

DEMOCRACY CORPS

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- Bush approval drops below 40 percent, as less than 1-in-3 Americans now see country moving in right direction
- Majorities reject Bush agenda, posing critical choice for Republicans in Congress
- Solid Democratic margin in generic congressional contest reflects dissatisfaction with Republicans; Democrats still viewed with little enthusiasm but emerging as agents of change
- Public greets Miers nomination with ambivalence; initial support significantly lower than for Roberts nomination

AN ANALYSIS OF RECENT PUBLIC POLLING – OCTOBER 21, 2005

by
Karl Agne

By now, anyone who reads these regular updates on public polling is familiar with the current trends. Bush approval at record lows; broad pessimism about the direction of the country; Democrats holding huge advantages in the generic congressional measure, but largely as a result of Republican losses rather than Democratic gains. However, it is important not to lose sight of just how dramatic and historically significant the current situation is:

- Bush's approval marks are the lowest for any second-term president at this stage of his presidency aside from Nixon in the midst of the Watergate scandal
- Congressional approval marks are among the lowest in history and comparable to the period preceding the landslide change election of 1994
- Barely 3-in-10 Americans are satisfied with the country's current direction, with broad majorities expressing pessimism about the economy, war in Iraq, and the country's growing energy crisis
- There is literally no issue in the recent body of public opinion research on which Americans express optimism about the country's current direction
- Ratings of both Democrats and Republicans are at their lowest points in 50 years

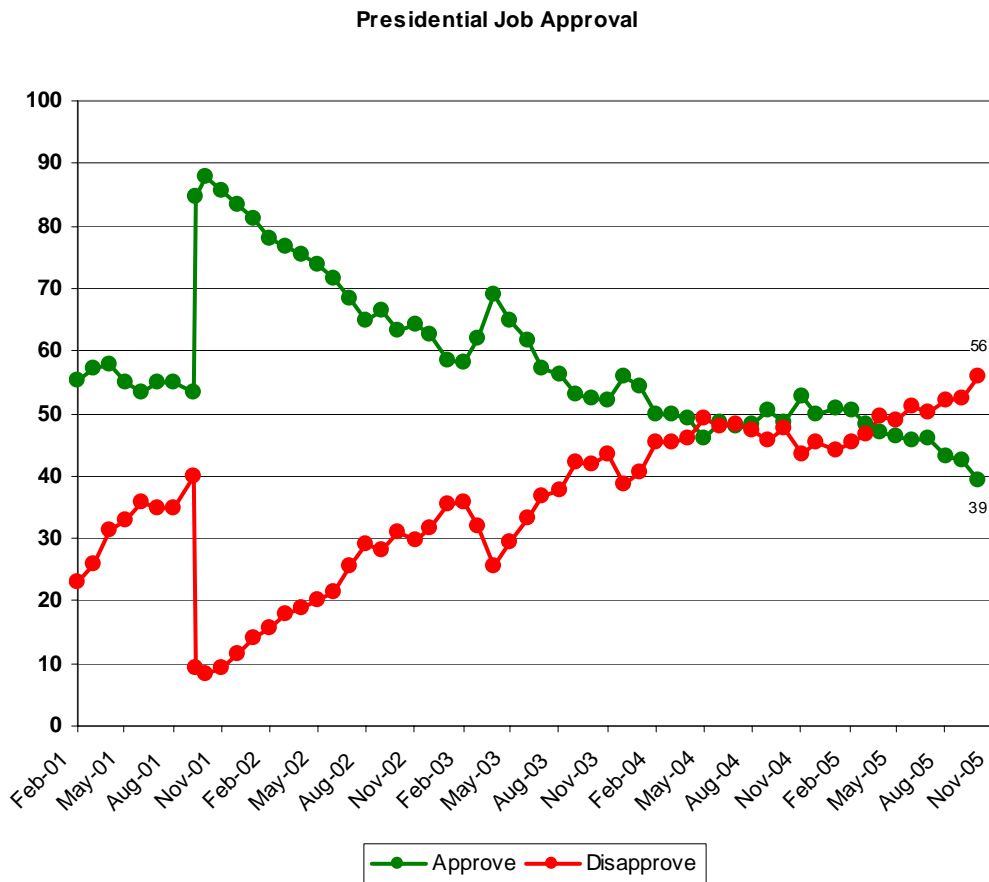
It is this last point that is most important as we look to the future, particularly the mid-term elections that are now barely a year away. The latest NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* survey shows Democrats with a 9-point advantage as the party Americans would like to see in control of Congress, but they still fail to garner the support of even 50 percent of voters.

