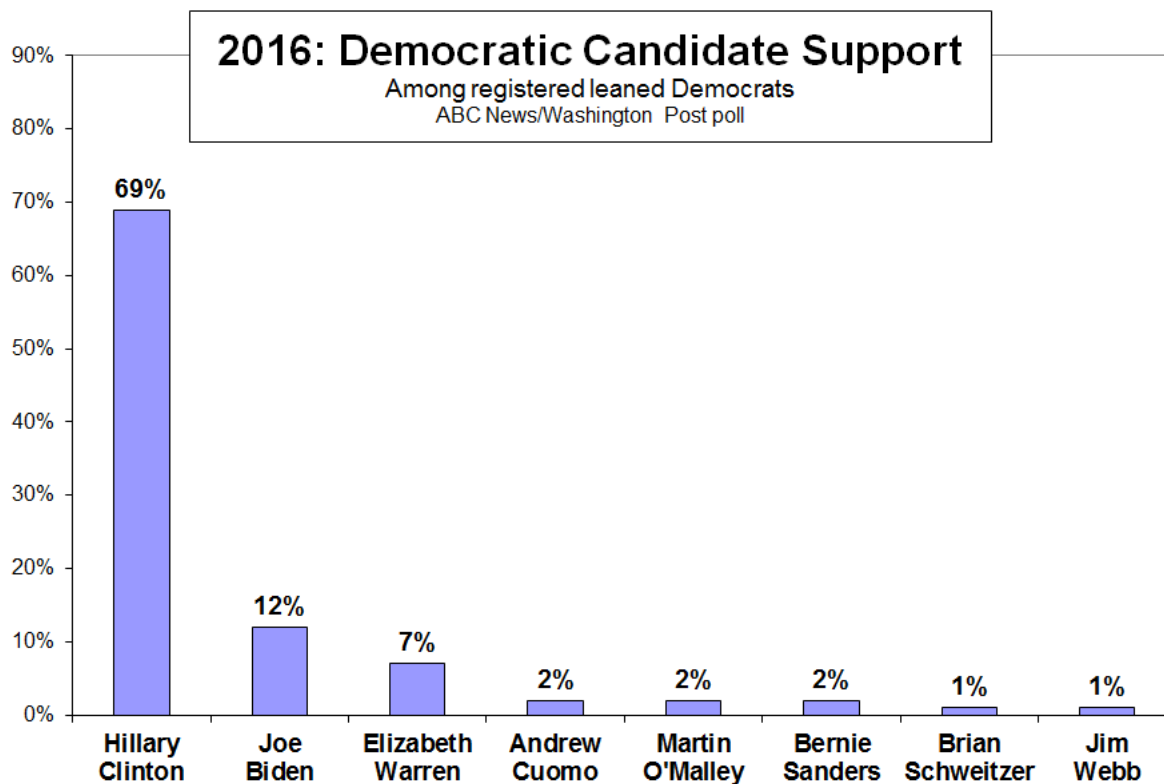


Clinton Shows Strengths for 2016 – Yet With Some Chinks in Her Armor

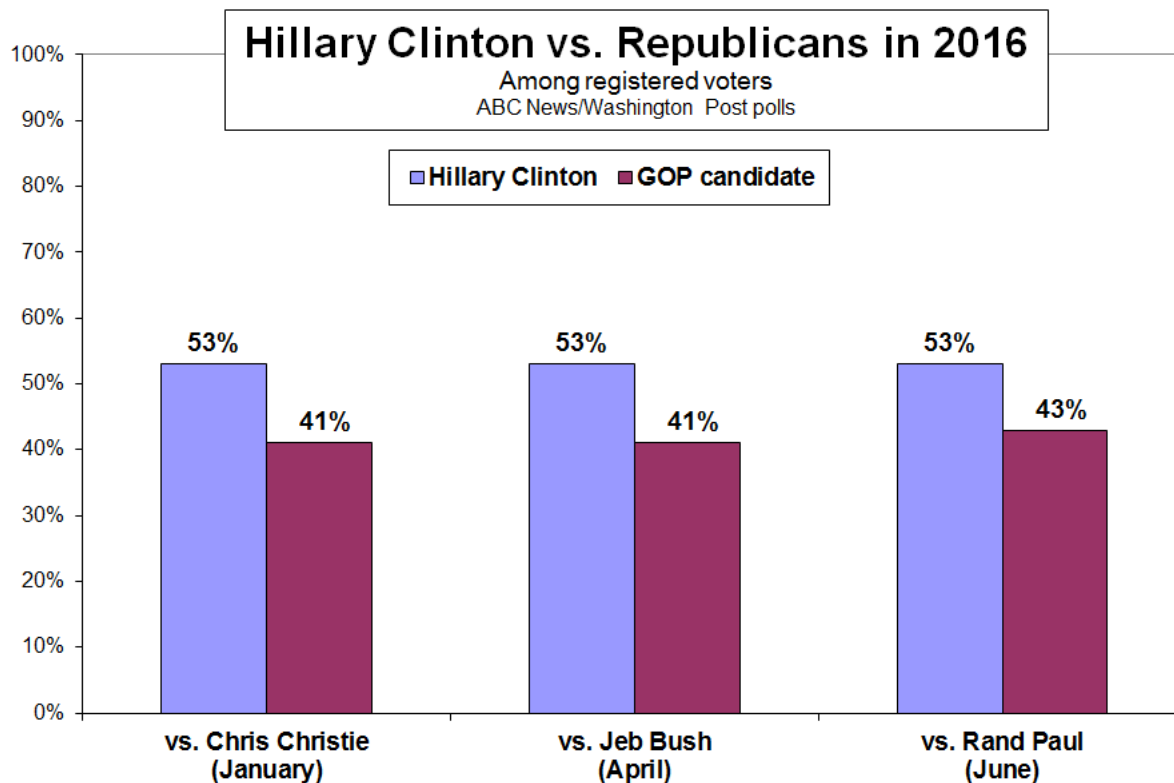
Hillary Clinton is strongly positioned to joust for the presidency, scoring highly on personal attributes, experience and early vote preferences alike. But she falls well short of universal appeal – and even her supporters want to see a contest for the Democratic nomination.

