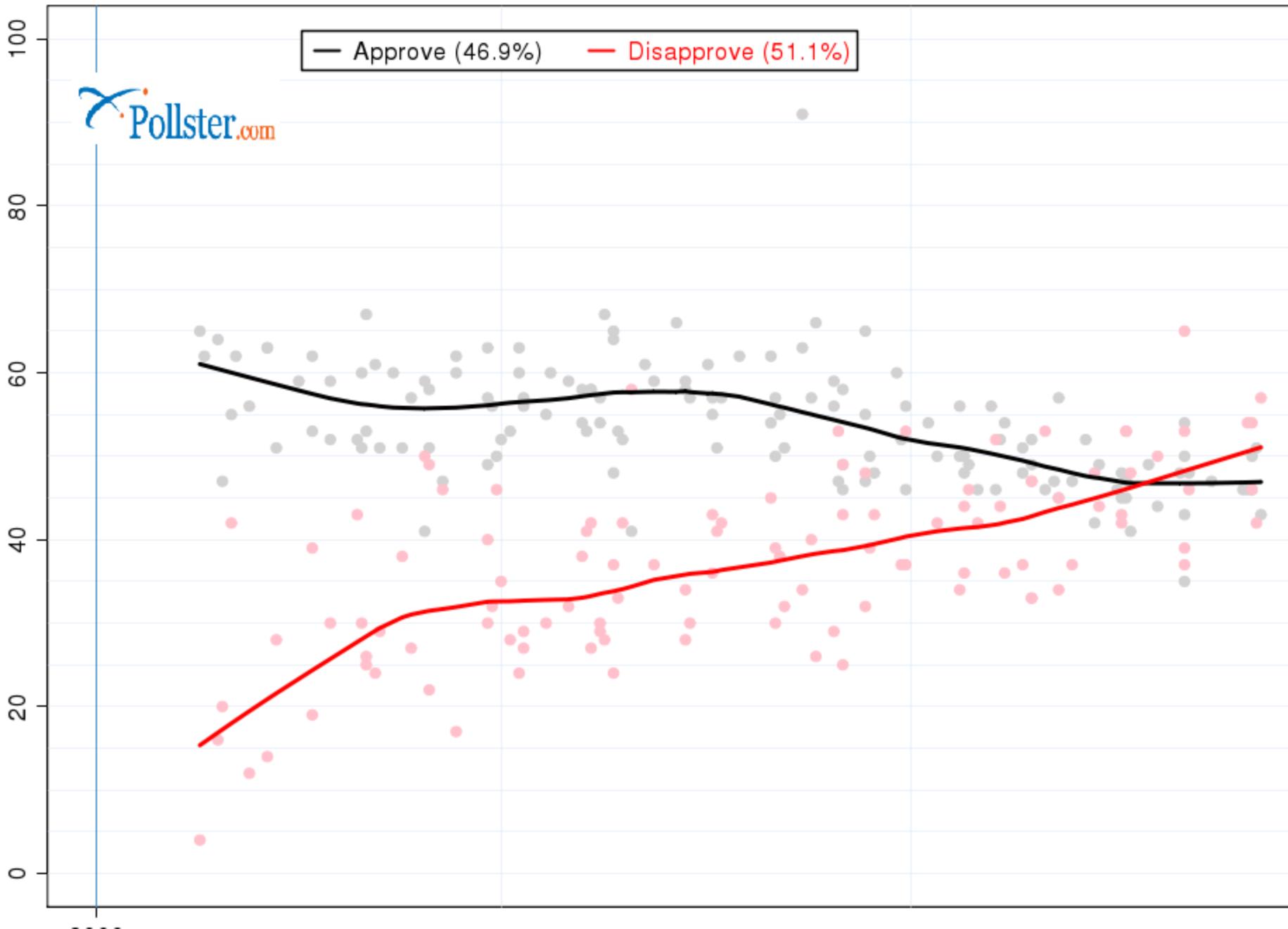


Figure 1-2 Approval of George W. Bush's Job Performance, 2001-2006, by Party Identification

