

RACE RELATIONS AND THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE

July 7 - 14, 2008

Barack Obama's impending nomination as the Democratic nominee for President and the first African-American to win a major party's nod has not done much to change African-Americans' broader outlook about opportunity in the U.S. Although not upbeat about the state of race relations in the U.S. today, African Americans are fairly optimistic about improved relations if Obama wins in November. But they do not expect any favoritism from an Obama Presidency.

Most blacks still believe the chances for blacks to get ahead are lower than they are for whites. Meanwhile, most whites continue to see opportunity as equally distributed - no different from what they thought eight years ago.

WHO HAS A BETTER CHANCE OF GETTING AHEAD IN SOCIETY?

	White		Black	
	Now	2/2000	Now	2/2000
Whites' chances better	35%	29%	64%	57%
Blacks' chances better	7	7	1	0
Both chances equal	53	62	30	28

African Americans are also more downbeat about the state of race relations in the U.S. than they were in March, and are about where they were eight years ago. Whites say relations are good - even more than in 2000.

STATE OF RACE RELATIONS IN THE U.S.

	Now	White		Black		
		3/08	2/00	Now	3/08	2/00
Good	55%	57%	56%	29%	42%	31%
Bad	34	34	34	59	46	57
Not sure	11	9	10	12	12	12

In March, shortly after Obama's well-received speech on race in the U.S., African-Americans were more positive about the state of race relations. But that was before Rev. Jeremiah Wright's National Press Club speech and Obama's resignation from Wright's church. In addition, Obama had some difficulties winning over white voters in some later primaries.

CBS News and The New York Times interviewed 297 African-Americans in this poll. Final results were weighted in proportion to the racial composition of the adult population in the U.S. Census.

Views on the status of race relations differ with partisanship: 46% of white Democrats say relations are good, but 64% of white Republicans do. White Democrats are more likely to say U.S. society gives whites an advantage in getting ahead - despite the fact that their party is about to put forward an African American Presidential nominee. Most white Republicans have an optimistic view on equality (yet they also are unfavorable toward Obama).

**AMONG WHITES:
WHO HAS A BETTER CHANCE OF GETTING AHEAD IN SOCIETY?**

	<u>Dems</u>	<u>Reps</u>	<u>Inds</u>
Whites' chances better	49%	26%	32%
Blacks' chances better	9	6	9
Both chances equal	42	63	54

"Working-class" whites - those earning less than \$50,000 per year and without college a education- tend to see equality of opportunity. Wealthier whites tend to feel whites have an advantage.

Whites and blacks, Democrats and Republicans all agree that there has been progress since the 1960s toward ending discrimination. Eight in ten whites and six in ten blacks think so.

In assessing the overall racial makeup of the country, many Americans - including most whites and blacks - overestimate the size of the African American population. Four in ten estimate that African Americans comprise more than 30% of the country, when in fact the correct figure is around half that amount, or 13%.

LOOKING AHEAD: THE NEXT PRESIDENT AND RACE RELATIONS

Overall, whites and blacks agree America is ready for a black president.

IS AMERICA READY FOR A BLACK PRESIDENT?

(Among registered voters)

	Whites	Blacks
Yes	69%	64%
No	25	28

Majorities of voters think both McCain's and Obama's policies would treat whites and blacks equally.

WILL THE CANDIDATE'S POLICIES...

(Among registered voters)

	Obama	McCain
Treat whites & blacks equally	81%	77%
Favor whites over blacks	1	16
Favor blacks over whites	13	1

Black voters (who overwhelmingly back Obama) do not anticipate any favoritism from a President Obama - only 4% of black voters think Obama would favor blacks over whites. They do anticipate equal treatment.

White voters, on the other hand, are a little more likely to suspect Obama would favor blacks. White voters backing McCain are especially likely to think so - 23% of them do.

WOULD OBAMA'S POLICIES...

(Among registered voters)

	White voters	Black voters
Treat whites & blacks equally	79%	90%
Favor whites over blacks	1	3
Favor blacks over whites	16	4

Meanwhile, 39% of black voters think McCain's policies will favor whites.

