ABC NEWS POLL: CAMPAIGN TRACKING #11 – 10/14/04
EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AFTER 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15, 2004

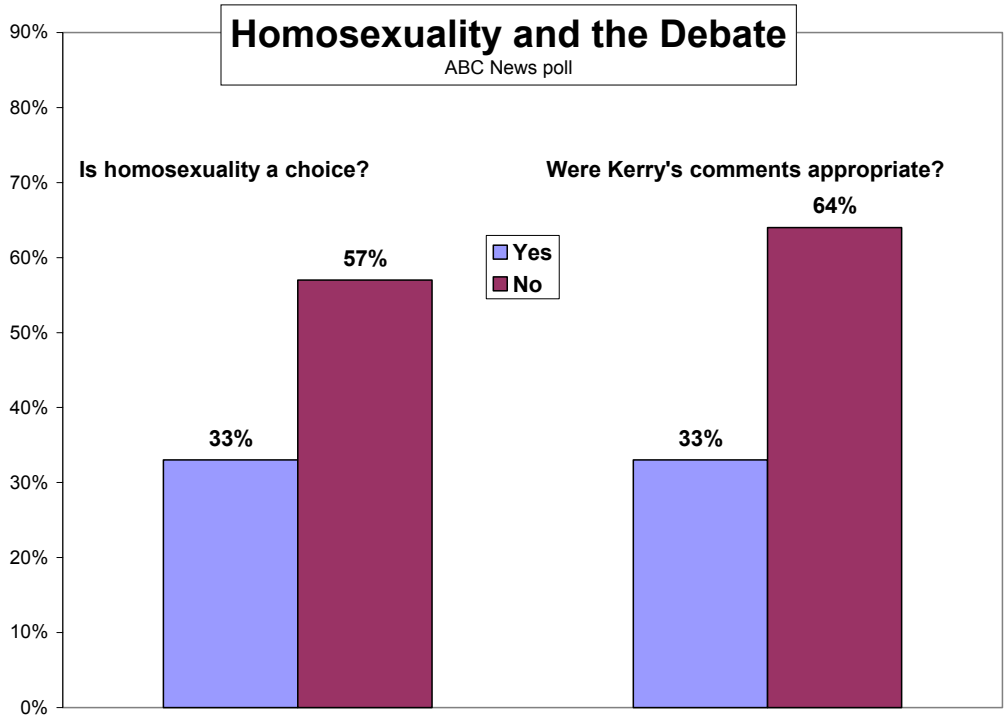
In Tempest on Debate Comment, Majority Calls it Inappropriate

Most likely voters agree with what John Kerry said about homosexuality at Wednesday's presidential debate – but not with the way he said it.

Fifty-seven percent say being homosexual is the way people are, not the way they choose to be – up from its level a decade ago. But likely voters by 2-1 also call it inappropriate for Kerry, when asked that question, to have noted that Vice President Dick Cheney's daughter is a lesbian. Cheney himself mentioned his daughter's sexual orientation in a campaign appearance in August.

After the debate, Cheney called himself "a pretty angry father" over Kerry's comment, and his wife called it "a cheap and tawdry political trick." Kerry responded that he was trying "to say something positive about the way strong families deal with the issue."

