



October 04, 2005

Nearly Half of Americans Think U.S. Will Soon Have a Woman President

Most say they would vote for a qualified woman

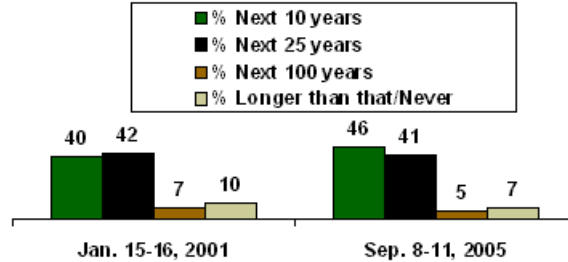
by Jeffrey M. Jones

GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

PRINCETON, NJ -- The success of the recent television show "Commander in Chief," with actress Geena Davis playing the role of the president, has intensified discussion about the likelihood of having a woman as the nation's chief executive. Speculation about a female president is already high, given the expectation that New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton will likely seek the Democratic presidential nomination in 2008. A recent CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll finds that the vast majority of Americans say they would personally vote for a qualified woman for president. Slightly less than half the public thinks that the United States will have a female president within the next 10 years, but most think there will be a female president within 25 years.

The Sept. 8-11 poll finds nearly half of Americans, 46%, think the United States will have a female president within the next 10 years, and an additional 41% say within the next 10 to 25 years. In 2001, 40% of Americans said there would be a female president within the next 10 years.

Overall, how long do you think it will be before a woman is elected president -- within the next 10 years, within the next 25 years, within the next 100 years, sometime longer than that, or never?



Women (51%) are more likely than men (40%) to believe that there will be a female president within the next 10 years. A majority of Democrats, 52%, think the United States will have a female president within the next 10 years, compared with 40% of Republicans.

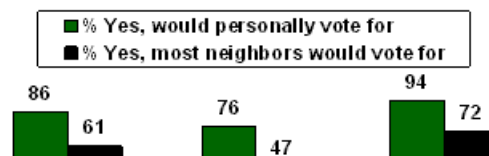
Eighty-six percent of Americans say that they, personally, would vote for a qualified woman for president. Democrats (94%) are more likely than Republicans (76%) to say they would vote for a woman, though the vast majority of each political group is supportive.

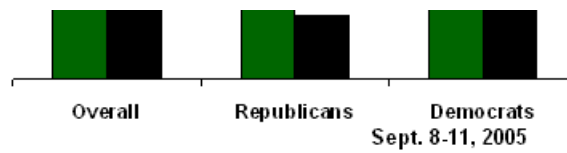
One issue with asking people whether they would vote for a female president is that some respondents may tell the interviewer they would do so even if in reality they would not, to avoid expressing a view about women that could be considered prejudicial. At times, survey researchers will ask respondents to assess their *neighbors'* intentions. This allows respondents to express a seemingly gender-biased view without appearing to be biased themselves. Using this approach, support for a female president is significantly lower, but still registers as a majority -- 61% of Americans say their neighbors would vote for a qualified woman, while 34% say their neighbors would not.

The direct and indirect results taken together suggest that most Americans would vote for a female president, though the actual percentage of who would do so is unclear. Interestingly, less than half of Republicans, 47%, believe their neighbors would vote for a qualified woman for president, compared with 72% of Democrats who share this view. For both parties, the percentage who believe their neighbors would vote for a woman is more than 20 percentage points lower than the percentage who say that they, personally, would vote for a woman.

Would you, personally, vote for a qualified woman for president, or not?

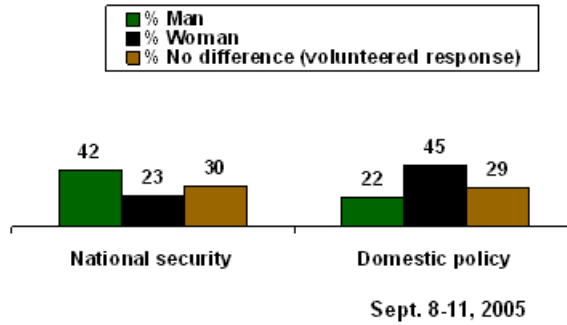
Do you think most of your neighbors would vote for a qualified woman for president, or not?





The poll also attempted to assess if Americans saw a difference in a male or female president in the dominant policy spheres -- national security and domestic policy. Americans are more inclined to say that a male president is better able to handle national security, and a female domestic policy. But a substantial proportion volunteers that the gender of the president makes no difference in either arena.

Do you think a man (or a) woman president would better handle national security/domestic policy?



Democrats' and Republicans' views diverge in their assessment of both policy areas, with Democrats saying a female president would better handle both, while Republicans say a male president would do a better job in both.

By a 57% to 8% margin, Republicans say that a man would better handle national security than a woman. Democrats show a slight preference for a female (37%) than a male (31%) president in this arena.

The reverse is true in regards to domestic policy -- Democrats overwhelmingly believe a female (62%) president is preferable to a male (13%), while Republicans show a slight preference for a man (34%) over a woman (30%) to handle domestic policy.

	Man %	Woman %	No difference %
National security			
Democrats	31	37	27
Independents	37	27	32
Republicans	57	8	31
Domestic policy			
Democrats	13	62	22
Independents	19	45	32
Republicans	34	30	32

Survey Methods

These results are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected national sample of 1,005 adults, aged 18 years and older, conducted Sept. 8-11, 2005. For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum error attributable to sampling and other random effects is ± 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Q.40-41 SPLIT SAMPLED

40. *Would you, personally, vote for a qualified woman for president, or not?*

BASED ON 533 NATIONAL ADULTS IN FORM A

	Yes, would	No, would not	No opinion
2005 Sep 8-11	86%	13	1

41. *Do you think most of your neighbors would vote for a qualified woman for president, or not?*

BASED ON 472 NATIONAL ADULTS IN FORM B

Yes, would	No, would not	No opinion
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2005 Sep 8-11

61%

34

5

42. Overall, how long do you think it will be before a woman is elected president -- within the next 10 years, within the next 25 years, within the next 100 years, sometime longer than that, or never?

	Next 10 years %	Next 25 years %	Next 100 years %	Longer than that %	Never %	No opinion %
National Adults						
2005 Sep 8-11	46	41	5	1	6	1
2001 Jan 15-16	40	42	7	2	8	1
Men						
2005 Sep 8-11	40	49	5	1	4	1
2001 Jan 15-16	42	41	7	2	7	1
Women						
2005 Sep 8-11	51	34	5	1	8	1
2001 Jan 15-16	38	43	6	2	10	1
1999 Feb 3-7	40	41	7	2	10	*

* = Less than 0.5%

43. Do you think a -- [ROTATED: man (or a woman)] -- president would better handle -- [RANDOM ORDER]?

National security

	Man	Woman	NO DIFFERENCE (vol.)	No opinion
2005 Sep 8-11	42%	23	30	5
(vol.) = Volunteered response				

Domestic policy

	Man	Woman	NO DIFFERENCE (vol.)	No opinion
2005 Sep 8-11	22%	45	29	4
(vol.) = Volunteered response				

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