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But Obama's Speech Gets Better Marks than Romney's

Democratic Convention Highlights: Clinton Outshines Obama

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But Obama's Speech Gets Better Marks than Romney's Democratic Convention Highlights: Clinton Outshines Obama

Like Mitt Romney, Barack Obama was not the highlight of his party's convention. Among those who watched at least a little coverage of the Democratic convention, 29% say the highlight was Bill Clinton's speech, while 16% name Obama's speech as the highlight. About as many (15%) say that first lady Michelle Obama's speech was the highlight of the convention.

The latest survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Sept. 7-9, 2012 among 1,012 adults nationwide, finds that while Obama's speech was not the highlight of the convention, it is evaluated more positively than Romney's convention address. Six-in-ten (60%) of those who watched at least a little convention coverage rate Obama's speech as excellent or good; that compares with 53% of GOP convention watchers who rated Romney's speech positively.

However, Obama's speech was not viewed nearly as positively as his address at the convention four years ago: 73% said that speech was excellent or good. In 2008, 42% of convention watchers rated Obama's speech as excellent, compared with 29% who rate it that highly today.

While Obama's speech was overshadowed by Clinton's, Romney shared the spotlight with actor Clint Eastwood. About as many said Eastwood's speech was the highlight of the GOP convention as mentioned Romney's speech. (For more, see ["RNC Highlights: Romney Shares Top Billing with Eastwood,"](#) Sept. 5, 2012.)

Democratic Convention Highlights

<i>What was highlight of Democratic convention?</i>	Sept 7-9 %
Bill Clinton speech	29
Barack Obama speech	16
Michelle Obama speech	15
Joe Biden speech	2
Elizabeth Warren speech	1
"God" platform controversy	1
Gabby Giffords' pledge	1
Other	10
Don't know	11
No highlight/It's over	22

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 7-9, 2012. Open-ended question based on those who watched at least a little convention coverage. Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

Views of Obama: Before and After

Overall views of Obama, like opinions about Romney, have improved modestly in the wake of his party's convention. In the new survey, 26% say their opinion of Obama has become more favorable in the past few days, while 20% say their opinion has become less favorable. Nearly half (48%) say their view of Obama has not changed.

In a survey conducted in late August, prior to the Charlotte convention, 16% said their opinion of Obama had become more favorable recently while 22% said it had become less favorable; 56% said it had not changed.

Recent opinions of Romney showed a similar positive shift after the GOP convention: The percentage saying they had come to have a more favorable view of Romney increased by seven points, from 18% before the Republican convention to 25% after it.

Overall, more Americans say they watched all or most of the Democratic convention than the Republican convention (22% vs. 17%); A third (33%) say they watched none of the coverage of the Democratic convention, compared with 40% who watched none of the coverage of the GOP convention.

Interest in this year's Democratic convention is on par with interest in the party's convention four years ago. In the 2008 post-convention survey, 22% said they watched all or most of the convention, the same percentage as in the current survey.

Modest Improvement in Views of Both Candidates Post-Convention

<i>In past few days view of ___ has become ...</i>	Aug 23-26	Sept 7-9	Change
Barack Obama	%	%	
More favorable	16	26	+10
Less favorable	22	20	-2
No change	56	48	-8
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	
	100	100	
	Aug 23-26	Aug 31-Sept 3	
Mitt Romney	%	%	
More favorable	18	25	+7
Less favorable	26	20	-6
No change	46	44	-2
Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>	
	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 7-9, 2012.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Obama's Speech Viewed More Positively than Romney's

<i>How much did you watch?</i>	GOP conv	Dem conv	GOP-Dem diff
	%	%	
All or most	17	22	-5
Some/Just a little	42	44	-2
None of it	40	33	+7
Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	
	100	100	
	Romney's Obama's speech speech		
<i>Among watchers*</i>			
Excellent	21	29	-8
Good	32	31	+1
Only fair	21	18	+3
Poor	13	12	+1
Did not see speech/ Don't know (Vol.)	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	+4
	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 7-9, 2012. GOP figures from Aug. 31-Sept. 3 survey. *Based on those who watched at least a little of each convention's coverage. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Among those who watched at least a little of the convention coverage, 60% rated Obama's speech as excellent (29%) or good (31%), compared with 53% who viewed Romney's speech as either excellent (21%) or good (32%).

