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Support for the Presidential Ticket and Identification with Party Predicted Convention Speech Viewing

The Democratic and Republican Convention's speech audiences tended to be made up of supporters. Nearly two-thirds of those who saw or heard all of Senator Clinton's speech and about three-fourths of those who saw or heard all of Senator Obama's speech said they backed the Democratic nominee. Similarly, about six in ten of those who saw or heard the entire convention speeches given by Governor Palin and Senator McCain were supporters of that ticket, according to results from the National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES).

Further, those who heard or watched all of the Obama and Clinton speeches were more likely to be Democrats and those who heard or watched all of the McCain and Palin speeches were more likely to be Republicans. The sample size of those who watched all of Senator Biden's speech is too small to permit detailed analysis, but the pattern of viewership followed the Democratic ticket.

These findings suggest that many Americans were selective about their convention viewing – they tuned in when their preferred candidate and party took the stage and opted out for the opposition. The data also show that self-described independents were as likely to watch the Democratic speeches as the Republican speeches.

According to Nielsen Media Research, the speeches by McCain, Obama and Palin were the most watched convention speeches of all time. Yet results from the NAES show that about a quarter of the country was unaware of exactly when the conventions were taking place.

Overall, those with more education and older Americans were more likely to view the convention speeches. However, the audience makeup of the speeches differed. Women made up over 50 percent of the viewing audience for Obama, Clinton and Palin. For

McCain 55 percent of the audience consisted of men. Obama's and Clinton's speech viewers were more racially diverse than either McCain's or Palin's.

The data reported here were collected between August 25 and September 4, 2008. Analysis of those who heard or saw a candidate speech in its entirety has a margin of error between 4 and 5 percent with the exception of Biden's speech, where the margin of error is +/-7 percent.

About the survey: The National Annenberg Election Survey is the largest academic election survey being conducted in the 2008 campaign. It ultimately will include between 45,000 and 50,000 rolling cross-section telephone interviews (one interview per respondent) and almost 100,000 web interviews (including up to five interviews with the same person) as the campaign evolves. The first web wave began in October 2007; the final interviews will be completed following the general election, November 4, 2008.

The data reported here are drawn from the rolling cross-sectional phone survey.

National Annenberg Election Surveys also were conducted in 2000 and 2004.

The 2008 survey, as with past NAES polls, is examining a wide range of political attitudes about candidates, issues and the traits Americans want in a president.

Methodology and Survey Question Wording

Data for this analysis comes from the NAES telephone survey. The field period ran from August 25, 2008 through September 9, 2008.

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.

The data for this study were collected between August 25 and September 4, 2008 ($N=2,913$, *margin of error*= $\pm 2\%$) for the DNC and between September 4 and September 9, 2008 for the RNC ($N=1,644$, *margin of error*= $\pm 2\%$). The sample sizes vary for subsamples and for each question reported because questions were asked at different times. Analysis of those who heard or saw a candidate speech in its entirety has a margin of error between ± 4 and ± 5 percent with the exception of Biden's speech, where the margin of error is ± 7 percent.

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.

Question wording

(Based on those who were aware that the convention was taking place or had just taken place):

ASKED 8/27/08 -- 9/1/08

EC3. *Did you see or hear any of Hillary Clinton's speech at the Democratic convention? (If yes) Did you watch just a few minutes, about fifteen minutes or the entire speech?*

ASKED 8/28/08 -- 8/31/08

EC5. *Did you see or hear any of Joe Biden's speech at the Democratic convention? (If yes) Did you watch just a few minutes, about ten minutes or the entire speech?*

ASKED 8/29/08 -- 9/3/08

EC6. *Did you see or hear any of Barack Obama's speech at the Democratic convention? (If yes) Did you watch just a few minutes, about thirty minutes or the entire speech?*

ASKED 9/4/08 -- 9/9/08

EC11. *Did you see or hear any of Sarah Palin's speech at the Republican convention? (If yes) Did you watch just a few minutes, about 15 minutes or the entire speech?*

ASKED 9/5/08 -- 9/9/08

EC12. *Did you see or hear any of John McCain's speech at the Republican convention? (If yes) Did you watch just a few minutes, about thirty minutes or the entire speech?*