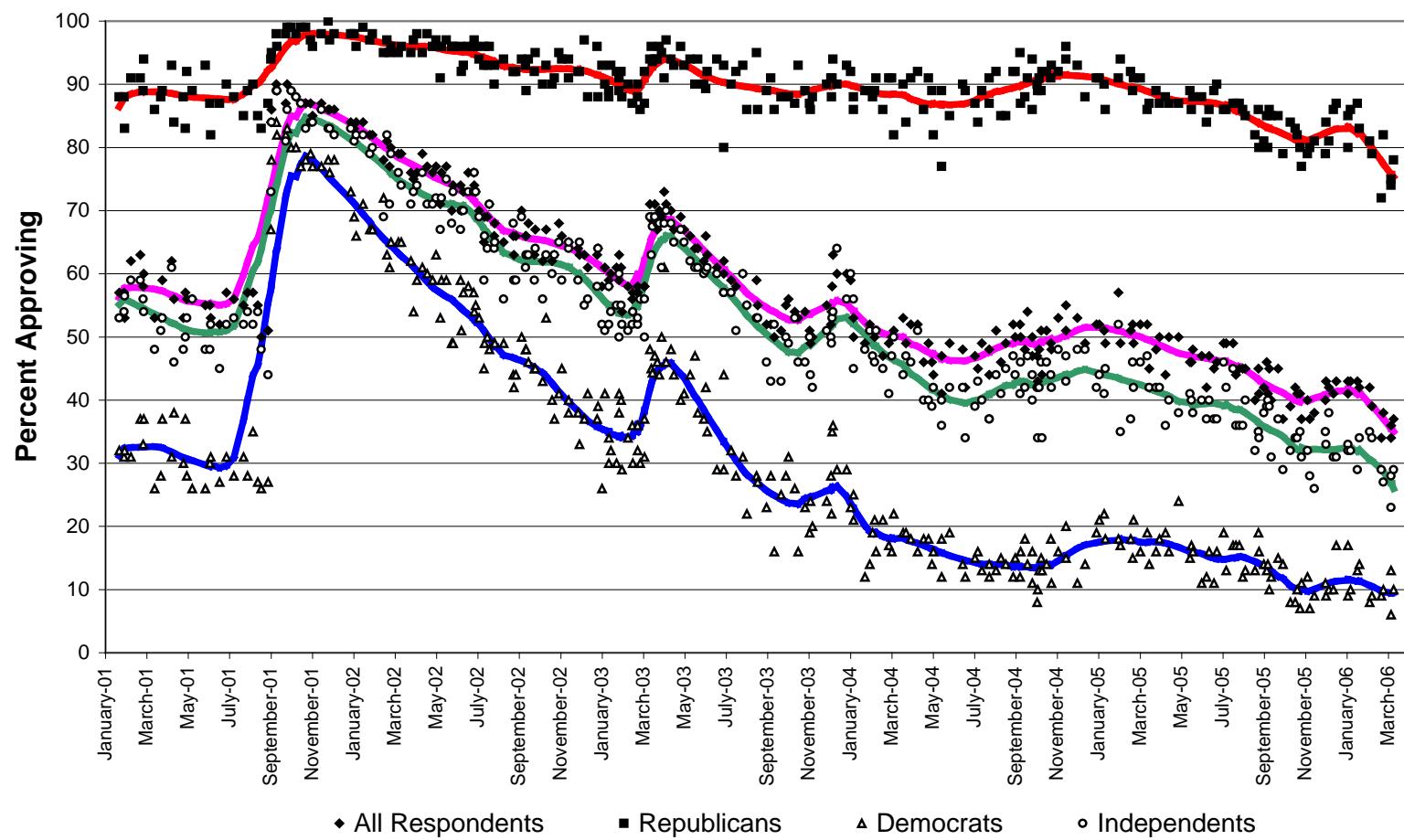


Figure 6-4 Partisan Differences in