Women, younger people and independents viewed Obama's acceptance more positively than Romney's. Among women who watched at least a little convention coverage, 62% said Obama's speech was excellent or good, while 50% said the same about Romney's speech. Fully 63% of those younger than 50 rated Obama's speech positively, compared with 43% who said Romney's speech was excellent or good.

And while partisans overwhelmingly view the speech of their nominee positively, more independents expressed positive opinions about Obama's speech than Romney's (57% vs. 46%).

Obama's Speech Better Rated by Women, Independents

Percent rating as excellent or good ...*	Romney's speech %	Obama's speech %	R-O Diff
Total	53	60	-7
Men	54	58	-4
Women	50	62	-12
18-49	43	63	-20
50+	62	57	+5
Republican	87	15	+72
Democrat	16	87	-71
Independent	46	57	-11

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 7-9, 2012. Romney ratings from Aug. 31-Sept. 3 survey. *Based on those who watched at least a little of each convention's coverage.

Obama Overshadowed

Four years ago, Obama's speech was the [clear highlight of the Democratic party convention](#). Nearly four-in-ten (38%) of those who watched at least a little convention coverage said his speech was the highlight; Hillary Clinton's speech was a distant second at 16%.

This year, however, Obama's speech was overshadowed by Bill Clinton's address: 29%

Highlights from Charlotte, Tampa

	All watchers %	Reps %	Dem convention highlights %	All watchers %	Dems %
<i>GOP convention highlights</i>			<i>Dem convention highlights</i>		
Clint Eastwood	20	19	Bill Clinton	29	36
Mitt Romney	17	25	Barack Obama	16	24
Ann Romney	10	13	Michelle Obama	15	18
Paul Ryan	9	15	Joe Biden	2	2
Marco Rubio	3	6	Elizabeth Warren	1	1
Condoleezza Rice	2	4	"God" controversy	1	0
Chris Christie	2	1	Gabby Giffords	1	*
Susana Martinez	1	*	Other	10	12
Other	12	14	Don't know	11	10
Don't know	9	4			
No highlight/It's over	20	6	No highlight/It's over	22	9

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 7-9, 2012. GOP convention highlights from Aug. 31-Sept. 3, 2012. Open-ended question based on those who watched at least a little convention coverage. Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

say Clinton's speech was the highlight, nearly twice the percentage citing Obama's speech (16%).

More Democrats mentioned Clinton's speech as the highlight than cited Obama's address (36% vs. 24%). Independents also are more likely to say that Clinton's speech was the convention highlight (29% vs. 15%).

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted September 7-9, 2012 among a national sample of 1,012 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (604 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 408 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 189 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,012	3.6 percentage points
Republicans	247	7.3 percentage points
Democrats	364	6.0 percentage points
Independents	347	6.1 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
September 7-9, 2012 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,012

ASK ALL:

PEW.1 Please think about each of the following candidates. **[INSERT NAME, RANDOMIZE]** In the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of him, a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of him changed lately?