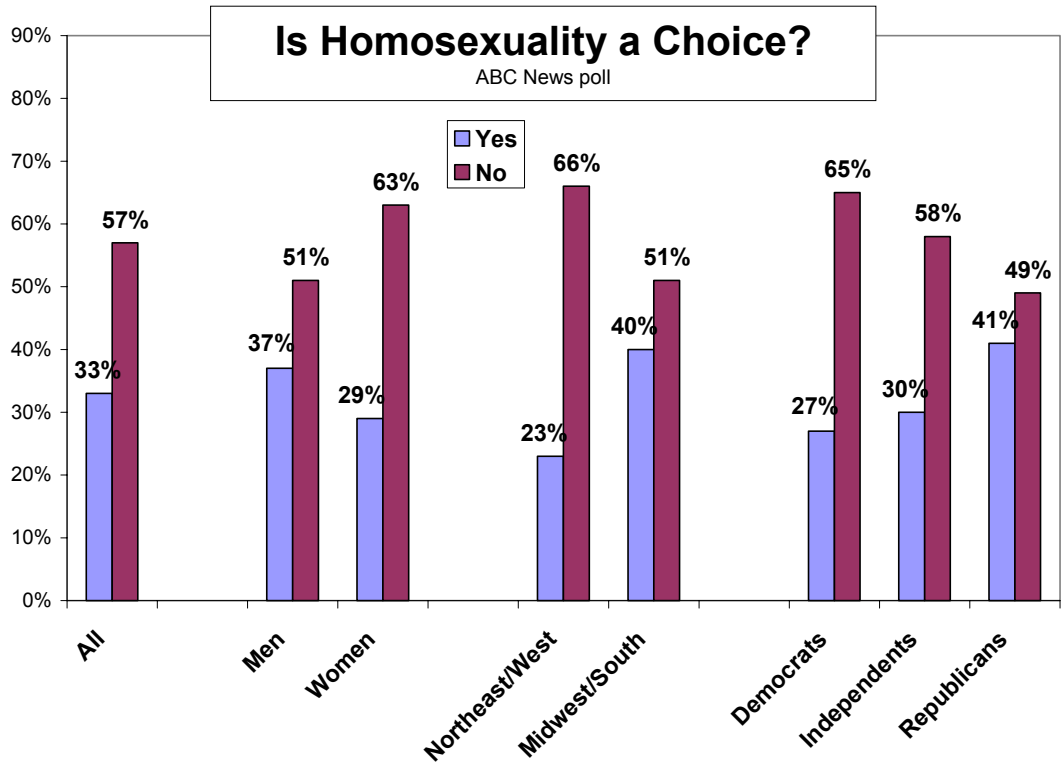
Kerry and George W. Bush remained locked in a 48-48 percent race in the latest ABC News tracking poll. While the tempest may not move many votes, it does look like a missed opportunity for Kerry, since most likely voters agree with his sentiment on the issue, but not how he expressed it.



Indeed only among one group, Kerry's own supporters, does a majority (52 percent) say it was appropriate for him to mention Mary Cheney. Among Democrats, 51 percent call it inappropriate; that rises to 64 percent of independents, 80 percent of Republicans and 82 percent of Bush supporters.

Yet, on the question of whether homosexuality is a trait or a choice, more people take Kerry's position. (In response to this question at the debate, Kerry said, "I think if you talk to anybody, it's not choice." Bush said, "I just don't know.") A third of likely voters call homosexuality a choice; 10 percent have no opinion; and, as noted, 57 percent say it's the way people are. (That compares with 49 percent in an ABC News/Washington Post poll of the general population in 1994.)

The question is somewhat of a political fault line. In one group, evangelical white Protestants – a core Bush group – most, 58 percent, call homosexuality a choice. So do 49 percent of conservatives and 46 percent of Bush supporters – pluralities, but not majorities. By contrast, 58 percent of independents, 65 percent of Democrats and 74 percent of Kerry supporters say it's the way people are. So do 68 percent of white Catholics, a swing voter group. And there's a strong regional difference, with more in the Northeast and West saying it's the way people are, not a choice.