Speech Viewership

Viewing	Joe Biden (%) (n=1,048)	Hillary Clinton (%) (n=1,308)	Barack Obama (%) (n=1,574)	Sarah Palin (%) (n=1,644)	John McCain (%) (n=1,366)
Viewed All	16.2	23.1	28.1	32.3	26.3
Viewed Some	12.9	22.1	22.9	26.2	23.9
Viewed None	70.9	54.8	49.0	41.5	49.8

Vote Preference by Speech Viewing **

Vote Intention	Viewed ALL of Joe Biden's Speech (%) (n=224)	Viewed ALL of Hillary Clinton's Speech (%) (n=418)	Viewed ALL of Barack Obama's Speech (%) (n=503)	Viewed ALL of Sarah Palin's Speech (%) (n=654)	Viewed ALL of John McCain's Speech (%) (n=431)
John McCain	16.0	22.5	19.0	60.4	58.8
Barack Obama	74.9	65.4	73.1	31.9	33.8
Ralph Nader	1.7	2.4	0.7	*	1.1
Bob Barr	1.1	0.8	1.6	0.6	*
Wouldn't Vote	1.1	1.1	0.7	*	0.8
Don't know	4.6	5.9	4.3	4.9	4.7

* Less than 0.5%

**Based on those who were aware that convention was taking place

Party Identification by Speech Viewing**

Party ID	Viewed ALL of Joe Biden's Speech (%) (n=224)	Viewed ALL of Hillary Clinton's Speech (%) (n=418)	Viewed ALL of Barack Obama's Speech (%) (n=503)	Viewed ALL of Sarah Palin's Speech (%) (n=654)	Viewed ALL of John McCain's Speech (%) (n=431)
Republican	14.9	19.0	16.1	44.9	42.0
Democrat	60.3	56.1	55.7	28.1	29.3
Independent	21.3	19.3	22.9	21.3	23.8

**Based on those who were aware that convention was taking place

Gender by Speech Viewing**

Gender	Viewed ALL of Joe Biden's Speech (%) (n=224)	Viewed ALL of Hillary Clinton's Speech (%) (n=418)	Viewed ALL of Barack Obama's Speech (%) (n=503)	Viewed ALL of Sarah Palin's Speech (%) (n=654)	Viewed ALL of John McCain's Speech (%) (n=431)
Male	50.3	46.5	46.8	48.9	55.4
Female	49.7	53.5	53.2	51.1	44.6

**Based on those who were aware that convention was taking place

Race/Ethnicity by Speech Viewing**

Race / Ethnicity	Viewed ALL of Joe Biden's Speech (%) (n=224)	Viewed ALL of Hillary Clinton's Speech (%) (n=418)	Viewed ALL of Barack Obama's Speech (%) (n=503)	Viewed ALL of Sarah Palin's Speech (%) (n=654)	Viewed ALL of John McCain's Speech (%) (n=431)
White	71.3	70.4	68.2	85.0	84.6
Black	24.1	21.9	24.4	7.0	6.3
Hispanic	3.4	6.4	4.1	4.7	6.9

**Based on those who were aware that convention was taking place

Age by Speech Viewing**

Age	Viewed ALL of Joe Biden's Speech (%) (n=224)	Viewed ALL of Hillary Clinton's Speech (%) (n=418)	Viewed ALL of Barack Obama's Speech (%) (n=503)	Viewed ALL of Sarah Palin's Speech (%) (n=654)	Viewed ALL of John McCain's Speech (%) (n=431)
18-29	4.0	7.8	8.4	6.3	7.5
30-44	17.9	22.9	22.4	21.4	22.7
45-54	27.2	24.0	26.5	26.8	24.9
55-64	26.0	20.2	21.0	19.7	18.2
65 or older	24.9	25.1	21.7	25.8	26.8

**Based on those who were aware that convention was taking place

Education by Speech Viewing**

Education	Viewed ALL of Joe Biden's Speech (%) (n=224)	Viewed ALL of Hillary Clinton's Speech (%) (n=418)	Viewed ALL of Barack Obama's Speech (%) (n=503)	Viewed ALL of Sarah Palin's Speech (%) (n=654)	Viewed ALL of John McCain's Speech (%) (n=431)
Did not graduate high school	5.8	7.3	5.5	7.6	8.1
HS Grad	26.7	30.0	28.3	25.6	26.4
Some College	24.4	27.3	28.1	25.2	25.0
4 year college degree	19.2	18.1	18.7	20.7	21.7
Post-college education	23.8	17.3	19.4	20.9	18.9

**Based on those who were aware that convention was taking place