	<u>More favorable</u>	<u>Less favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has not changed</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. Barack Obama				
September 7-9, 2012	26	20	48	5
August 23-26, 2012	16	22	56	5
TREND FOR COMPARISON¹				
Jan 29-Feb 1, 2010	18	22	57	3
January 22-25, 2010	8	33	55	4
December 4-7, 2009	12	27	57	3
September 11-14, 2009	19	26	53	1
June 25-28, 2009	13	20	63	4
May 21-24, 2009	18	21	60	1
April 9-13, 2009	20	18	60	2
March 20-23, 2009	22	19	56	3
February 27-March 2, 2009	23	20	56	1
February 6-9, 2009	23	16	60	1
2008 Election Trend				
October 31-Nov 3, 2008	25	25	49	1
October 24-27, 2008	24	21	52	3
October 17-20, 2008	33	23	43	1
October 10-13, 2008	29	21	48	2
October 3-6, 2008	28	23	47	2
September 26-29, 2008	31	23	45	1
September 19-22, 2008	25	20	53	2
September 12-15, 2008	20	20	58	2
September 5-8, 2008	20	20	59	1
August 29-31, 2008	29	19	50	2
August 22-25, 2008	22	21	54	3
August 15-18, 2008	16	21	60	3
August 8-11, 2008	15	18	64	3
August 1-4, 2008	16	22	60	2
July 25-28, 2008	17	21	59	3
July 18-21, 2008	16	22	60	2
July 11-14, 2008	15	17	64	4
July 3-7, 2008	17	17	62	4
June 27-30, 2008	21	19	56	4
June 20-23, 2008	16	16	66	2
June 13-16, 2008	17	15	64	4
June 6-9, 2008	19	17	61	3
May 30-June 2, 2008	17	21	58	4
May 22-25, 2008	18	20	60	2
May 16-19, 2008	19	19	59	3
May 9-12, 2008	20	23	55	2
May 2-5, 2008	11	25	59	5
April 25-28, 2008	16	24	58	2
April 18-21, 2008	18	24	54	4
March 28-31, 2008	18	27	52	3
March 20-24, 2008	22	30	46	2

¹ From February 2009 through February 2010, question asked about the "past few weeks" and did not introduce Obama as a "candidate."

PEW.1 CONTINUED ...

	More <u>favorable</u>	Less <u>favorable</u>	Opinion has <u>not changed</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
b. Mitt Romney				
September 7-9, 2012	21	25	46	8
August 31-September 3, 2012	25	20	44	11
August 23-26, 2012	18	26	46	11

NO QUESTION PEW.2**PEW.3, PEW.4 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

PEW.5 Thinking about the Democratic convention in Charlotte, how much of the convention coverage did you watch? Did you watch all or most of the coverage, some of it, just a little, or none of it?

		<i>Republican Convention</i> Aug 31-Sep 3 <u>2012</u>	<i>Republican Convention</i> Sep 5-8 <u>2008</u>	<i>Democratic Convention</i> Aug 29-31 <u>2008</u>
Sep 7-9 <u>2012</u>				
22	All or most	17	23	22
21	Some of it	21	33	24
23	Just a little	21	23	25
33	None of it	40	21	29
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	*	*

ASK IF WATCHED AT LEAST A LITTLE CONVENTION COVERAGE (PEW.5=1-3) [N=722]:

PEW.6 For you, what was the highlight of the Democratic convention? [**OPEN-END; ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES BUT DO NOT PROBE.**]

Sep 7-9 <u>2012</u>	
29	Bill Clinton's speech
16	Barack Obama's speech
15	Michelle Obama's speech
2	Joe Biden's speech
1	Controversy about God in Democratic platform
1	Gabby Giffords reciting the Pledge of Allegiance
1	Elizabeth Warren's speech
22	There was no highlight/That it's over
10	Other
11	Don't know/Refused

Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

PEW.6 TREND FOR COMPARISON...

For you, what was the highlight of the Democratic convention? [OPEN-END; ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES BUT DO NOT PROBE.]

Aug 29-31

2008

38	Barack Obama's speech
16	Hillary Clinton's speech
7	Bill Clinton's speech
6	Michelle Obama's speech
3	Joe Biden's speech
3	Ted Kennedy's speech
1	Seeing the Democrats unify behind Obama
1	The turnout/public attention
1	Seeing an African American nominated for president
7	Other
19	There was no highlight/That it's over
10	Don't know/Refused

Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

NO QUESTION PEW.7**ASK IF WATCHED AT LEAST A LITTLE CONVENTION COVERAGE (PEW.5=1-3) [N=722]:**

PEW.8 How would you rate Barack Obama's speech at the convention? Would you say it was excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Sep 7-9 <u>2012</u>		<i>Romney</i> Aug 31-Sep 3 <u>2012</u>	<i>McCain</i> Sep 5-8 <u>2008</u>	<i>Obama</i> Aug 29-31 <u>2008</u>
29	Excellent	21	16	42
31	Good	32	36	31
18	Only fair	21	23	11
12	Poor	13	9	3
9	Did not see speech (VOL.)	12	15	12
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2	1	1

PEW.9, PEW.10 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE