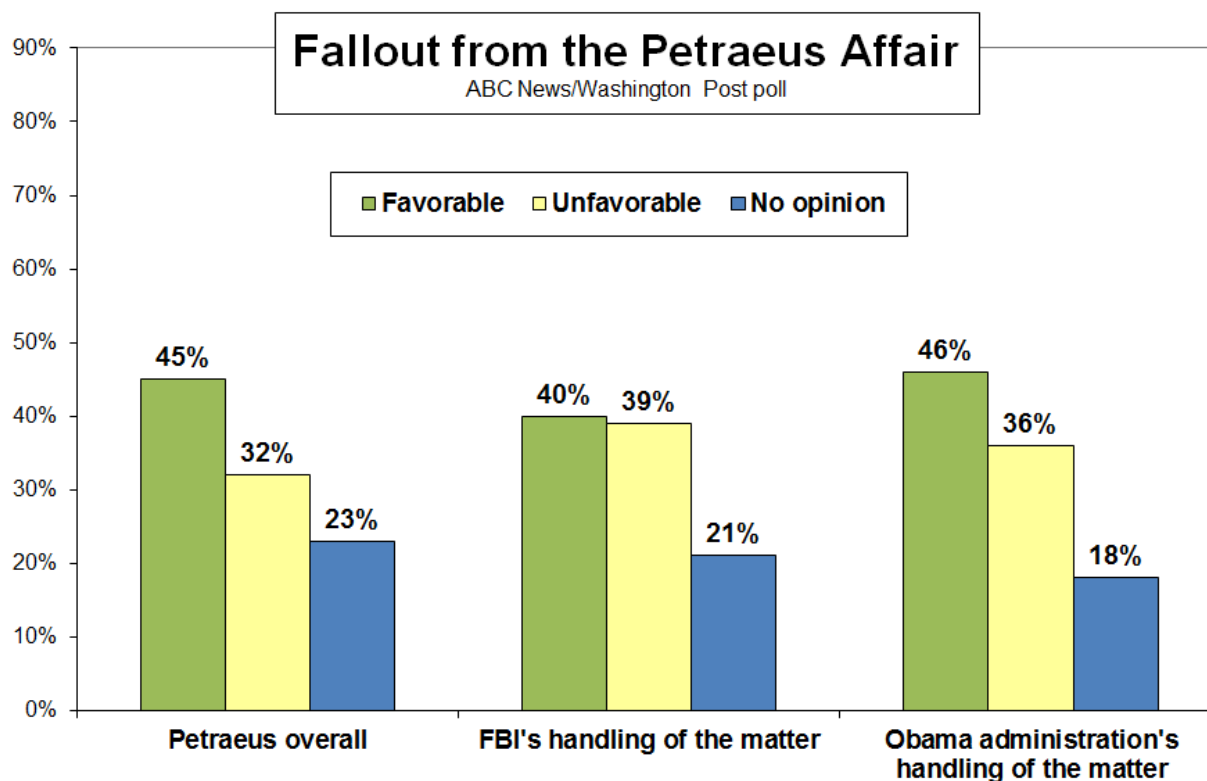


## **Petraeus' Image Takes a Hit; Split Views on the FBI's Approach**

David Petraeus' popularity has dropped since the scandal that's forced him from directorship of the CIA, but still more Americans see him favorably than unfavorably – a better rating than the FBI's for its handling of the investigation that unearthed his marital infidelity.

Forty-five percent in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll see Petraeus favorably overall, down 10 points from March 2011 and 16 points from his peak in September 2007, both in Gallup surveys. Thirty-two percent see him unfavorably, a new high.

Yet uncovering Petraeus' behavior – in an investigation that's prompted discussions about privacy in the digital age – hasn't won fans for the FBI. Americans divide evenly, 40-39 percent, on the agency's handling of the matter. The Obama administration, for its part, gets 46-36 percent favorable-unfavorable ratings – more positive than negative, but no great shakes, as might be expected on a subject that's given new life to the term “tawdry.”



This survey asked first about overall attitudes toward Petraeus, “who recently resigned as

director of the CIA,” then next asked about the FBI and Obama administration’s handling of the Petraeus matter. Details on the scandal weren’t provided.

While favorable views of Petraeus are well off their peak of 61 percent, the fact that he’s still seen more positively than negatively is a testament to the good will he built as commander of U.S. forces in Iraq during the surge in U.S. forces and his role in the recruitment of Sunni tribes that reduced the spiral of violence there in 2007. There’s also either a withholding of judgment, or a lack of familiarity: Twenty-three percent express no opinion of him personally.

Still, a major change has occurred in particular among Republicans. In mid-September 2007, as then-Gen. Petraeus testified before Congress on U.S. progress in Iraq, 83 percent of Republicans saw him favorably; he was mentioned as a potential presidential candidate for the party. Today his favorable rating among Republicans is 30 points lower.

In the same period, Petraeus has lost 15 points in popularity among independents, to 44 percent. His rating among Democrats, now 43 percent, is unchanged in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#).

Among other groups, favorable opinions of Petraeus are 12 to 15 points higher among men, better-off and more-educated adults, with their opposites, in each case, more likely to express no opinion. Among married women he’s rated 39-36 percent, favorable-unfavorable, presumably not counting his wife.

Ratings of the FBI’s reaction to the scandal are more closely related to partisanship. Democrats are more apt to rate the federal agency’s reaction positively than negatively, 48-31 percent, while Republicans are more negative than positive, 55-33 percent. Independents divide about evenly.

Assessments of the Obama administration’s reaction to the situation also are strongly influenced by ideological and partisan predispositions. Democrats, liberals and other groups that are better-disposed toward Obama – nonwhites, younger adults and those who are financially less well-off – see the administration’s reaction more positively, compared with their counterparts.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone Nov. 14-18, 2012, among a random national sample of 1,011 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points. 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. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of (ITEM)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

11/18/12 - Summary Table

	--- Favorable ---			-- Unfavorable --			No op.
	NET	Str	Smwht	NET	Smwht	Str	
a. former General David Petraeus, who recently resigned as director of the CIA	45	20	25	32	21	11	23
b. the FBI's handling of the Petraeus matter	40	13	27	39	22	18	21
c. the Obama administration's handling of the Petraeus matter	46	24	23	36	14	22	18

Trend:

a. former General David Petraeus, who recently resigned as director of the CIA

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
11/18/12	45	20	25	32	21	11	23

Compare to: (Next, we'd like to get your overall opinion of some people in the news. As I read each name, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of these people - or if you have never heard of them.) How about...General David Petraeus?

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Never heard of	No opinion
3/27/11*	55	11	22	12
7/11/10	56	9	24	10
9/16/07	61	22	7	11
9/8/07	52	17	14	17
8/5/07	47	21	16	16

\*3/27/11 and before: Gallup

b. the FBI's handling of the Petraeus matter

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
11/18/12	40	13	27	39	22	18	21

c. the Obama administration's handling of the Petraeus matter

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
11/18/12	46	24	23	36	14	22	18

\*\*\* END \*\*\*