Asked whether they favor specific policies to help minorities get ahead, blacks are strongly in favor - 80% do - while whites are more divided, with 44% in favor. Among whites, there are partisan differences: 57% of white Democrats favor such policies, while 57% of white Republicans are opposed.

However, large majorities of both whites (82%) and blacks (93%) favor policies to help economically disadvantaged people, regardless of race.

On race relations overall, 31% of voters say if Obama is elected president race relations in this country will improve. Just 3% say that about a potential McCain presidency.

IF ... IS ELECTED, WILL RACE RELATIONS...

(Among registered voters)

	Obama	McCain
Get better	31%	3%
Get worse	17	10
Stay the same	49	84

Nearly half of black voters - 47% - expect improvement in race relations if Obama is elected. Fewer white voters - 29% - are optimistic about it. However, a majority of whites who are voting for Obama foresee improvement.

AN OBAMA PRESIDENCY: RACE RELATIONS WOULD...

(Among registered voters)

	White voters	Black voters
Get better	29%	47%
Get worse	19	7
Stay the same	48	42

DISCUSSING RACE AND AMERICANS' COMMUNITIES

In their current assessments, both white and black Americans are much more positive about the state of race relations in their own communities than in the nation as a whole. (On many subjects, Americans often assess their own locales more positively than the nation as a whole.)

STATE OF RACE RELATIONS IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

	All	White	Black
Good	77%	79%	58%
Bad	20	18	37

However, many Americans report living in communities that are not racially mixed. 83% of whites say there are only a few, or no, African Americans who live nearby. Meanwhile 67% of African Americans report living in areas where half or more of the residents are also African American.

81% of working whites also report that none, or just a few, of the people they work with are African American.

Many Americans suspect race is a difficult subject for Americans to talk about. 47% of whites and 56% of blacks say they think most people feel uncomfortable discussing race with people of other races.

Blacks are more likely than whites to feel that the problems facing the black community are not discussed enough. 49% of whites feel that the right amount of attention has been given to the issues facing black people in recent years; 48% of blacks think there has been too little. These views are not different from eight years ago.

ATTENTION TO PROBLEMS FACING AFRICAN AMERICANS HAS BEEN...

	All	White	Black
Too much	23%	27%	7%
Too little	20	16	48
About right	48	49	37

Many African Americans also report feeling racial discrimination, and to a much larger extent than whites report this. 68% of African Americans say they have had a specific instance of discrimination; only 26% of whites say this. This reporting rate is essentially unchanged from eight years ago.

AFRICAN AMERICANS: HAVE YOU EVER FELT DISCRIMINATION?

	Now	2/2000
Yes	68%	66%
No	32	33

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1796 adults nationwide interviewed by telephone July 7-14, 2008. Oversamples of African Americans and Hispanics were interviewed, for a total of 297 interviews with African Americans and 246 interviews with Hispanics. Respondents could be interviewed in either English or Spanish, and the poll included a sample of cell phones. The results then weighted in proportion to the racial composition of the adult population in the U.S. Census. The error due to sampling could be plus or minus three percentage points based on the entire sample. The sampling errors could be plus or minus six percentage points for the African American and Hispanic samples.

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
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q1-q30 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q31 If Barack Obama is elected President, do you think race relations in the United States will get better, get worse, or stay about the same?

	* REGISTERED VOTERS *			
	** Race **			
	Total	White	Black	Mar08c
	%	%	%	%
Better	31	29	47	34
Worse	17	19	7	21
Same	49	48	42	42
DK/NA	3	4	4	3

q32-q39 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q40 If John McCain is elected President, do you think race relations in the United States will get better, get worse, or stay about the same?

Better	3	4	1	4
Worse	10	9	18	11
Same	84	85	77	82
DK/NA	3	2	4	3

q41-q49 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q50-q51 BLANK

q52 Do you think race relations in the United States are generally good or generally bad?

	* TOTAL RESPONDENTS *			
Good	53	55	29	55
Bad	37	34	59	36
Don't know/No answer	10	11	12	9

q53 Do you think race relations in your community are generally good or generally bad?

Good	77	79	58	77
Bad	20	18	37	18
Don't know/No answer	3	3	5	5

q54 In general, who do you think has a better chance of getting ahead in today's society -- white people, black people, or do white people and black people have about an equal chance of getting ahead?