Back in the limelight this week with the publication of her book on her time as secretary of state, Clinton is in an enviable position overall. Anywhere from 55 to 67 percent of Americans think she understands the problems of ordinary Americans, has new ideas, is honest and trustworthy and is a strong leader. And 59 percent approve of her job performance at the State Department.

Should she run, among registered voters, 69 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents favor her for the party's nomination over seven other hypothetical contenders. Vice President Joe Biden gets 12 percent, Elizabeth Warren 7 percent, with the rest barely registering.



In a general election matchup, moreover, this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds Clinton drawing 53 percent support vs. Rand Paul, identical to her support against Chris Christie and Jeb Bush in previous ABC/Post polls this year.



That said, even among Democrats who support her for the nomination, 58 percent also say they'd rather see other candidates run as well – a preference for a race, not a waltz. That, of course, would keep her in the spotlight and perhaps hone her campaign performance. But contested campaigns are never a sure bet, even for frontrunners, as Clinton herself found in 2008.

Clinton and her ex-president husband alike have been making numerous public appearances of late, in advance of the publication Tuesday of her latest book, "Hard Choices." She's the subject of an ABC News special with Diane Sawyer, airing Monday evening at 9 p.m. Eastern time.

GAPS – Strong as it is, Clinton's support for the nomination is not monolithic. While solid across groups, she does better inside the party, with 74 percent support among Democrats, than outside it, with 58 percent support from independents who lean toward the Democratic Party. That could open the door, at least a crack, for an intraparty, anti-establishment opponent.

Gaps widen among the broader public. Partisanship is profound: Ninety percent of Democrats approve of Clinton's job performance as secretary of state, compared with 27 percent of Republicans (and 54 percent of independents). Ideological divisions are similar; at the most extreme, approval of her work at the State Department ranges from 96 percent of liberal Democrats to 19 percent among conservative Republicans.

There's also an issue-level criticism: While 59 percent overall approve of her job performance at State, that declines sharply, to 37 percent, for her handling of the 2012 incident in Benghazi, Libya, in which a U.S. diplomat and three other Americans were killed. Given that 58 percent also think the Obama administration has covered up what it knows about the attack – and half favor a further congressional investigation – the issue could present challenges.

Further among groups, there's a consistent, large gender gap in support for Clinton, who could be the first woman to win a major-party nomination for the presidency. She leads Paul by 18 points, 57-39 percent, among women, but runs essentially evenly among men, 47-46 percent. However, that's similar to Barack Obama's gender gap in 2012 (he won women by 11 points, lost men by 7), and so clearly survivable.

These results and others for Clinton vs. Paul are very similar to those testing her against Bush and Christie alike.

	Among registered voters		
	Clinton-Paul (June)	Clinton-Bush (April)	Clinton-Christie (January)
All	53-43%	53-41%	53-41%
Men	47-46	45-48	46-49
Women	57-39	59-36	59-34
Whites	43-51	45-49	44-50
Nonwhites	75-22	74-20	74-19
Democrats	95- 5	94- 4	90- 8
Independents	46-47	47-44	48-43
Republicans	11-84	10-88	16-79
Liberals	87-10	82-15	84-12
Moderates	57-37	59-37	57-37
Conservatives	26-70	25-66	28-65
Age <50	58-40	57-37	56-38
Age 50+	48-45	48-45	50-44

In a further prominent gap, Clinton trails Paul by a slight 8 points among whites, while leading by a vast 53 points among nonwhites. Again, though, that's not unusual; in 2012 Obama lost whites by an even wider margin, 20 points, while winning nonwhites – a growing segment of the electorate (a record 28 percent in 2012) – by 61 points.

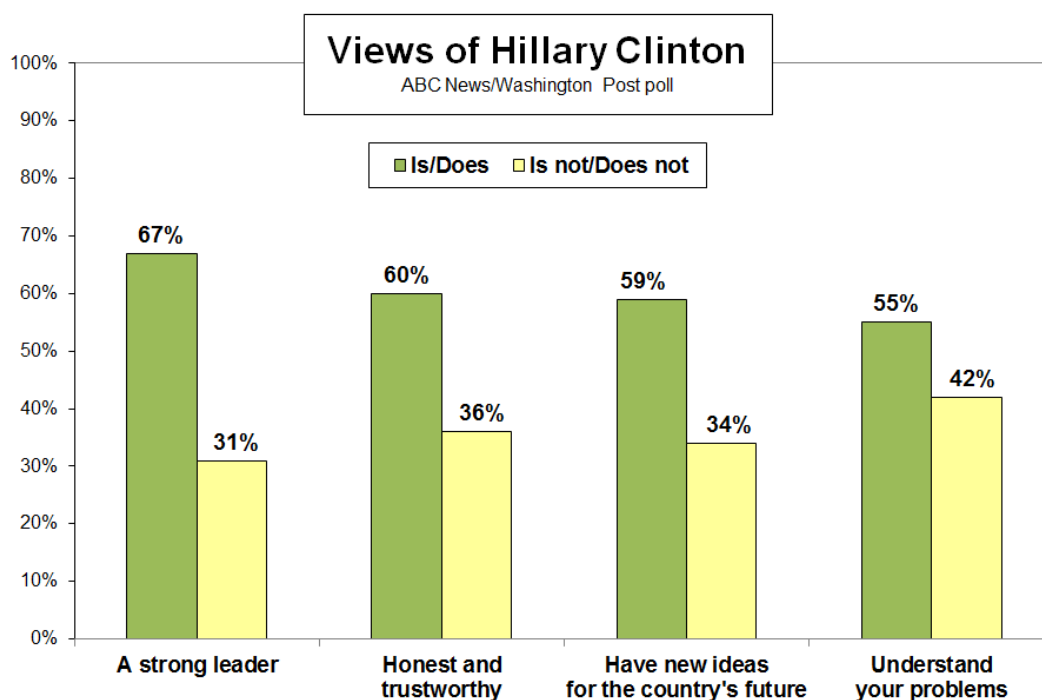
Clinton also is notably less popular among middle-aged and older adults, again as was the case with Obama. She runs just 48-45 percent against Paul among registered voters age 50 and older. Among voters younger than age 50, by contrast, Clinton leads by 58-40 percent.

Separately, while Clinton's political and ideological cross-border appeal is limited, she does better on these than Obama did in 2012. She's backed vs. Paul by 26 percent of conservatives

and 11 percent of Republicans, groups in which Obama won just 17 and 6 percent support, respectively. And Clinton runs evenly with Paul in the 2012 red states won by Mitt Romney, while leading by 18 points in Obama's 2012 blue states.

ATTRIBUTES – As noted, Clinton benefits from her personal reputation as well as her resume. Sixty-seven percent of Americans see her as a strong leader, 60 percent rate her as honest and trustworthy, 59 percent say she has new ideas for the country's future and 55 percent think she understands their problems. (See below for results of a wording test on this question.)

While each is an important element of a candidate's support structure, empathy can be particularly attractive to voters in difficult times. The fact that it's the weakest of these measures for her does represent a potential chink in her armor.



Some of the same divisions seen in other measures are reflected in views of Clinton's attributes. Among them, women are 12 points more apt than men to see her as a strong leader, an identical 12 points more likely to see her as honest and trustworthy and 15 points more likely to say she has new ideas.

Moreover, on the empathy measure, 62 percent of women say Clinton "understands the problems of people like you." Among men, 46 percent agree – a difference that suggests gender will be front and center of the political stage, should Clinton in fact seek the presidency in 2016.

Finally, as mentioned above, this poll included a wording test: Half of respondents ("Half A") were asked if Clinton, for example, "is or is not a strong leader," intended as a balanced question because it supplies the alternative proposition. The other half ("Half B") were asked if various

attribute statements did or did not apply to Clinton (e.g, “She is a strong leader”), a traditional albeit less balanced formulation because the statements are worded in the affirmative.

There were essentially no differences on “strong leader” and “understands the problems of people like you.” “Honest and trustworthy” and “has new ideas,” though, were selected by more in Half A, 60 and 59 percent respectively, than in Half B, 53 percent for both. It may be easier to say you don’t think Clinton is honest or has new ideas than to say you think she is not honest or does not have new ideas. Further analysis of this test will be reported separately.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone May 29-June 1, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,002 adults, 851 of whom say they’re registered to vote, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points for the full sample and 4 points for registered voters, including design effect. Partisan divisions are 33-24-35 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents, for the full sample, 33-26-35 percent for registered voters.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

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

Media contact: [Van Scott Jr.](#), (212) 456-7423.

Full results follow.

* in data columns = less than 0.5 percent

1-7, 13-33 previously released.

8. (ASKED OF LEANED DEMOCRATS) I’m going to read a list of possible candidates for the Democratic nomination for president in 2016. After you hear the list, please tell me, if the 2016 Democratic presidential primary or caucus in your state were being held today, for whom would you vote?

6/1/14 - NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE AMONG RVs

	6/1	1/23
Joe Biden	12	11
Hillary Clinton	69	73
Andrew Cuomo	2	NA
Martin O'Malley	2	NA
Bernie Sanders	2	NA
Brian Schweitzer	1	NA
Elizabeth Warren	7	9
Jim Webb	1	NA
Other (vol.)	0	*
None of these (vol.)	2	3
Would not vote (vol.)	0	*
No opinion	2	4

9. (ASKED OF LEANED DEMOCRATS) What's your preference - that Hillary Clinton runs unopposed for the Democratic nomination for president in 2016, that Clinton runs for the nomination but that other Democrats also run, or that Clinton does not run for the presidential nomination?

		----- Should run -----			
	NET	Runs unopposed	Other Democrats also run	Should not run	No opinion
6/1/14	83	28	55	13	4

10. (ASKED OF REGISTERED VOTERS) If the 2016 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Hillary Clinton, the Democrat) and (Rand Paul, the Republican), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Clinton) or toward (Paul)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE - REGISTERED VOTERS

		Hillary Clinton	Rand Paul	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
6/1/14 RV		53	43	*	3	1	1

Compare to:

4/27/14 RV	Hillary Clinton	Jeb Bush		*	4	1	1
	53	41					
1/23/14 RV	Hillary Clinton	Chris Christie		*	2	2	2
	53	41					

11. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Hillary Clinton handled her job as secretary of state? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	NET	Approve Strongly	Approve Somewhat	NET	Disapprove Somewhat	Disapprove Strongly	No opinion
6/1/14	59	32	27	34	11	23	7
5/19/13	62	38	24	28	9	20	9
12/2/12*	68	35	33	22	9	13	10

*"is handling"

Compare to:

		Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
2/25/07	Condoleeza Rice	58	31	10
12/19/04	Donald Rumsfeld	35	53	12
11/24/97*	Madeleine Albright	56	12	32
11/4/93**	Warren Christopher	41	28	31
10/10/93**	Warren Christopher	35	26	39
3/21/82	Alexander Haig	49	35	16
10/18/81	Alexander Haig	26	17	57
3/31/81	Alexander Haig	45	33	23

*CBS; **Gallup

12a. (HALF SAMPLE) Do you think Hillary Clinton: [ITEM]?

6/1/14 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. Is or is not a strong leader	67	31	2
b. Does or does not understand the problems of people like you	55	42	3

c. Is or is not honest and trustworthy	60	36	4
d. Does or does not have new ideas for the country's future	59	34	7

12b. (HALF SAMPLE) Please tell me whether the following statement applies to Hillary Clinton, or not: [ITEM]?

6/1/14 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. She is a strong leader	68	28	4
b. She understands the problems of people like you	54	41	5
c. She is honest and trustworthy	53	42	5
d. She has new ideas for the country's future	53	37	9

Trend:

a. She is a strong leader

	Yes	No	No opinion
6/1/14	68	28	4
5/15/06	68	30	2

b. She understands the problems of people like you

	Yes	No	No opinion
6/1/14	54	41	5
5/15/06	54	43	3

c. She is honest and trustworthy

	Yes	No	No opinion
6/1/14	53	42	5
5/15/06	52	42	6

d. No trend.

18. The Benghazi attack occurred when Hillary Clinton was secretary of state. Do you approve or disapprove of the way she handled this incident? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
6/1/14	37	17	20	50	17	33	13

*** END ***