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## **While The Public Learned Specifics About Bush and Gore After their Conventions, One out of Two Still Not Ready to Vote**

### **Men more Likely than Women to Know Policy Positions and More Likely to Feel they Can Make an Informed Choice for President**

With only ten weeks to go before election day, only one in two Americans (49 percent) feels she or he has learned enough about Al Gore and George W. Bush to make an informed choice for President, according to a new study from the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. Men were more likely than women to feel informed enough to make the decision, and more likely to know candidates' policy positions.

Among the study's findings:

- After the two conventions 54 percent of the men knew Bush's positions on a range of issues compared to 47 percent of the women; 56 percent of the men knew Gore's positions compared to 48 percent of the women.
- Prior to both conventions 50 percent of men felt they had enough information to make a choice and only 33 percent of women felt that way.
- After the conventions, the percentage of men that felt they had enough information to make an informed choice rose slightly (to 54 percent) while the percentage of women jumped 12 percent (to 45 percent).

"Women, in particular, gained information and confidence in their choice about the candidates as a result of the conventions. But, the public still wants to know more about these two candidates before they make a choice on election day," said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center and Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication.

The August 1, 2000 release from the Annenberg Public Policy Center found gains in knowledge about Bush's specific policy stands after the Republican National Convention. There were even more dramatic knowledge gains about Gore's positions after the Democratic Convention. After the Democratic Convention more Americans knew that Gore:

- favors allowing patients to sue their HMOs;
- favors using government funds to make sure that every child in the US is covered by health insurance;
- wants to ban soft money political contributions;
- favors allowing gays to openly serve in the military;
- wants to cover prescriptions drugs for seniors through Medicare; and,
- favors the death penalty.

The Annenberg 2000 Survey will be the largest survey of the American electorate ever conducted. By the end of 2000, over 100,000 interviews will have been conducted on Americans' political knowledge, media use, and opinions about candidates and issues. Reports will be released regularly. Margin of error for a weekly average is +/- 3.5%. The full report can be found on [www.asc.upenn.edu](http://www.asc.upenn.edu) and [www.appcpenn.org](http://www.appcpenn.org).

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*The Annenberg Public Policy Center was established by publisher and philanthropist Walter Annenberg in 1994 to create a community of scholars within the University of Pennsylvania that would examine the role of communications in public policy issues at the local, state and federal levels. The Center has four ongoing research foci: Information and Society; Media and the Developing Mind; Media and the Dialogue of Democracy; Health Communications. The Annenberg Public Policy Center supports research and sponsors lectures and conferences in these areas.*