White people	39	35	64	33
Black people	6	7	1	5
Equal	51	53	30	59
DK/NA	4	5	5	3

q55 In order to make up for past discrimination, do you favor or oppose programs which make special efforts to help minorities get ahead?

* REGISTERED VOTERS *

** Race **

	Total	White	Black	Jul03b
	%	%	%	%
Favor	51	44	80	53
Oppose	42	48	13	40
DK/NA	7	8	7	7

q56 Do you favor or oppose programs that make special efforts to help people get ahead who come from low-income backgrounds, regardless of their gender or ethnicity?

				Mar05a*
Favor	83	82	93	84
Oppose	13	14	4	10
DK/NA	4	4	3	6

*New York Times trend

q57 Some people say that since the 1960s there has been a lot of real progress in getting rid of racial discrimination against blacks. Others say that there hasn't been much real progress for blacks over that time. Which do you agree with more? Would you say there's been a lot of real progress getting rid of racial discrimination or hasn't there been much real progress?

				Feb00a
Progress	76	79	59	71
No real progress	20	17	39	26
DK/NA	4	4	2	3

q58 What about for other minority groups? Would you say there's been a lot of real progress getting rid of discrimination or hasn't there been much real progress?

				Jun00b*
Progress	56	58	47	57
No real progress	36	34	47	33
DK/NA	8	8	6	10

*New York Times trend

q59 How comfortable do you think most people feel when they do have a conversation ABOUT race with someone of another race -- very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, somewhat uncomfortable, or very uncomfortable?

Very comfortable	9	9	11	8*
Somewhat comfortable	37	38	30	30
Somewhat uncomfortable	39	40	42	44
Very uncomfortable	9	7	14	11
DK/NA	6	6	3	7

*New York Times trend

q60 About how many of the people who live in the immediate area around your home are black -- none, a few, about half, or almost all?

None	16	18	3	23*
A few	59	65	29	54
About half	17	15	33	15
Almost all	6	2	34	7
DK/NA	2	0	1	1

*New York Times trend

q62 About how many of the people you work with are black -- none, a few, about half or almost all?

* FULL OR PART TIME WORKERS *

	** Race **			Jun00b*
	Total	White	Black	
	%	%	%	%
None	30	33	6	29
A few	47	48	42	51
About half	18	16	36	14
Almost all	4	3	16	5
DK/NA	1	0	0	1

*New York Times trend

q63 In recent years, do you think too much has been made of the problems facing black people, too little has been made, or is it about right?

	* TOTAL RESPONDENTS *			
Too Much	23	27	7	30*
Too little	20	16	48	22
Just right	48	49	37	42
DK/NA	9	8	8	6

*New York Times trend

q64 Have you ever felt you were stopped by the police just because of your race or ethnic background?

				Feb00a
Yes	13	7	43	10
No	86	93	57	89
DK/NA	1	0	0	1

q65 Was there ever a specific instance when you felt discriminated against because of your race?

Yes	34	26	68	66*
No	66	74	32	33
DK/NA	0	0	0	1

*Blacks

q69-q74 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q75-q76 BLANK

q77 Do you think most people you know would vote for a presidential candidate who is black, or not?

	* REGISTERED VOTERS *			May08b
Would	70	69	71	63
Would not	18	18	17	26
DK/NA	12	12	12	11

q78 Would you personally vote for a presidential candidate who is black, or not?

* REGISTERED VOTERS *

** Race **

	Total	White	Black	Jan08c
	%	%	%	%
Would	92	92	90	90
Would not	4	4	6	6
Don't know/No answer	4	4	4	4

q79 Do you think America is ready to elect a black president, or not?

				May08b
Yes	69	69	64	68
No	25	25	28	23
Don't know/No answer	6	6	8	9

q80 Just as your best guess, about what percentage of all Americans are black: less than 10%, between 10 and 20%, between 20 and 30%, between 30 and 50%, or more than 50%?

Less than 10%	1	1	4
10-20%	21	21	24
20-30%	32	33	26
30-50%	32	33	24
more than 50%	9	8	17
DK/NA	5	4	5

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	1796	
Total Registered voters	1534	1462
Total Blacks	297	207
Total Whites	1338	1392