In order to once again claim a majority, Democrats must recapture some of the independent voters – particularly white, non-college-educated voters in rural areas and red states

– who have defected to the Republicans in recent elections. Focus groups conducted by Democracy Corps among these voters highlighted the challenge facing Democrats – these voters see little or no differences between the parties on critical ‘kitchen table’ issues such as jobs, health care, and gas prices. As a result, no matter how disenchanted these voters become with Republicans, many of them will still vote Republican because of their views on cultural issues and defense – unless and until Democrats are seen as agents of change, offering a real alternative on the ‘kitchen table’ issues they care about most. The most recent polls highlight the growing concerns Americans harbor on many of these issues – notably economic growth and job creation, gas prices, spending for the war in Iraq and the lack of a clear plan, health care, record deficits, long-term energy policy, homeland security, and cleaning up the rampant corruption and cronyism in Washington.

Looking back over public polling data from the last six months, it is clear that the precipitous drop in Republicans’ fortunes has resulted from a combination of Republican overreach in the wake of the 2004 election (on issues from Social Security to Terri Schiavo), stronger Democratic opposition and critiques, and the inevitable consequences of disastrous Republican leadership and policies. It is hard to imagine, given the degree to which the public has turned on them, Republicans will be able to make significant gains over the next year, but it remains a possibility, particularly if another major event comes that fundamentally shifts the current political environment.

President Bush’s approval rating – which has fallen 12 points since the beginning of this year and is now below 40 percent, with disapproval up to 56 percent – is the clearest indicator of Republican losses this year.



Going beyond overall approval numbers – which have consistently averaged higher than Bush’s approval on any issues beyond the war on terrorism – the new Pew poll includes a battery that powerfully demonstrates the breadth and depth of public dissatisfaction with Bush’s policies and leadership. Asking whether Bush’s policies and decisions have made things better or worse (or neither) on a series of 11 issues, only on ‘America’s national security’ does a plurality believe Bush has made things better. In every other area, including even supposed strengths such as ‘morality in America,’ Americans believe the country is worse off as a direct result of Bush’s leadership.

IMPACT OF BUSH POLICIES AND DECISIONS				
	Better	Worse	Neither	<i>Net Bush Impact</i>
America's national security	47	30	21	+17
Public education	24	32	37	-8
Morality in America	25	35	36	-10
Race relations	16	29	48	-13
The tax system	22	40	31	-18
America's relations with its allies	22	47	26	-25
Health care in America	16	43	36	-27
The Social Security system	12	40	39	-28
America's economy	19	57	20	-38
The gap between rich and poor	8	57	31	-49
The federal budget deficit	6	66	21	-60

The bottom line – when asked to look ahead to the next presidential election, only 25 percent said they would like to see a president who offers policies similar to Bush while an amazing 69 percent prefer a president who takes the country in a different direction. But Bush clearly hasn't learned his lesson. While Bush pushes for more tax cuts, a majority in the NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll say 'federal tax cuts have not been worth it, because they have increased the deficit and caused cuts in government programs.'

These trends leave Republicans in Congress in a difficult situation. They have marched in lockstep with this president for five years now, but his plummeting numbers, lame duck status, and insistence on forwarding unpopular policies and defending the corruption and cronyism within his administration could soon create a political imperative for Republicans to distance themselves. And the Harriet Miers nomination could be the first step in that process. Every poll released since Bush announced this nomination shows lukewarm support for Miers – much lower than initial support for John Roberts. Americans are underwhelmed by her record and qualifications, and they harbor serious questions about the role her relationship with Bush played in her nomination, as well as the way it might influence her decisions as a Supreme Court justice.

That being said, the Republican side of the equation is not likely to be the determining factor in the 2006 elections. Given current trends, Democrats should make gains in these mid-term elections regardless, but the scope of those gains depends on their ability to separate themselves from the Republicans' mess in Washington and to present a clear agenda for the country that reflects most Americans' beliefs that America can do better, that we can't continue to ignore our growing needs here at home, and that we can't afford tax cuts and other policies that benefit a wealthy few at the expense of most Americans.

Democrats have clearly not made their case yet, but there are some optimistic early signs that suggest they may finally be moving in the right direction. The Pew poll compared the two parties on a series of attributes and found large Democratic advantages on two critical measures. A majority of Americans chose Democrats as the party 'concerned with the needs of people like

me' (52 percent Democrats, 30 percent Republicans). And by a 16-point margin, they see Democrats as the party that 'can bring about the kind of changes the country needs' (48 percent Democrats, 32 percent Republicans). Democrats must do far better than 48 percent on this measure by this time next year, but there are signs they are beginning to emerge as the party of change in an election that will likely be dominated by the public's desire for a new direction.

Polls included in this analysis:

NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*. 10/8-10/2005. 807 adults.

Pew Research Center. 10/6-10/2005. 1500 adults.

