



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE: August 6, 2004**

**CONTACT: Adam Clymer at 202-879-6757 or 202 549-7161 (cell)**

**VISIT: [www.naes04.org](http://www.naes04.org)**

**After Convention, Kerry Catches Up With Bush on Optimism,  
Gains on Values, Inspiration, Annenberg Data Show**

After the Democratic National Convention, John Kerry gained on George W. Bush when independents compared them on optimism, inspiration, and sharing their values, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

Polling of 1,646 registered voters conducted from July 30, the day after the convention, through August 5 showed that 42 percent of independents now rate Kerry higher than Bush on optimism. Thirty percent rated Bush higher. In pre-convention polling, from July 5 through 25, Bush had a 41 to 34 percent advantage.

Among all respondents, Kerry also gained when respondents rated the two candidates as optimistic, inspiring and sharing values, although the gains were smaller. For example, on optimism, Bush had led before the convention, 42 percent to 34 percent. After the convention, Kerry had clearly improved, with 40 percent rating him higher and 37 percent rating Bush higher. The earlier Bush advantage was statistically significant; the new finding falls within the margin of sampling error. The post-convention polling on traits had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points.

Bush held important advantages on two questions, concerning the military and terrorism, questions that were asked only on Wednesday and Thursday of this week, to a total of 450 registered voters, Bush held important advantages. Forty-eight percent said they trusted him more to handle the responsibilities of being commander-in-chief of the military, while 41 percent preferred Kerry. That advantage was within the margin of sampling error, plus or minus five percentage points, for those two days.

Fifty-one percent said Bush would do a better job handling the war on terrorism than would Kerry, who was preferred by 40 percent. However, this does not mean the public approves overwhelmingly of Bush's handling of terrorism. On another question asked for the full week, the public was basically split, just 51 percent said they approved of his handling of it while 47 percent disapproved, a statistically insignificant margin for approval.

-More-

The poll also found that 47 percent of registered voters now had a favorable opinion of Kerry, while 36 percent were unfavorable. The margin of error was plus or minus two percentage points. Before the convention, it was 43 percent favorable, 34 percent unfavorable. Bush's standing was virtually unchanged. Now 49 percent were favorable, and 41 percent unfavorable. Before the convention it was 48 percent favorable and 41 percent unfavorable.

There was also a modest increase in positive attitudes among people who said they intended to vote for Kerry. Forty-two percent of Kerry supporters said they were planning to vote more for Kerry than against Bush; 54 percent said they were more against Bush. Before the convention 35 percent said they were more for Kerry than against Bush and 62 percent said they were more against Bush. There was also a slight decrease in the share of Kerry supporters who said there was a "good chance" they would change their minds before Election Day. There was no significant change on any of those matters ratios for Bush supporters.

Optimism was the only trait where one candidate lost a pre-convention advantage and the other gained it, either among independents or the electorate generally. But a Bush advantage disappeared on the question of who was best described as "says one thing and does another." Before the convention, 40 percent said that term fit Kerry better than Bush, and 35 percent said it fit Bush better. Now 38 percent said Kerry and 36 percent said Bush, a statistically insignificant margin. Independents moved similarly, from 40 percent saying the term fit Kerry best and 36 percent saying Bush to 36 percent for each.

Independents had already preferred Kerry over Bush on the question of who best shared their values and who was most inspiring. But a 47 to 36 percent advantage for Kerry on values went to 52 to 33 percent, and a 44 to 37 percent lead on inspiration rose to 52 to 34 percent.

That National Annenberg Election Survey, the largest academic election poll, is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania ([www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org](http://www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org)). It has been tracking the presidential campaign since October 7, and interviewing will continue until after Election Day. Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is [FactCheck.org](http://FactCheck.org), a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at [www.FactCheck.Org](http://www.FactCheck.Org).

-More-

## Questions

A. Respondents were asked to rate George W. Bush and John Kerry on each trait using a scale of zero to ten. The following data represents the percentage of people ranking Bush higher, Kerry higher, or both equal.