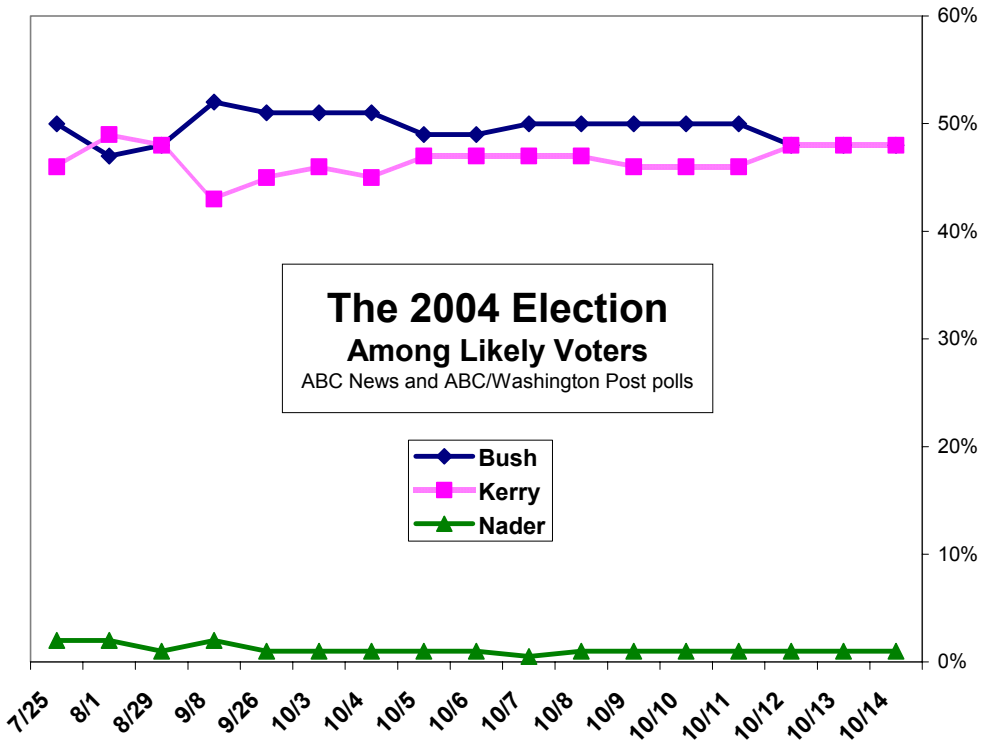


ISSUES – Three top issues continue to command the most attention: Twenty-six percent of likely voters call Iraq the most important issue in their vote, 22 percent say it's the

economy and 20 percent cite the U.S. campaign against terrorism. Health care is next, cited by 14 percent.

Bush maintains his lead over Kerry in trust to handle two of these – Iraq and terrorism. But Kerry responds on domestic issues: He's opened a five-point edge in trust to handle the economy and six points on education, both improved from his position earlier in the week.

Kerry also leads by seven points on "creating jobs," and he holds a double-digit lead in trust to handle health care.



GROUPS – Voter groups continue to divide along very partisan lines; Bush is supported by 90 percent of Republicans, and he's poaching 12 percent of Democrats; Kerry's supported by 85 percent of Democrats, and 10 percent of Republicans. And the swing group in the middle, independents, split 46-46 percent.

The customary gender gap in presidential politics is in classic form: Men favor Bush by 10 points while women favor Kerry by eight. Race, as well, is a major factor: Whites support Bush by nine points, while non-whites support Kerry by a huge 46 points – among blacks, by 89-9 percent.

The sample in the ABC News tracking poll has grown large enough to aggregate some smaller subgroups. Using the full set of daily interviews since Oct. 1, the poll finds

Hispanic voters supporting Kerry by a 17-point margin over Bush, 56-39 percent. It was 62-35 percent Gore-Bush in 2000.

Kerry has the customarily huge lead for a Democratic candidate among Jewish voters – they support him over Bush by 80-15 percent (Gore won Jewish voters by 79-19 percent in 2000). Jews accounted for four percent of voters in 2000, Hispanics, seven percent.

METHODOLOGY – This poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 12-14, 2004 among a random national sample of 1,802 adults, including 1,554 registered voters and 1,203 likely voters. The results have a three-point error margin for the likely voter sample. The questions on homosexuality are based on 422 likely voters interviewed Thursday night; those results have a 5-point margin of error.

ABC News and The Washington Post are sharing data collection for this tracking poll, then independently applying their own models to arrive at likely voter estimates. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer and Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934, or Lisa Finkel, (212) 456-6190.

3. (and 3a) If the 2004 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for (George W. Bush and Dick Cheney, the Republicans), (John Kerry and John Edwards, the Democrats), or Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo, the independents? Which candidate are you leaning toward?

Net Leaned Vote, Likely Voters:

	Bush	Kerry	Nader	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No op.
10/14/04	48	48	1	*	1	*	1
10/13/04	48	48	1	*	1	0	2
10/12/04	48	48	1	*	1	0	2
10/11/04	50	46	1	*	1	0	2
10/10/04	50	46	1	*	1	0	2
10/9/04	50	46	1	*	1	0	2
10/8/04	50	47	1	*	1	0	2
10/7/04	50	47	*	*	1	0	1
10/6/04	49	47	1	1	1	0	1
10/5/04	49	47	1	1	1	0	1
10/4/04	51	45	1	*	1	0	1
10/3/04	51	46	1	*	1	*	1
9/26/04	51	45	1	*	1	0	2
9/8/04	52	43	2	*	1	0	2
8/29/04	48	48	1	*	1	0	2
8/1/04	47	49	2	*	1	0	1
7/25/04	50	46	2	*	1	*	1

Net Leaned Vote, Registered Voters:

Bush	Kerry	Nader	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No op.

