

THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY
OF PUBLIC OPINION ESTABLISHED IN 1947 AS
THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

Field Research Corporation

222 Sutter Street, Suite 700
San Francisco, CA 94108-4411
(415) 392-5763 FAX: (415) 434-2541
EMAIL: fieldpoll@field.com
www.field.com/fieldpollonline

COPYRIGHT 2006 BY FIELD RESEARCH CORPORATION. FOR ADVANCE PUBLICATION BY SUBSCRIBERS ONLY.

Release #2186

Release Date: **Friday, March 10, 2006**

**NOT EVERYBODY THINKS THE U.S. IS
READY FOR A FEMALE PRESIDENT.
SHARP DIVISIONS IN CALIFORNIA
ABOUT VOTING FOR HILLARY CLINTON
IN 2008. MOST THINK THAT IF SHE RAN,
SHE WOULD BE TREATED MORE
HARSHLY THAN OTHER CANDIDATES.**

IMPORTANT: Contract for this service is subject to revocation if publication or broadcast takes place before release date or if contents are divulged to persons outside of subscriber staff prior to release time.
(ISSN 0195-4520)

by Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

The prominence of New York Democratic U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton, the wife of former President Bill Clinton, in the unofficial campaign to be her party's presidential nominee in 2008, has stirred political speculation as to whether the country is ready for a woman to be president.

In its most recent survey, *The Field Poll* posed this question to registered voters in this state and found that 69% say the country is ready for a woman president, while 24% don't think so.

Voters in this state are sharply divided when asked whether they'd be inclined or not inclined to vote for Clinton in 2008 should she decide to run, with 47% inclined to back her and 42% not inclined. There is a huge partisan divide in voter inclinations to support a potential Clinton candidacy in this state, with 74% of Democrats stating they'd be inclined to support her, while 78% of Republicans would not be.

In addition, a majority of this state's voters (51%) believe that were Hillary to run for President in 2008, she would be treated more harshly than other candidates, while just 18% feel she will be treated better. Another 22% felt she would be treated like any other candidate.

Is the nation ready for a woman President?

When Californians are asked whether they believed the country was ready for a woman president, 69% feel that it is, while 24% don't.

A recent national poll conducted by CBS News in January found that a smaller majority of Americans (55%) felt the country was ready for a woman president, while 38% disagreed.

There are only minor differences in voter opinions about whether they feel the U.S. is ready for a woman president across subgroups of the state's electorate, with majorities in each case feeling the country is ready for a woman president. Significantly, there are no differences between men and women on this issue.

Table 1
Is the U.S. ready for a woman President
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total statewide	69%	24	7
<u>Party</u>			
Democrat	77%	17	6
Republican	56%	37	7
Non-partisans/others	74%	18	8
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	57%	36	7
Moderate	71%	22	7
Liberal	81%	13	6
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	69%	21	10
Female	69%	27	4
<u>Age</u>			
18 – 39	76%	21	3
40 – 64	71%	23	6
65 or older	59%	32	9

Californians divided about whether they'd vote for Hillary in 2008

When a cross-section of California voters are asked whether they would be inclined or disinclined to vote for Hillary Clinton for President in 2008 should she decide to run, 47% are supportive while 42% are not.

Nearly three-fourths (71%) of Democrats at this point are inclined to support a potential Clinton candidacy, but an even larger proportion of Republicans (78%) say they would not.

Women line up 54% to 35% in support of a Clinton candidacy, while men are disinclined to back her by a five to four margin (50% to 40%). Voters living in the state's Coastal counties are favorably disposed to a Clinton candidacy 50% to 39%. On the other hand, voters living in Inland counties take the opposite view and react negatively 51% to 39%.

Other subgroups of the California electorate disinclined to support a Clinton candidacy include conservatives, older voters, white non-Hispanics and Protestants.

The voter subgroups most inclined to support Clinton, were she to run for President in 2008, are liberals, younger voters, ethnic voters, voters with no religious preference, and those who are affiliated with non-Christian denominations.