### Registered Citizens Only

		July 5 - July 25	July 30 - August 5			
			All	Republican	Democrat	Independent
<b>Optimistic</b>						
	Bush higher	42%	37%	66%	15%	30%
	Kerry higher	34%	40%	13%	66%	42%
	Equal	16%	16%	14%	13%	23%
<b>Cares about people like me</b>						
	Bush higher	38%	39%	75%	9%	34%
	Kerry higher	45%	45%	11%	78%	47%
	Equal	9%	9%	7%	6%	13%
<b>Inspiring</b>						
	Bush higher	42%	43%	84%	10%	34%
	Kerry higher	43%	46%	7%	80%	52%
	Equal	10%	7%	5%	6%	11%
<b>Strong leader</b>						
	Bush higher	46%	45%	85%	10%	41%
	Kerry higher	39%	42%	6%	80%	39%
	Equal	8%	8%	4%	5%	15%
<b>Trustworthy</b>						
	Bush higher	41%	43%	83%	10%	36%
	Kerry higher	43%	44%	7%	77%	48%
	Equal	8%	6%	4%	6%	8%
<b>Shares my values</b>						
	Bush higher	41%	41%	83%	10%	33%
	Kerry higher	43%	45%	6%	80%	52%
	Equal	8%	7%	5%	6%	10%
<b>Knowledgeable</b>						
	Bush higher	36%	38%	72%	11%	28%
	Kerry higher	47%	46%	10%	77%	52%
	Equal	11%	10%	11%	7%	14%

		July 5 - July 25	July 30 - August 5			
			All	Republican	Democrat	Independent
<b>Reckless</b>						
	Bush higher	44%	45%	26%	60%	53%
	Kerry higher	30%	30%	53%	14%	21%
	Equal	15%	15%	13%	14%	17%
<b>Steady</b>						
	Bush higher	44%	44%	76%	13%	47%
	Kerry higher	34%	36%	6%	64%	38%
	Equal	13%	11%	10%	13%	10%
<b>Says one thing, does another</b>						
	Bush higher	35%	36%	18%	54%	36%
	Kerry higher	40%	38%	60%	19%	36%
	Equal	13%	15%	12%	14%	19%
<b>Has the right kind of experience to be president</b>						
	Bush higher	43%	43%	80%	12%	37%
	Kerry higher	41%	43%	8%	79%	41%
	Equal	8%	8%	7%	4%	14%
<b>Easy to like as a person</b>						
	Bush higher	42%	44%	79%	15%	37%
	Kerry higher	38%	39%	6%	70%	40%
	Equal	11%	9%	7%	8%	12%
<b>Out of touch with people like me</b>						
	Bush higher	41%	44%	23%	61%	47%
	Kerry higher	36%	36%	56%	22%	32%
	Equal	14%	13%	15%	10%	13%
<b>Stubborn</b>						
	Bush higher	53%	55%	47%	61%	62%
	Kerry higher	17%	16%	20%	14%	14%
	Equal	15%	15%	17%	12%	12%
<b>Arrogant</b>						
	Bush higher	46%	45%	20%	65%	54%
	Kerry higher	33%	35%	62%	17%	25%
	Equal	13%	13%	13%	10%	15%

**B. Favorability**

		July 5 - July 25	July 30 - August 5			
			All	Republican	Democrat	Independent
<b>Kerry</b>	<b>Favorable</b>	43%	47%	11%	79%	48%
	<b>Unfavorable</b>	34%	36%	71%	9%	31%
<b>Bush</b>	<b>Favorable</b>	48%	49%	92%	12%	49%
	<b>Unfavorable</b>	41%	41%	4%	76%	40%

**C. Would you say you are supporting Bush for president more because you are for Bush or more because you are against Kerry?**

		July 8 - July 25	July 30 - August 5			
			All	Republican	Democrat	Independent
<b>More for Bush</b>		77%	73%	79%	*	65%
<b>More against Kerry</b>		19%	23%	18%	*	31%

Asked of people who said they would vote for Bush.

\* Too few cases to measure accurately.

**D. Would you say you are supporting Kerry for president more because you are for Kerry or more because you are against Bush?**

		July 8 - July 25	July 30 - August 5			
			All	Republican	Democrat	Independent
<b>More for Kerry</b>		35%	42%	*	46%	32%
<b>More against Bush</b>		62%	54%	*	50%	64%

Asked of people who said they would vote for Kerry.

\* Too few cases to measure accurately.

-More-

## Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue past Election Day.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with interviewing conducted from July 30 through August 5, 2004, when 1,997 adults were interviewed, of whom 1,887 were citizens and 1,646 said they were registered voters. In theory, in 19 out of 20 cases, results for all registered voters will differ by no more than two percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults. For smaller subgroups the margin of sampling error would be higher. For example, for registered voters interviewed only on August 4 and August 5, it would be plus or minus two percentage points. Moreover, some questions were not asked of all respondents. The questions about traits were asked of two-thirds of the sample, and the margin of sampling error on those questions would be plus or minus three percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

If you would like to be removed from this press release list, please call or email Jennifer Wilhelm at [jwilhelm@asc.upenn.edu](mailto:jwilhelm@asc.upenn.edu) or (202) 879-6747.

For a printer-friendly version of this release please visit [www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org](http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org).

###