10/14/04	47	48	2	*	1	*	2
10/13/04	47	47	2	*	2	*	2
10/12/04	47	47	2	*	2	*	2
10/11/04	48	46	2	*	1	*	2
10/10/04	48	46	1	*	1	*	3
10/9/04	48	47	1	*	2	*	3
10/8/04	48	46	1	*	2	*	3
10/7/04	48	47	1	*	2	*	2
10/6/04	49	46	1	1	2	*	2
10/5/04	50	45	2	*	1	*	2
10/4/04	52	43	2	*	1	*	2
10/3/04	50	45	2	*	1	*	2
9/26/04	51	44	2	1	1	*	2
9/8/04	50	44	2	*	2	*	2
8/29/04	48	47	2	*	1	*	2
8/1/04	44	50	2	*	1	1	2
7/25/04	48	46	3	*	1	*	1
7/11/04	46	46	4	1	2	1	1
6/20/04	44	48	6	*	1	*	1
5/23/04	46	46	4	*	1	1	1
4/18/04	48	43	6	*	2	1	*
3/7/04	44	48	3	*	1	2	2

4. (IF NAMED CANDIDATE) Will you definitely vote for (CANDIDATE), or is there a chance you could change your mind and vote for someone else? (IF CHANCE CHANGE MIND) Is there a good chance you'll change your mind, or would you say it's pretty unlikely?

		Definitely vote	---Chance change mind---- NET	Good	Unlikely	No opin.
Likely voters:						
10/14/04	All	88	12	4	7	1
	Bush	89	10	3	7	*
	Kerry	88	11	5	7	1

Call for full trend.

5. What (was/will be) the single most important issue in your vote for president this year: (The U.S. campaign against terrorism), (the war in Iraq), (the economy and jobs), (education), (health care), or something else?

		Terrorism	Iraq	Economy/ jobs	Educ- ation	Health care	Other	No op.
10/14/04	LV	20	26	22	4	14	13	1
10/13/04	LV	22	24	23	5	13	13	1
10/12/04	LV	22	24	24	4	11	13	2
10/11/04	LV	23	23	24	4	12	13	2
10/10/04	LV	23	24	24	3	12	12	2
10/7/04	LV	23	23	23	4	10	15	2
10/3/04	LV	24	26	21	4	12	12	2
9/26/04	LV	24	20	27	5	11	10	3
	RV	21	19	28	6	13	10	3
9/8/04	RV	25	18	27	6	13	8	2
8/29/04	RV	19	19	31	6	12	11	2
8/1/04	RV	20	23	25	7	11	12	2
7/25/04	RV	20	21	27	7	12	12	1

6. Who do you trust to do a better job handling (ITEM), (Bush) or (Kerry)?

10/14/04 - Summary Table - Likely Voters

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
a. The situation in Iraq	50	41	1	4	4
b. The US campaign against terrorism	54	38	2	3	4
f. The economy	44	49	1	4	2
g. Education	42	48	2	4	5
h. Health care	39	51	1	5	4
i. Creating jobs	42	49	1	5	3

Trend:

a. The situation in Iraq

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/14/04 LV	50	41	1	4	4
10/13/04 LV	49	42	1	4	4
10/12/04 LV	50	41	1	3	4
10/11/04 LV	52	40	1	3	3
10/10/04 LV	54	39	1	3	3
10/7/04 LV	53	43	*	2	2
10/3/04 LV	52	41	1	3	3
9/26/04 LV	53	41	*	3	4
RV	53	40	*	3	4
9/8/04 RV	53	37	1	4	6
8/29/04 RV	52	44	*	2	2
8/1/04 RV	46	48	*	2	4
7/25/04 RV	52	40	1	3	3
7/11/04 RV	47	47	1	4	2
All	47	47	1	3	2
6/20/04 RV	49	47	*	3	1
All	50	45	*	4	1
5/23/04	48	42	*	6	3
4/18/04	52	41	*	4	2
3/7/04	47	48	1	3	2
2/11/04	48	41	1	6	5