ABC News/*Washington Post*. Month ending 10/16/2005. 1000 Adults.

Gallup. 10/13-16/2005. 1,012 Adults.

BUSH JOB APPROVAL – POST 9/11/01				
		Approve	Disapprove	App – Disapp
Monthly Average – October	Oct-05	39.3	55.8	-16.5
CNN/Gallup/USA Today#	10/16/2005	39	58	-19.0
Diageo/Hotline^	10/16/2005	40	57	-17.0
Fox News/Opinion Dynamics^	10/12/2005	40	51	-11.0
Democracy Corps#	10/10/2005	42	54	-12.0
NBC News/Wall Street Journal#	10/10/2005	39	54	-15.0
Pew Research #	10/10/2005	38	56	-18.0
CBS News#	10/5/2005	37	58	-21.0
AP/Ipsos#	10/5/2005	39	58	-19.0
Monthly Average – September	Sep-05	42.4	52.4	-10.0
Newsweek#	9/30/2005	40	53	-13.0
Fox News/Opinion Dynamics^	9/28/2005	45	47	-2.0
CNN/Gallup/USA Today#	9/28/2005	45	50	-5.0
Democracy Corps#	9/26/2005	46	51	-5.0
Democracy Corps#	9/21/2005	43	53	-10.0
ABC News/Washington Post#	9/11/2005	42	57	-15.0
Pew Research#	9/11/2005	40	52	-12.0
Pew Research#	9/7/2005	40	52	-12.0
Newsweek#	9/9/2005	38	55	-17.0
Time#	9/8/2005	46	47	-1.0
AP/Ipsos#	9/8/2005	39	59	-20.0
Democracy Corps#	9/7/2005	45	53	-8.0
CBS News#	9/7/2005	42	52	-10.0
Monthly Average – August	Aug-05	43.0	52.0	-9.0
CBS News#	8/31/2005	41	51	-10.0
ABC News/Washington Post#	8/28/2005	45	53	-8.0
Harris#	8/16/2005	40	58	-18.0
Gallup#	8/11/2005	45	51	-6.0
CNN/Gallup/USA Today#	8/5/2005	44	51	-7.0
Newsweek#	8/4/2005	42	51	-9.0
AP/Ipsos#	8/3/2005	42	55	-13.0
CBS News#	8/2/2005	45	46	-1.0
Monthly Average – July	Jul-05	46.1	50.2	-4.1
Monthly Average – June	Jun-05	45.6	51.1	-5.4
Monthly Average – May	May-05	46.4	49.0	-2.6
Monthly Average – April	Apr-05	46.9	49.6	-2.7
Monthly Average – March	Mar-05	48.3	46.5	1.8
Monthly Average – February	Feb-05	50.5	45.5	5.0
Monthly Average – January	Jan-05	50.9	44.1	6.8
Monthly Average – December	Dec-04	49.8	45.5	4.3
Monthly Average – November	Nov-04	52.8	43.3	9.5

Monthly Average – October	Oct-04	48.5	47.7	0.8
Monthly Average – September	Sep-04	50.6	45.8	4.8
Monthly Average – August	Aug-04	48.4	47.4	1
Monthly Average – July	Jul-04	47.8	48.2	-0.4
Monthly Average – June	Jun-04	48.5	48	0.5
Monthly Average – May	May-04	46	49.2	-3.2
Monthly Average – April	Apr-04	49.1	46	3.1
Monthly Average – March	Mar-04	49.8	45.5	4.3
Monthly Average – February	Feb-04	49.9	45.3	4.6
Monthly Average – January	Jan-04	54.3	40.5	13.8
Monthly Average – December	Dec-03	55.9	38.7	17.2
Monthly Average – November	Nov-03	52.2	43.3	8.9
Monthly Average – October	Oct-03	52.3	41.7	10.6
Monthly Average – September	Sep-03	53	42.3	10.7
Monthly Average – August	Aug-03	56.3	37.8	18.5
Monthly Average – July	Jul-03	57.2	36.8	20.4
Monthly Average – June	Jun-03	61.7	33.1	28.6
Monthly Average – May	May-03	64.8	29.5	35.3
Monthly Average – April	Apr-03	69.1	25.4	43.7
Monthly Average – March	Mar-03	62	31.9	30.1
Monthly Average – February	Feb-03	58.2	35.8	22.4
Monthly Average – January	Jan-03	58.5	35.6	22.9
Monthly Average – December	Dec-02	62.5	31.6	30.9
Monthly Average – November	Nov-02	64.3	29.6	34.7
Monthly Average – October	Oct-02	63.2	31.1	32.1
Monthly Average – September	Sep-02	66.5	28.1	38.4
Monthly Average – August	Aug-02	64.9	29.1	35.8
Monthly Average – July	Jul-02	68.3	25.6	42.7
Monthly Average – June	Jun-02	71.5	21.3	50.2
Monthly Average – May	May-02	73.7	20.2	53.5
Monthly Average – April	Apr-02	75.4	18.7	56.7
Monthly Average – March	Mar-02	76.6	18	58.6
Monthly Average – February	Feb-02	77.9	15.5	62.4
Monthly Average – January	Jan-02	81.1	14	67.1
Monthly Average – Dec.	Dec-01	83.3	11.5	71.8
Monthly Average – Nov.	Nov-01	85.5	9.2	76.3
Monthly Average – Oct.	Oct-01	87.7	8.3	79.4
Monthly Average – Sept.	Sep-01	84.7	9.2	75.5