Support for the War in Iraq

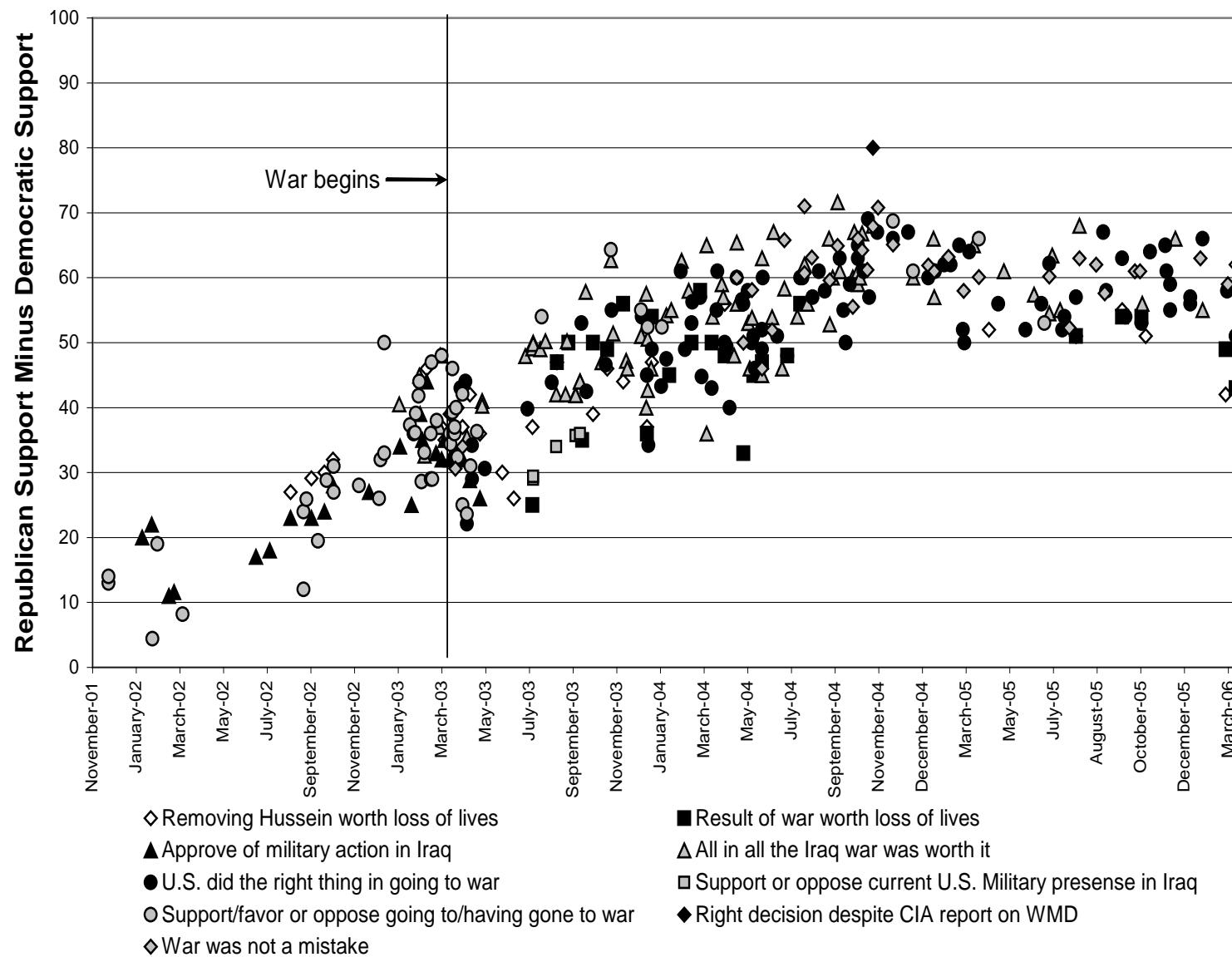
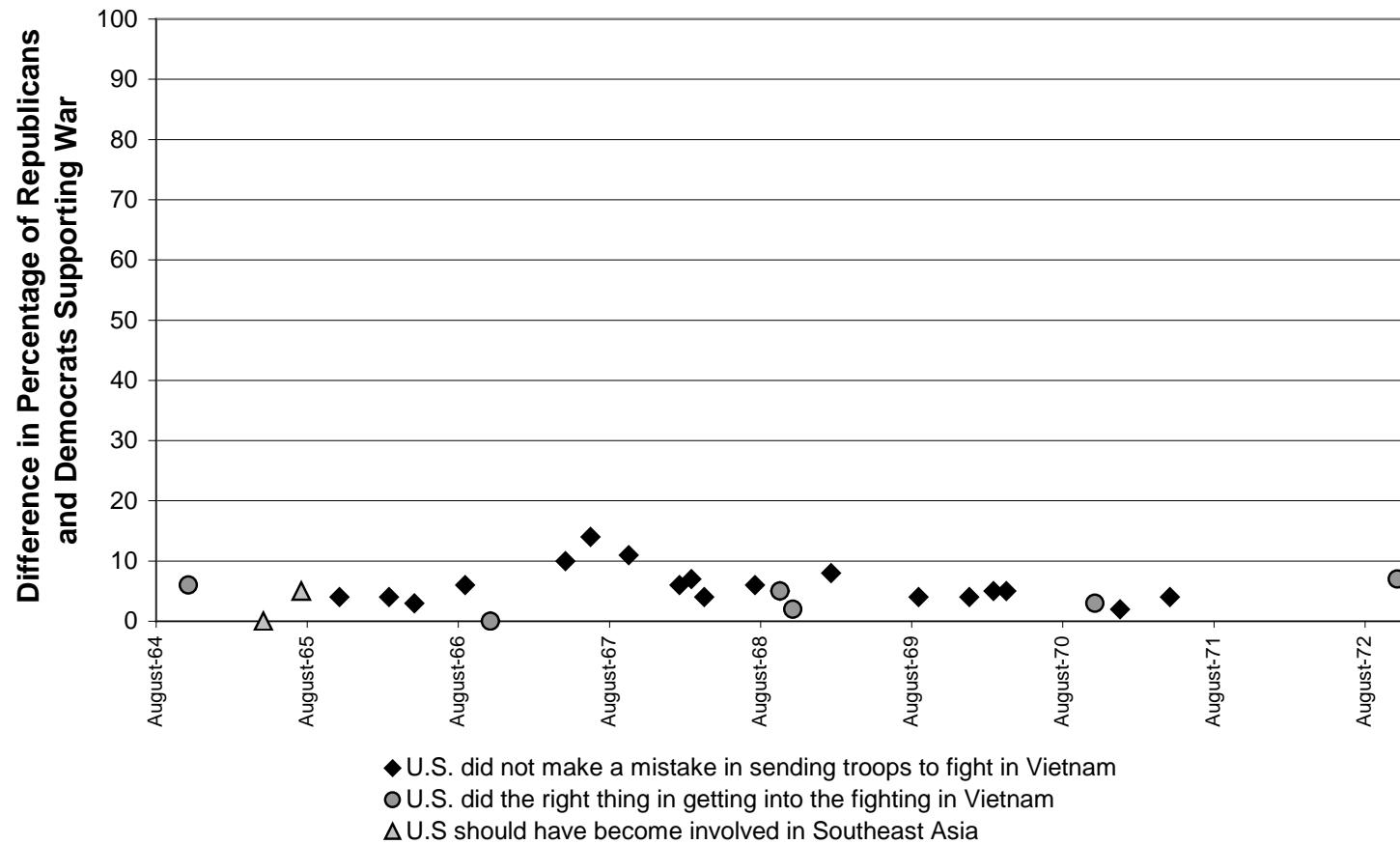
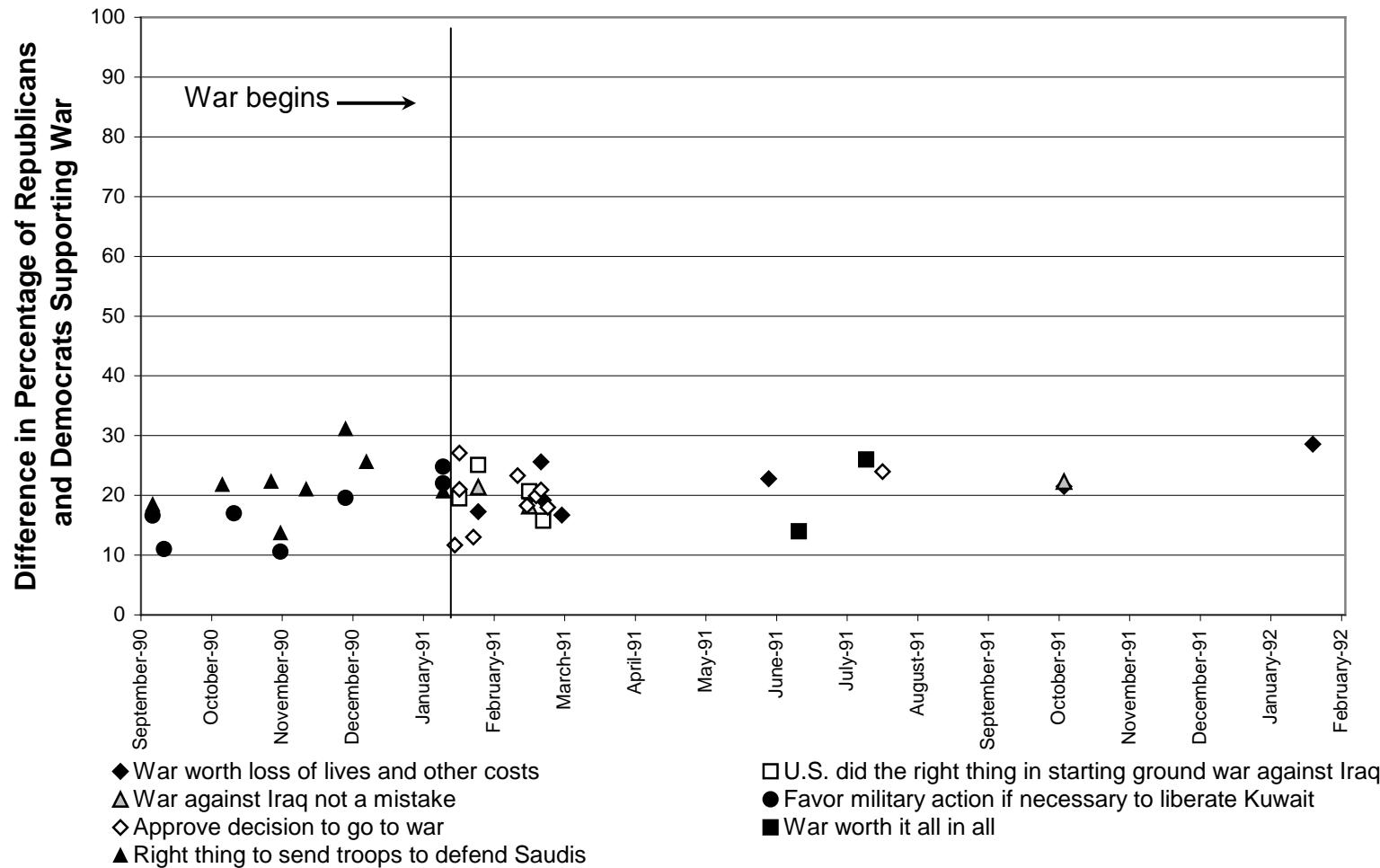


