

ABCNews.com blog item for 5 p.m. 10/16/12

Election 2012: No Fun for the Middle

Memo to presidential candidates: For most people in the middle of American politics, the 2012 election is a turn-off.

It's a result worth knowing as the presidential candidates head into their second debate tonight: The contest overall is resonating more among partisan and ideological true-believers and less in the broad center of the political spectrum, where national elections can be won or lost.

The latest ABC News/Washington Post poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that 62 percent of independents see the presidential election unfavorably, as do 54 percent of self-identified political moderates and "somewhat" conservatives alike.

Just 28 percent of independents – who tend to be less engaged in politics than partisans – see the election favorably. And independents see the battle for the White House "strongly" negatively rather than strongly positively by a wide 3-1 margin.

Similarly, just 35 percent of moderates see the election favorably, as do 41 percent of "somewhat" conservatives.

The party faithful are more forgiving. Self-identified Democrats express a favorable rather than unfavorable opinion of the presidential race, by 59-38 percent; Republicans divide more closely, 50-43 percent, favorable-unfavorable. Ideologically, liberals and "very" conservatives alike see the election more favorably than unfavorably, dividing by 53-43 and 52-44 percent, respectively.

Add it up and Americans overall split essentially evenly, 45-47 percent in positive vs. negative views of the 2012 election. Results are virtually identical among registered voters.

One conclusion of the results is that Barack Obama and Mitt Romney would do well, tonight and beyond, to sharpen their appeals to the political center. Another is that, for those with a less partisan bent, the next three weeks may not be the most fun they've ever had.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone Oct. 10-14, 2012, among a random national sample of 1,029 adults. Results have a margin of sampling error of 3.5 points, including design effect. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS/Social Science Research Solutions of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gregory Holyk.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

1. Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of this year's presidential election? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/14/12	45	23	22	47	23	24	7

*** END ***