Key: # - Adults, * - Registered Voters, ^ - Likely Voters, ~ - Nov. 2 Voters

BUSH JOB APPROVAL – PRE 9/11/01				
		Approve	Disapprove	App – Disapp
Monthly Average – Sept.	9/01	53.3	40.0	+13.3
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	9/10/01	51	39	+12
ABC News/Wash Post#	9/9/01	55	41	+14
Democracy Corps^	9/6/01	54	40	+14
Monthly Average – August	8/01	54.8	34.7	+20.1
CBS News#	8/31/01	50	38	+12
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	8/26/01	55	36	+19
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	8/19/01	57	34	+23
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	8/12/01	57	35	+22
Bloomberg#	8/5/01	55	30	+25
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	8/5/01	55	35	+20
Monthly Average – July	7/01	54.8	34.8	+20.0
ABC News/Wash Post#	7/30/01	59	38	+21
Harris#	7/25/01	56	39	+17
Gallup#	7/22/01	56	33	+23
Time/CNN#	7/18/01	55	35	+20
Pew#	7/12/01	52	27	+25
American Research Group#	7/12/01	51	37	+14
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	7/11/01	57	35	+22
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	7/1/01	52	34	+18
Monthly Average – June	6/01	53.3	35.8	+17.5
NBC News/WSJ	6/25/01	50	35	+15
Harris#	6/18/01	50	46	+4
CBS/NYTimes#	6/18/01	53	34	+19
Pew#	6/17/01	50	33	+17
Gallup#	6/17/01	55	33	+22
Democracy Corps^	6/13/01	58	35	+23
CNN/USA Today/Gallup#	6/10/01	55	35	+20
ABC News/Wash Post#	6/3/01	55	40	+15
Bloomberg#	6/3/01	54	31	+23
Monthly Average – May	5/01	54.8	32.9	+21.9
Monthly Average – April	4/01	57.9	31.3	+26.6
Monthly Average – March	3/01	57.1	25.9	+31.2
Monthly Average – Feb.	2/01	55.2	22.9	+32.3

Key: # - Adults, * - Registered Voters, ^ - Likely Voters

COUNTRY DIRECTION					
Poll	Direction/Satisfied	Date	Right	Wrong	Right-Wrong
Monthly Average - October 2005		Oct-05	30.3	62.8	-32.5
Gallup#	S	10/16/2005	31	68	-37
Democracy Corps#	D	10/10/2005	34	58	-24
NBC News/Wall Street Journal#	D	10/10/2005	28	59	-31
AP/Ipsos#	D	10/5/2005	28	66	-38
Monthly Average - September 2005		Sep-05	33.5	61.5	-28.0
Newsweek#	S	9/30/2005	31	61	-30
Gallup#	S	9/28/2005	39	59	-20
Democracy Corps#	D	9/26/2005	36	57	-21
Democracy Corps#	D	9/21/2005	33	61	-28
Gallup#	S	9/15/2005	34	62	-28
NBC News/Wall Street Journal#	D	9/12/2005	32	57	-25
Newsweek#	S	9/9/2005	28	66	-38
AP/Ipsos#	D	9/8/2005	32	65	-33
Democracy Corps#	D	9/7/2005	34	59	-25
Monthly Average - August 2005		Aug-05	36.7	57.7	-21.0
Gallup#	S	8/11/2005	37	60	-23
Newsweek#	S	8/4/2005	36	54	-18
AP/Ipsos#	D	8/3/2005	37	59	-22
Monthly Average - July 2005		Jul-05	37.8	56.4	-18.6
Monthly Average - June 2005		Jun-05	35.0	55.5	-20.5
Monthly Average - May 2005		May-05	36.1	55.4	-19.3
Monthly Average - April 2005		Apr-05	36.9	54.6	-17.7
Monthly Average - March 2005	D	Mar-05	40.3	55.5	-15.3
Monthly Average - February 2005		Feb-05	41.2	51.8	-10.7
Monthly Average - January 2005		Jan-05	42.0	51.0	-9
Monthly Average - December 2004		Dec-04	42.5	49.5	-7
Monthly Average - November 2004		Nov-04	44.5	50.5	-6
Monthly Average - October 2004		Oct-04	40.9	53.6	-12.7
Monthly Average - September 2004		Sep-04	42.4	51.7	-9.3
Monthly Average - September 2004		Sep-04	42.4	51.7	-9.3
Monthly Average - August 2004		Aug-04	40.0	53.4	-13.4