Figure 6-6 Partisan Differences in Support for Vietnam War



Sources: John E. Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973). P. 271, and the 1964-1972 NES Surveys.

Figure 6-7 Partisan Differences in Support for the Persian Gulf War



Sources: CBS News/New York Times polls; Gallup Polls reported in Ole R. Holsti, *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*, Revised Edition (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), p. 173, and ABC News/Washington Post polls.

Presidential Job Approval Ratings Following the First 100 Days
Eisenhower - Obama

Year	Interview Dates	President	% Approval	% Disapproval	% No Opinion	Initial Approval	% Change
1953	Apr. 19-24	Dwight D. Eisenhower	73	10	17	68	5
1961	Apr. 28-May 3	John Kennedy	83	5	12	72	11
1969	May 1-6	Richard Nixon	62	15	23	59	3
1977	Apr. 29-May 2	Jimmy Carter	63	18	19	66	-3
1981	May 8-11	Ronald Reagan	68	21	11	51	17
1989	May 4-7	George Bush	56	22	22	51	5
1993	Apr. 22-24	William J. Clinton	55	37	8	58	-3
2001	Apr. 20-22	George W. Bush	62	29	9	57	5
2009	Apr. 28-30	Barack Obama	65	29	6	68	-3

*data includes only presidents inaugurated following election
 data compiled from the *Gallup Poll*

European Attitudes toward US, September 2009

	2008	2009
Desirable for US to exert strong leadership in world	33	50
Relations have improved between US and Europe in past year	17	37
Approval of president's international policies	19	79
Feeling thermometer-US	48	55

U.S. Favorability Rating

1999 /
 2000 2002 2003 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
U.S.	--	--	--	83	76	80	84	88
Canada	71	72	63	59	--	55	--	68
Britain	83	75	70	55	56	51	53	69
France	62	62	42	43	39	39	42	75
Germany	78	60	45	42	37	30	31	64
Spain	50	--	38	41	23	34	33	58
Poland	86	79	--	62	--	61	68	67
Russia	37	61	37	52	43	41	46	44
Turkey	52	30	15	23	12	9	12	14
Egypt	--	--	--	--	30	21	22	27
Jordan	--	25	1	21	15	20	19	25
Lebanon	--	36	27	42	--	47	51	55
Palest. ter.	--	--	*	--	--	13	--	15
Israel	--	--	78	--	--	78	--	71
China	--	--	--	42	47	34	41	47
India	--	66	--	71	56	59	66	76
Indonesia	75	61	15	38	30	29	37	63
Japan	77	72	--	--	63	61	50	59
Pakistan	23	10	13	23	27	15	19	16
S. Korea	58	52	46	--	--	58	70	78
Argentina	50	34	--	--	--	16	22	38
Brazil	56	51	35	--	--	44	47	61
Mexico	68	64	--	--	--	56	47	69
Kenya	94	80	--	--	--	87	--	90
Nigeria	46	76	61	--	62	70	64	79

1999/2000 survey trends provided by the Office of Research, U.S. Department of State

Question 11a.

**Will Do Right Thing
in World Affairs**

% confident	Bush	Obama	<i>Diff</i>
	2008	2009	
U.S.	37	74	+37
Canada*	28	88	+60
Britain	16	86	+70
France	13	91	+78
Germany	14	93	+79
Spain	8	72	+64
Poland	41	62	+21
Russia	22	37	+15
Turkey	2	33	+31
Egypt	11	42	+31
Jordan	7	31	+24
Lebanon	33	46	+13
Palest. ter.*	8	23	+15
Israel*	57	56	-1
China	30	62	+32
India	55	77	+22
Indonesia	23	71	+48
Japan	25	85	+60
Pakistan	7	13	+6
S. Korea	30	81	+51
Argentina	7	61	+54
Brazil	17	76	+59
Mexico	16	55	+39
Kenya*	72	94	+22
Nigeria	55	88	+33

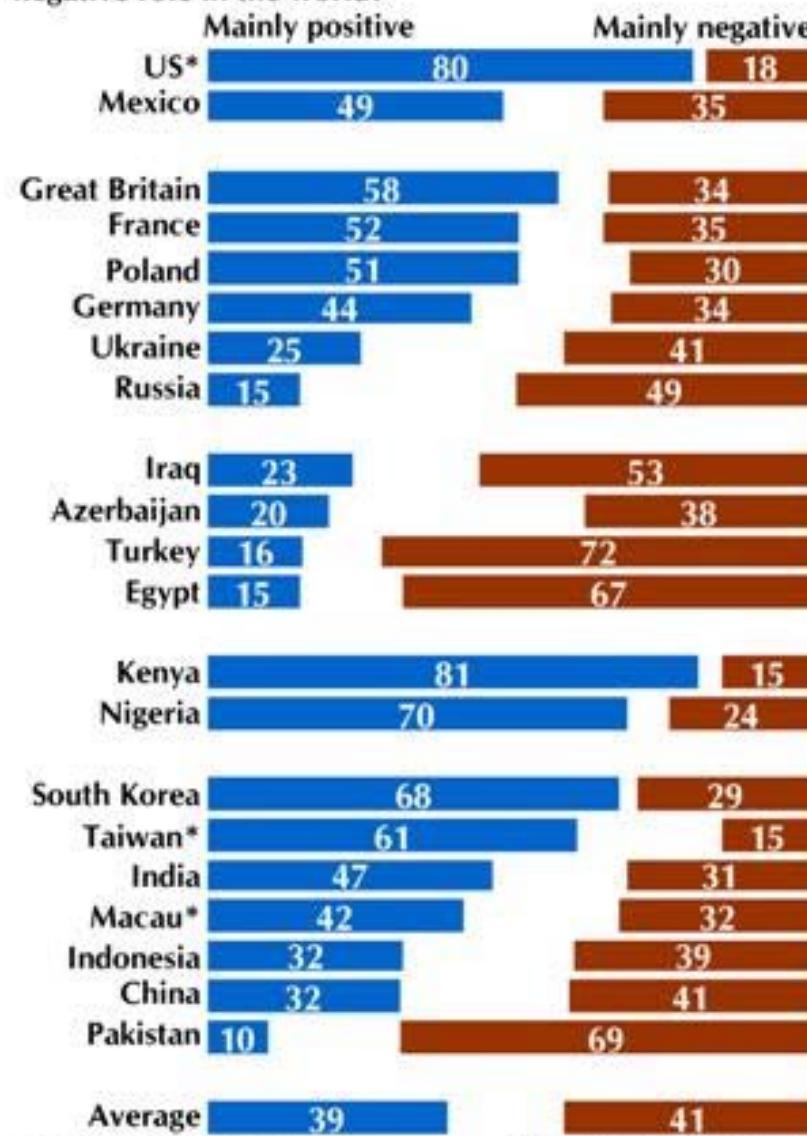
*Bush confidence from 2007.