b. The U.S. campaign against terrorism

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/14/04 LV	54	38	2	3	4
10/13/04 LV	52	39	2	3	4
10/12/04 LV	53	38	1	3	4
10/11/04 LV	55	37	1	3	3
10/10/04 LV	56	37	1	3	3
10/7/04 LV	55	40	1	2	3
10/3/04 LV	54	38	1	2	4
9/26/04 LV	53	38	1	3	5
RV	54	37	1	3	5
9/8/04 RV	57	35	1	3	4
8/29/04 RV	56	38	1	2	3
8/1/04 RV	48	45	*	1	5
7/25/04 RV	55	37	2	3	3
7/11/04 RV	51	43	1	3	3
All	51	42	1	3	3
6/20/04 RV	48	47	*	3	2
All	47	48	1	3	1
5/23/04	52	39	1	4	4
4/18/04	58	37	1	3	1
3/7/04	57	36	2	2	3

2/11/04	53	37	1	4	5

f. The economy

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/14/04 LV	44	49	1	4	2
10/13/04 LV	44	49	2	4	2
10/12/04 LV	45	48	2	3	3
10/11/04 LV	47	46	1	3	3
10/10/04 LV	47	45	1	3	3
10/7/04 LV	47	48	1	2	3
9/26/04 RV	48	43	*	4	5
9/8/04 RV	47	43	1	4	5
8/29/04 RV	48	47	1	2	2
8/1/04 RV	41	52	*	3	4
7/25/04 RV	47	46	1	3	4
7/11/04 RV	44	50	1	3	2
7/11/04	43	51	1	3	3
6/20/04 RV	45	50	1	2	1
6/20/04	45	50	1	3	1
5/23/04	43	48	*	5	3
4/18/04	47	47	1	4	1
3/7/04	41	53	*	4	2
2/11/04	41	49	1	4	5

g. Education

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/14/04 LV	42	48	2	4	5
10/13/04 LV	41	48	2	4	5
10/12/04 LV	43	46	2	4	6
10/11/04 LV	45	44	2	4	5
10/10/04 LV	47	43	1	4	5
10/7/04 LV	48	46	1	2	3
9/8/04 RV	46	42	1	5	6
8/29/04 RV	47	47	1	2	3
8/1/04 RV	39	52	1	3	5
7/25/04 RV	44	45	1	4	6
7/11/04 RV	40	50	1	4	4
7/11/04	40	50	1	4	5
6/20/04 RV	43	52	1	2	2
6/20/04	42	52	1	2	2
4/18/04	47	44	1	6	2
3/7/04	40	52	1	3	4
2/11/04	40	49	1	6	5

h. Health care

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/14/04 LV	39	51	1	5	4
10/13/04 LV	38	51	1	6	4
10/12/04 LV	38	50	1	6	5
10/11/04 LV	40	48	2	5	5
10/10/04 LV	41	48	1	5	5
10/7/04 LV	44	49	*	3	3
9/8/04 RV	42	45	1	5	8
8/29/04 RV	43	50	*	3	4
8/1/04 RV	36	55	*	3	5
7/25/04 RV	44	47	1	4	5

6/20/04 RV	38	56	*	3	2
6/20/04	37	58	*	4	2

Compare to: The cost, availability, and coverage of health insurance

4/18/04	42	48	1	6	3
3/7/04	36	56	0	5	2
2/11/04	34	52	1	7	6

i. Creating jobs

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/14/04 LV	42	49	1	5	3
10/13/04 LV	42	48	1	5	3
10/12/04 LV	42	47	1	6	4
10/11/04 LV	44	46	1	5	4
10/10/04 LV	45	46	1	4	4
10/7/04 LV	44	49	*	3	4
9/26/04 RV	44	46	1	5	5
9/8/04 RV	43	45	1	6	6
4/18/04	46	48	1	4	1
3/7/04	43	51	1	3	2
2/11/04	37	51	1	5	6

7. On another subject, do you think being homosexual is something that people choose to be, or do you think it's just the way they are?

	Something that people choose	The way they are	No opinion
10/14/04 LV	33	57	10
6/26/94	40	49	11

8. In response to a question on homosexuality in the last presidential debate, Kerry mentioned that Vice President Dick Cheney’s daughter is a lesbian. That’s something Cheney has acknowledged. Do you think it was appropriate or inappropriate for Kerry to mention it?

	Appropriate	Not appropriate	No opinion
10/14/04 LV	33	64	3

END