

For 9 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 18

By Gary Langer

### Huckabee vs. Clinton: Reconsider the Day Job?

It's almost enough to reconsider quitting the day job: Mike Huckabee's got a steep hill to climb should he face off against Hillary Clinton for the presidency in 2016.

Tested in a head-to-head matchup among registered voters, Huckabee gets 39 percent support in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll, vs. 56 percent for Clinton, a wide 17-point gap in presidential preference. It's their first test in an ABC/Post poll in this cycle, and much better for Clinton than a hypothetical matchup in late 2007, when she and Huckabee ran essentially evenly among registered voters, 48-45 percent.

Huckabee, a guest today on ABC's This Week with George Stephanopoulos, resigned his Fox News job earlier this month and said he's exploring another run for the Republican presidential nomination. He's on a book tour the next few weeks, including three stops in Iowa, where the voting starts in a year.

Additional candidate matchups and attitudes about the 2016 contest will be covered later this week in a subsequent analysis of the latest ABC/Post poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#).

In one striking difference in their support profiles, Clinton's backed by 92 percent of Democrats who are registered to vote (6 percent cross over to Huckabee), while Huckabee's backed by fewer Republicans (79 percent, with 14 percent going to Clinton and 7 percent simply taking a pass.) Further, Clinton leads Huckabee among independents, potentially a swing voting group, by 52-41 percent.

Huckabee, an ordained Southern Baptist minister, holds a broad 68-27 percent lead over Clinton among evangelical white Protestants, a core Republican group and one in which he did especially well in his 2008 campaign for the GOP nomination. However, that flips to a 55-39 percent race, Clinton-Huckabee, among non-evangelical white Protestants. And, typical for a Democrat, Clinton has a vast lead among nonwhites, 81-15 percent – an ongoing challenge for the GOP as nonwhites grow as a proportion of the electorate.

Clinton leads Huckabee among women by 24 points, and does particularly well among younger adults, with a 65-32 percent advantage among registered voters who are under 40. Unusually for a Democrat, Clinton is competitive with Huckabee even in rural areas, customarily a GOP stronghold, as well as the suburbs, while she's trouncing him in urban areas, 66-29 percent.

Ideology is another strong differentiator. Huckabee leads Clinton by 73-22 percent among Americans who identify themselves as "very" conservative, and by a much closer 16 points among somewhat conservatives. Clinton, though, comes back with a 62-33 percent result among

moderates and 81-15 percent among liberals, who together account for 60 percent of all registered voters.

Clinton's lead today, of course, is no assurance of what may happen in 2016. There are hats to drop, campaigns to pursue, nominations to win – and many months ahead for voters to come to their final judgments.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Jan. 12-15, 2015, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults, including 843 registered voters, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have margins of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 and 4 points for the general population and registered voters, respectively, including design effect. Partisan divisions are 30-24-37 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents, among the general population, and 33-26-33 percent among 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.

Full results follow.

1-27, 28a-c, 28e, 29-31 held for release.

28d. If the 2016 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Hillary Clinton, the Democrat) and (Mike Huckabee, the Republican), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Clinton) or toward (Huckabee)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE - REG VOTERS

	Hillary Clinton	Mike Huckabee	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
1/15/15	56	39	1	2	1	2

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