Monthly Average - July 2004	Jul-04	39.1	54.3	-15.2
Monthly Average - June 2004	Jun-04	38.6	54.4	-15.8
Monthly Average - May 2004	May-04	34.6	58.6	-24
Monthly Average - April 2004	Apr-04	38.8	56.8	-18
Monthly Average - March 2004	Mar-04	39.0	54.8	-15.8
Monthly Average - February 2004	Feb-04	42.0	53.5	-11.5
Monthly Average - January 2004	Jan-04	46.9	47.2	-0.3
Monthly Average - December 2003	Dec-03	46.0	45.9	0.1
Monthly Average - November 2003	Nov-03	40.7	52.0	-11.3
Monthly Average - October 2003	Oct-03	40.3	53.4	-13.1
Monthly Average - September 2003	Sep-03	38.2	54.8	-16.6
Monthly Average - August 2003	Aug-03	40.8	52.8	-12
Monthly Average - July 2003	Jul-03	43.5	49.3	-5.8
Monthly Average - June 2003	Jun-03	47.2	46.0	1.2
Monthly Average - May 2003	May-03	51.0	42.2	8.8
Monthly Average - April 2003	Apr-03	56.5	35.0	21.5
Monthly Average - March 2003	Mar-03	46.6	46.6	0
Monthly Average - February 2003	Feb-03	40.0	52.8	-12.8
Monthly Average - January 2003	Jan-03	38.6	52.0	-13.4
Monthly Average - December 2002	Dec-02	43.4	48.2	-4.8
Monthly Average - November 2002	Nov-02	46.8	46.5	0.3
Monthly Average - October 2002	Oct-02	42.8	48.3	-5.5
Monthly Average - September 2002	Sep-02	46.2	45.3	0.8
Monthly Average - August 2002	Aug-02	46.0	47.0	-1
Monthly Average - July 2002	Jul-02	46.2	48.3	-2.2
Monthly Average - June 2002	Jun-02	49.6	39.0	10.6
Monthly Average - May 2002	May-02	52.0	40.2	11.8
Monthly Average - April 2002	Apr-02	55.5	34.3	21.3
Monthly Average - March 2002	Mar-02	56.0	36.3	19.8
Monthly Average - February 2002	Feb-02	63.0	31.5	31.5
Monthly Average - January 2002	Jan-02	63.5	28.0	35.5
Monthly Average - December 2001	Dec-01	67.7	22.7	45
Monthly Average - November 2001	Nov-01	63.7	27.3	36.3
Monthly Average - October 2001	Oct-01	67.0	29.0	38
Average - September 11-30, 2001	9/11-30/2001	59.3	32.7	26.7
Average - January 1-September 10, 2001	1/1-9/11/2001	48.1	43.2	5
Yearly Average - 2000	2000	53	37	16.5
Yearly Average - 1999	1999	52	39	12.5
Yearly Average - 1998	1998	54	38	15.4
Yearly Average - 1997	1997	46	46	0.2

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

All in all, do you think that things in the nation are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that things are off on the wrong track:	
Headed in the right direction	28%
Off on the wrong track	59

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today:	
Satisfied	29%
Dissatisfied	65

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

In general, are you satisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time?	
Satisfied	31%
Dissatisfied	68

Priorities

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

Let me list some issues that have been proposed for the federal government to address. Please tell me which one of these items you think should be the top priority for the federal government.	
Job creation and economic growth	21%
The war in Iraq	14
Rebuilding the areas hit by Hurricane Katrina	13
The budget deficit	11
The cost and the supply of energy	10
Terrorism	10
Social Security	9
Illegal immigration	8

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?	
<i>Economic problems (NET)</i>	36%
Economy in general	15
Fuel/Oil prices	7
Unemployment/Jobs	5
Federal budget deficit/Federal debt	3
Gap between rich and poor	2
<i>Non-economic problems (NET)</i>	70
Situation in Iraq	21
Dissatisfaction with government	9
Natural disaster relief effort and funding	6
Ethical/Moral decline	5
Terrorism	5
Foreign aid/Focus overseas	4
Lack of energy sources/Energy crisis	4
Poor health care/High cost of health care	4
Poverty/Hunger/Homelessness	4
Education/Poor education	3
Immigration/Illegal aliens	2
National security	2

