



CBS NEWS POLL
 For Release: July 20, 2009
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THE MOON LANDING: 40 YEARS LATER

July 9-12, 2009

As the country marks the 40th anniversary of the first moon landing, most Americans think it was worth the time, effort and money that went into that endeavor. And looking ahead, Americans favor sending astronauts to tackle another frontier - Mars. Still, this poll finds a third say that since the moon landing, the accomplishments of the U.S. space program have fallen short of their expectations.

71% of Americans look back on the moon landing as a worthwhile effort, as they have in recent years. However, in 1979, just 10 years after men first walked on the moon, Americans were divided in their opinions. In 1979, the country was crippled by a gasoline shortage and a struggling economy, perhaps impacting views on the time and money spent on the moon landing.

WAS LANDING MEN ON THE MOON WORTH IT?

	Now	8/1999	6/1994	7/1979
Yes	71%	71%	66%	47%
No	24	24	31	49

When assessing the U.S. space program overall since 1969, more Americans say its' accomplishments have fallen short of their expectations (32%) rather than exceeded them (27%). Still, 36% say the space program has accomplished about what they expected.

Men are more likely than women to say the U.S. space program has accomplished less than they expected.

U.S. SPACE PROGRAM'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

More	27%
Less	32
About what you expected	36

While the U.S. has sent spacecraft such as rovers to Mars, humans have yet to set foot there. 51% of Americans favor the U.S. sending astronauts to Mars, but a sizeable number - 43% - are opposed to manned exploration of the Red Planet. Five years ago, the country was more divided on the subject, but in years prior to that, more than half of Americans supported sending astronauts to explore Mars.

SHOULD THE U.S. SEND ASTRONAUTS TO MARS?

	Now	1/2004	8/1999	6/1994
Yes	51%	48%	58%	55%
No	43	47	35	40

There are striking gender differences on this question, with 62% of men in favor of sending astronauts to Mars, compared to just 42% of women.

Also, Americans under age 45, who were less likely to have watched the moon landing on television in 1969, favor exploring Mars. Older Americans are opposed to the idea.

As the partisans in Washington argue about health care reform and the current Supreme Court nominee, at least half of Republicans (50%), Democrats (53%) and Independents (51%) in this poll agree that the U.S. is ready to send astronauts to Mars.

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 944 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone July 9-12, 2009. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher.

This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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The Moon Landing: 40 Years Later
July 9-12, 2009

q58 Forty years ago, the United States spent a great deal of time, effort, and money to land men on the moon. Looking back now, do you think that effort was worth it, or not?

	Total %	*** Gender ***		*** Age ***		Aug99a* %
		Men %	Women %	<45 %	45+ %	
Yes	71	72	70	76	66	71
No	24	24	23	20	28	24
DK/NA	5	4	7	4	6	5

*Thirty years ago...

q59 Since the moon landing forty years ago, do you think the U.S. space program has accomplished more than you expected, less than you expected, or about what you expected it to accomplish by now?

More	27	26	27	28	25
Less	32	37	27	30	33
About expected	36	31	41	36	36
DK/NA	5	6	5	6	6

q60 Would you favor or oppose the United States sending astronauts to explore Mars?

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Favor	51	62	42	59	43
Oppose	43	36	49	35	51
DK/NA	6	2	9	6	6

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	944	
Total Men	436	454
Total Women	508	490
Total Under Age 45	235	471
Total Age 45 and over	709	473