Table 2
Inclination to support a Hillary Clinton
candidacy for President in 2008
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Inclined</u>	<u>Not inclined</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Total statewide	47%	42	11
<u>Party</u>			
Democrat	74%	15	11
Republican	16%	78	6
Non-partisans/others	45%	38	17
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Conservative	24%	71	5
Moderate	46%	40	14
Liberal	81%	9	10
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	40%	50	10
Female	54%	35	11
<u>Area</u>			
Coastal counties	50%	39	11
Inland counties	39%	51	10
<u>Age</u>			
18 – 39	56%	34	10
40 – 64	47%	42	11
65 or older	35%	54	11
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	41%	49	10
Latino	56%	33	11
Black*	74%	8	18
Asian/other*	57%	30	13
<u>Religion</u>			
Protestant	36%	55	9
Catholic	52%	41	7
Other religion	56%	28	16
No religious preference	56%	31	13

* Small sample base.

Most think Clinton would be treated harshly if she were to become a candidate

Ever since she has been on the national stage, when her husband first ran for President in 1992, Hillary Clinton has been the focal point of much controversy played out in the press and political circles.

In this survey *The Field Poll* posed this question: “ *If Hillary Clinton were to run for President in 2008, do you think that because of who she is, she will be treated more harshly than other candidates, be treated just like any other candidate, or will she be treated better than other candidates?*”

Replies to this question indicate that a majority of California voters (51%) believe that she would be treated more harshly than other candidates, 18% think she’d be treated better, and 22% feel she’d be treated just like any other candidate.

Democrats, liberals, non-partisans and younger voters are more likely than other voters to feel Clinton would be treated more harshly than other candidates if she decided to run.

Table 3
If Hillary Clinton were to run for President in 2008, would she be treated more harshly than other candidates, treated better, or just like any other candidate (among California registered voters)

	<u>More harshly</u>	<u>Like any other candidate</u>	<u>Less harshly</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Total statewide	51%	22	18	9
<u>Party</u>				
Democrats	65%	18	12	5
Republicans	33%	27	28	12
Non-partisans/others	51%	23	16	10
<u>Political ideology</u>				
Conservative	28%	27	31	14
Moderate	53%	24	15	8
Liberal	78%	13	7	2
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	49%	23	21	7
Female	53%	22	16	9
<u>Age</u>				
18 – 39	57%	18	20	5
40 – 64	51%	23	19	7
65 or older	42%	26	14	18

* Small sample base.
 ** Less than ½ of 1%.

Background

In various national polls of Democratic voters, Hillary Clinton has led by big margins in preference over other candidates considered to be in contention for the 2008 Democratic nomination.

For example, in a CNN/Gallup/USA Today poll taken last month among Democratic voters nationwide, Hillary Clinton received 39% of the preferences, John Kerry 15%, Al Gore 12%, John Edwards 11%, Mark Warner 6%, Joe Biden 5%, with only scattered proportions for other possible Democratic candidates.

– 30 –

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 507 registered voters in California. The survey was conducted by telephone February 12-26, 2006 in English and Spanish.

Households were sampled using a random digit dial methodology, which randomly selects operating landline telephone exchanges within all areas codes serving California households in proportion to population. Within each exchange, telephone numbers are created by adding random digits to the selected telephone exchange. This method gives each phone listing an equal chance of being selected and permits access to all landline telephone numbers statewide, both listed and unlisted.

According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from the overall sample have a sampling error of +/- 4.5 percentage points.

Questions Asked

Do you think the United States is ready for a woman President?

Suppose Democratic New York Senator Hillary Clinton were to run for President in 2008. Would you be inclined or not inclined to vote for Clinton for President in 2008?

If Hillary Clinton were to run for President in 2008, do you think, that because of who she is, she will be treated more harshly than other candidates, be treated just like any other candidate, or will she be treated better than the other candidates?