Samples in Brazil, China, India and Pakistan are disproportionately urban. See the Methods section for more information.

Question 21a.

US Role in the World

Is the United States playing a mainly positive or mainly negative role in the world?



* Excluded from average

WorldPublicOpinion.org

Policy Matters Most

- European allies still refuse to send significantly more troops to Afghanistan. The Saudis basically ignored Mr. Obama's request for concessions to Israel, while Israel rebuffed his demand to stop settlement expansion. North Korea defied him by testing a nuclear weapon. Japan elected a party less friendly to the United States. Cuba has done little to liberalize in response to modest relaxation of sanctions. India and China are resisting a climate change deal. And Russia rejected new sanctions against Iran's nuclear program even as Mr. Obama heads into talks with Tehran. (NYT 9-19-09)

Perceptions of Whether Race Relations are Generally Good or Generally Bad

	Whites: Generally good	Whites: Generally bad	Blacks: Generally good	Blacks: Generally bad
July 2008	55	34	29	59
April 2009	65	21	59	30
CHANGE	+10	-13	+30	-29

New York Times, April 27, 2009

...will Barack Obama's presidency bring different groups of Americans together, or will it divide them?

BRING TOGETHER

63

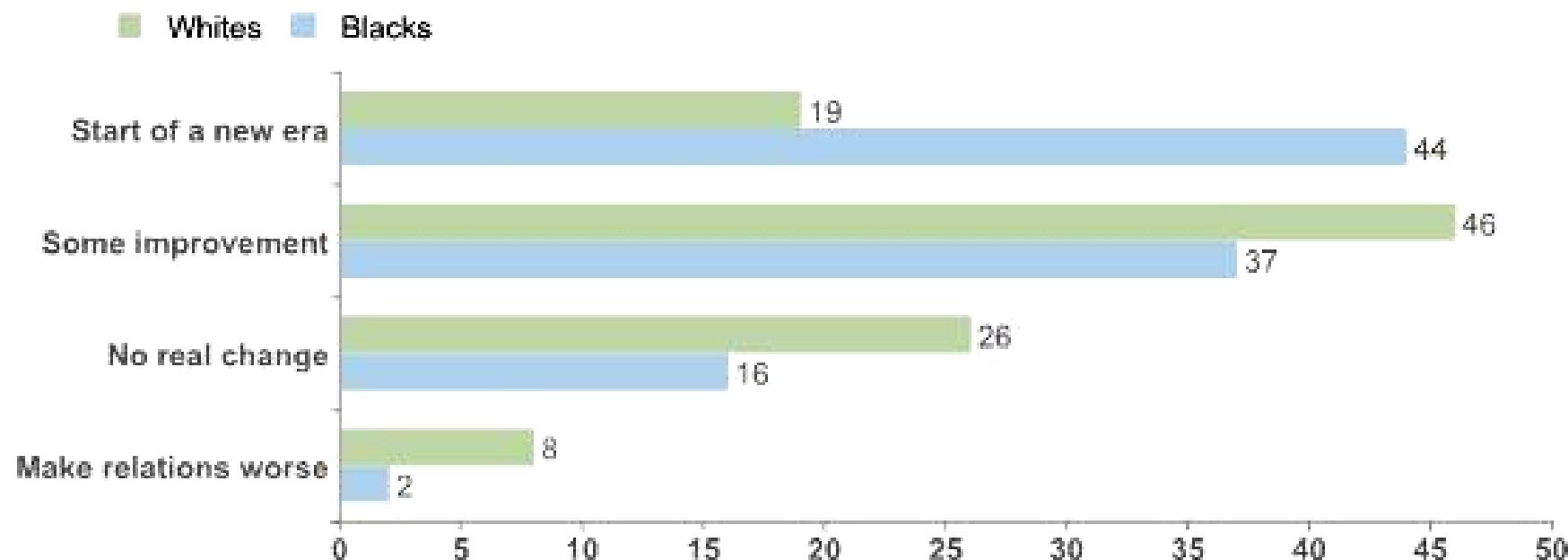
DIVIDE

25

Based on nationwide telephone interviews conducted April 22-26 with 973 adults. Those with no opinion are not shown.