Economy / Personal finances

ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index – 10/16

Today	-17	
Last week	-19	
Four weeks ago	-23	2005 low
2005 high	-7	March 6, 2005
2005 average	-13	
2004 average	-11	
2003 average	-19	
2002 average	-11	
2001 average	+4	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Record high	+38	Jan. 16, 2000
Record low	-50	Feb. 9, 1992
Average since 12/85	-9	

ABC News/Washington Post – 10/16/05

Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor?	
Excellent	3%
Good	30
Not good	42
Poor	25

Would you describe the state of your own personal finances these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor?	
Excellent	7%
Good	51
Not good	28
Poor	14

Considering the cost of things today and your own personal finances, would you say now is an excellent time, a good time, a not so good time or a poor time to buy the things you want and need?	
Excellent	3%
Good	30
Not good	41
Poor	26

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

How would you rate economic conditions in this country today?	
Excellent	3%
Good	25
Only fair	46
Poor	26

Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?	
Getting better	24%
Getting worse	68
Same (vol.)	6

Thinking about the job situation in America today, would you say that it is now a good time or a bad time to find a quality job?	
Good time	35%
Bad time	62

RATINGS OF BUSH

Bush Job

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

In general, do you approve or disapprove of the job that George W. Bush is doing as president:	
Approve	39%
Disapprove	54

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president:	
Approve	38%
Disapprove	56

(Asked of half-sample) All in all, what effect has George W. Bush had on politics and the way government works in Washington? Has he made things better, made things worse, or hasn't he had much of an effect:	
Made better	21%
Made worse	41
Not much of an effect	32

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

Do you approve of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?	
Approve	39%
Disapprove	58

Bush Job – Issues

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

(Asked of half-sample) Have George W. Bush's policies and decisions made... better, worse, or neither better nor worse? (rotated)

America's economy:	
Better	19%
Worse	57
Neither better nor worse	20
The federal budget deficit:	
Better	6%
Worse	66
Neither better nor worse	21
Public education:	
Better	24%
Worse	32
Neither better nor worse	37
Health care in America:	
Better	16%
Worse	43
Neither better nor worse	36
The tax system:	
Better	22%
Worse	40
Neither better nor worse	31
The Social Security system:	
Better	12%
Worse	40
Neither better nor worse	39
America's national security:	
Better	47%
Worse	30
Neither better nor worse	21

America's relations with its allies:	
Better	22%
Worse	47
Neither better nor worse	26
Race relations:	
Better	16%
Worse	29
Neither better nor worse	48
The gap between rich and poor:	
Better	8%
Worse	57
Neither better nor worse	31
Morality in America:	
Better	25%
Worse	35
Neither better nor worse	36

Bush Priorities

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

When it comes to appointing people to positions in the government, which of the following things do you think President Bush puts greater emphasis on:	
Personal friendships/Partisan loyalty	54%
Competence/Qualifications to do the job	37

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

(Asked of half-sample) When it comes to national policy, who do you think George W. Bush is listening to more? (rotated)	
Conservative members of his party	57%
Moderate members of his party	27

Compared to other presidents, do you think that President Bush offers important jobs to his friends and political allies more often, less often, or about as often as other presidents:

More often	41%
Less often	9
About as often	44

Bush Favorability

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

George W. Bush:

Very positive	21%
Somewhat positive	20
Neutral	11
Somewhat negative	17
Very negative	31

Bush Traits

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

(Asked of half-sample) As I read some pairs of opposite phrases, tell me which one best reflects your impression of George W. Bush so far. (rotated)

Trustworthy	49%
Not trustworthy	46

Able to get things done	51%
Not able to get things done	43

Liberal	9%
Middle of the road	27
Conservative	55

Cares about people like me	45%
Doesn't care about people like me	51

Strong leader	51%
Not a strong leader	46

Bush Legacy

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

In the long run, do you think George W. Bush will be a successful or unsuccessful president, or do you think it is too early to tell:	
Successful	26%
Unsuccessful	41
Too early to tell	30

Looking ahead to the next presidential election, would you like to see a president who offers policies and programs similar to those of the Bush administration, or would you like to see a president who offers different policies and programs:	
Policies and programs similar to the Bush administration	25%
Different policies and programs	69

FOREIGN POLICY/WAR ON TERRORISM

Iraq

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

When it comes to the war in Iraq, do you think that removing Saddam Hussein from power was or was not worth the number of U.S. military casualties and the financial cost of the war:	
Worth it	40%
Not worth it	51

Do you think that the United States should maintain its current troop level in Iraq to help secure peace and stability, or should the United States reduce its number of troops once new elections have been held:	
Maintain current troop level	34%
Reduce number of troops	58

And do you feel more confident or less confident that the war in Iraq will come to a successful conclusion:	
More confident	35%
Less confident	56

I'm going to read you several issues. For each one, please tell me whether you think that the worst is still ahead, that we are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go, that we are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near, or that we have turned the corner and better times are here.