[The New York Times](#)

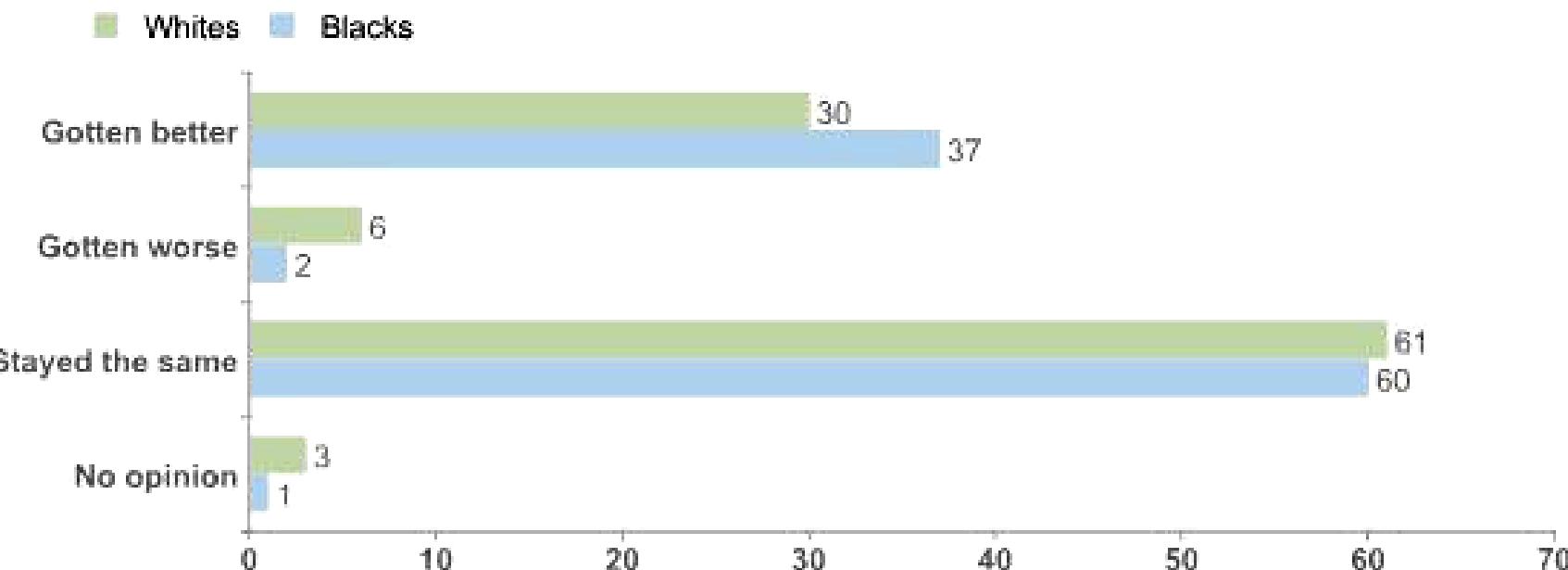
Question: Effect of Barack Obama's election on race relations



SAMPLE: Telephone interviews with 505 African-Americans and 501 non-Hispanic whites conducted May 16-18, 2009.

SAMPLE ERROR: +/- 4.5% pts

Question: Do you think relations between blacks and whites in the U.S. have gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed the same since Barack Obama became president?



SAMPLE: Telephone interviews with 505 African-Americans conducted May 16-18, 2009.

SAMPLE ERROR: +/- 4.5% pts

The Road Ahead

- Evaluations will continue to diverge sharply by party
- Evaluations on changes in race relations likely to persist, but decline
- World opinion favorable, but details matter
- Eases way for future candidates
- In most respects, evaluated as most any other president would be—historic in its own way