The war in Iraq:	
The worst is still ahead	40%
We are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go	45
We are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near	8
We have turned the corner and better times are here	5

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against Iraq:	
Right decision	44%
Wrong decision	50

How well is the U.S. military effort in Iraq going:	
Very well	9%
Fairly well	35
Not too well	31
Not at all well	22

Do you think the U.S. should keep military troops in Iraq until the situation has stabilized, or do you think the U.S. should bring its troops home as soon as possible:	
Keep troops in Iraq	47%
Bring troops home	48

Do you think more troops are needed in Iraq right now, or do you think there are already enough troops there to do the job:	
More troops needed	13%
Have enough there to do the job	26
Reduce number of troops (vol.)	0

In the long run, do you think the war in Iraq has increased the chances of terrorist attacks in the U.S., lessened the chances or has it made no difference:	
Increased	41%
Lessened	25
No difference	32

(Asked of half-sample) Which concerns you more? (rotated)	
That the U.S. will leave Iraq before a stable democracy is in place	32%
That the U.S. will wait too long to withdraw its troops from Iraq	55

How much longer do you think United States troops will have to remain in Iraq:	
Less than a year	12%
1-2 years	24
2-5 years	31
Longer than five years	26

Do you think the U.S. should or should not set a timetable for when troops will be withdrawn from Iraq:	
Should set a timetable	52%
Should not set a timetable	43
Should get out now (vol.)	1

On October 15th, Iraq is scheduled to have a nationwide vote on the country's proposed constitution. How much have you heard about this:

A lot	21%
A little	50
Nothing at all	28

If the proposed constitution is approved in Iraq, do you think it will lead to a more stable situation, a less stable situation or will the situation in Iraq not change much:

More stable	29%
Less stable	10
Situation will not change much	51

DOMESTIC ISSUES

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

I'm going to read you several issues. For each one, please tell me whether you think that the worst is still ahead, that we are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go, that we are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near, or that we have turned the corner and better times are here.

The economy:	
The worst is still ahead	40%
We are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go	37
We are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near	10
We have turned the corner and better times are here	9

The effects of Hurricane Katrina:	
The worst is still ahead	21%
We are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go	57
We are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near	13
We have turned the corner and better times are here	7

Economic Policy / Tax Cuts

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

Please tell me which of the following statements comes closer to your point of view when it comes to tax cuts: Statement A: Federal tax cuts have been worth it, because they have helped strengthen the economy by allowing Americans to keep more of their own money. Statement B: Federal tax cuts have not been worth it, because they have increased the deficit and caused cuts in government programs.	
Statement A	39%
Statement B	53

Gas Prices

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

I'm going to read you several issues. For each one, please tell me whether you think that the worst is still ahead, that we are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go, that we are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near, or that we have turned the corner and better times are here.

(Asked of half-sample) Energy and fuel prices:	
The worst is still ahead	69%
We are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go	22
We are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near	3
We have turned the corner and better times are here	2

(Asked of half-sample) Gas prices:	
The worst is still ahead	61%
We are slowly putting the worst behind us with a long way to go	30
We are quickly putting the worst behind us and better times are near	6
We have turned the corner and better times are here	1

Supreme Court

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

As you may know, President Bush recently nominated Harriet Miers to serve as a justice on the Supreme Court. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose Harriet Miers' serving as a justice on the Supreme Court, or do you not know enough about her to say:	
Strongly support	11%
Somewhat support	16
Somewhat oppose	10
Strongly oppose	11
Do not know enough to say	51

Based on what you have heard so far, do you think that Harriet Miers is qualified or not qualified to be a Supreme Court justice, or do you not know enough about her to say:	
Qualified	29%
Not qualified	24
Do not know enough to say	46

Harriet Miers:	
Very positive	5%
Somewhat positive	13
Neutral	28
Somewhat negative	7
Very negative	4

I'm going to read you several things about Harriet Miers. For each one, please tell me whether this makes you feel more positive about Harriet Miers sitting on the Supreme Court, less positive, or does it make no difference to you either way:

She was the first woman to be president of the Texas Bar Association:	
More positive	47%
Less positive	10
No difference either way	42
She has been named one of America's one hundred most powerful lawyers:	
More positive	45%
Less positive	14
No difference either way	39
She has worked for President Bush as his personal lawyer for many years, previously while he was governor of Texas, and most recently as White House counsel:	
More positive	24%
Less positive	40
No difference either way	35
She has not previously served as a judge:	
More positive	8%
Less positive	50
No difference either way	40
Her positions on many legal issues facing the court are unknown:	
More positive	8%
Less positive	52
No difference either way	37

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

From what you've seen and heard so far. Do you think the Senate should or should not confirm Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court:

Should	33%
Should not	27

Do you worry that Harriet Miers would make the Supreme Court too conservative, not conservative enough, or don't you worry about this:

Too conservative	18%
Not conservative enough	8
Don't worry about this	56

Do you worry that Chief Justice John Roberts will make the Supreme Court too conservative, not conservative enough, or don't you worry about this:

Too conservative	20%
Not conservative enough	9
Don't worry about this	60

Does the fact that Harriet Miers... make you feel more favorably toward her, less favorably, or does this not affect your opinion at all? How about the fact that she...?

Is a woman:

More favorably	22%
Less favorably	3
No effect	72

Once served as George W. Bush's personal attorney:

More favorably	10%
Less favorably	35
No effect	52

Has never before served as a judge:

More favorably	10%
Less favorably	38
No effect	49

Had a long career in a major law firm:

More favorably	29%
Less favorably	11
No effect	56

Is an evangelical Christian:	
More favorably	20%
Less favorably	14
No effect	61

When senators ask Supreme Court nominees questions about issues like abortion that may come before the court, do you think... or do you think...:	
Nominees should be required to answer those questions	55%
Nominees should be allowed to not comment on those questions	39

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

U.S. Supreme Court nominee, Harriet Miers:	
Favorable	31%
Unfavorable	26
Never heard of	17
No opinion	26

(Asked of half-sample A) As you may know, Harriet Miers is the person nominated to serve on the Supreme Court. Would you like to see the Senate vote in favor of Miers serving on the Supreme Court, or not?	
Yes, vote in favor	44%
No, would not	36
No opinion	20

(Asked of half-sample B) Would you like to see President Bush continue to support his nomination of Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court or withdraw his nomination of Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court?	
Continue to support	46%
Withdraw nomination	36
No opinion	18

The Plame Investigation

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

Presidential adviser, Karl Rove:	
Favorable	22%
Unfavorable	39
Never heard of	23
No opinion	16

CONGRESS & OTHER POLITICAL FIGURES

2006 Congressional Elections

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

(Asked of registered voters) What is your preference for the outcome of the 2006 congressional elections -- a Congress controlled by Republicans or a Congress controlled by Democrats:	
Republican-controlled Congress	39%
Democrat-controlled Congress	48

Congress – Job Approval

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing:	
Approve	32%
Disapprove	52

Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing:	
Approve	32%
Disapprove	48

CNN /USA Today/Gallup – 10/16/05

Do you approve of the way Congress is handling its job?	
Approve	29%
Disapprove	64

Frist, DeLay, and The Culture of Corruption

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

Recently, a series of charges have been raised against public officials. For each one I mention, please tell me whether this is nothing more than the usual kind of partisan political charge that has little merit, or whether you think this charge indicates potential illegal activity.

Congressman Tom DeLay being indicted for illegal use of corporate contributions to political campaigns:	
Usual political charge/Has little merit	24%
Indicates potential illegal activity	65
Senator Bill Frist's sale of stock in a company his family runs just before the value of the stock declined:	
Usual political charge/Has little merit	28%
Indicates potential illegal activity	57

Tom DeLay:	
Very positive	3%
Somewhat positive	8
Neutral	22
Somewhat negative	13
Very negative	23

Democrats vs. Republicans

NBC News/Wall Street Journal – 10/10/05

The Democratic Party:	
Very positive	10%
Somewhat positive	24
Neutral	32
Somewhat negative	19
Very negative	13

The Republican Party:	
Very positive	13%
Somewhat positive	23
Neutral	23
Somewhat negative	20
Very negative	19

Pew Research Center – 10/10/05

Please tell me if you think each phrase I read better describes the Republican Party and its leaders or the Democratic Party and its leaders. First, which party do you think is better described by the phrase...? (rotated)

Able to manage the federal government well:	
Republican Party	35%
Democratic Party	41
Governs in an honest and ethical way;	
Republican Party	30%
Democratic Party	40
Can bring about the kind of changes the country needs:	
Republican Party	32%
Democratic Party	48
Is concerned with the needs of people like me:	
Republican Party	30%
Democratic Party	52
Is concerned with the needs and interest of the disadvantaged:	
Republican Party	22%
Democratic Party	61
(Asked of half-sample) Is concerned with the needs and interests of business and other powerful groups:	
Republican Party	59%
Democratic Party	22
(Asked of half-sample) Is concerned with the needs and interests of business:	
Republican Party	61%
Democratic Party	23