# Clinton's Support Drops by a Third
as Trump, Carson Surge in GOP race

Damaged by increased doubt about her honesty and empathy, Hillary Clinton's lost a third of her support for the Democratic presidential nomination in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll, while non-politicians Donald Trump and Ben Carson have surged on the GOP side, commanding more than half the vote between them in a crowded field.

The results are remarkable, particularly in the Republican contest: Even as Trump's lead for his party's nomination has grown, six in 10 Americans see him as unqualified to serve as president and as many say he lacks the personality and temperament to succeed in the job. His rating for empathy is far worse than Clinton's; for honesty and trustworthiness, slightly worse.

That said, Trump – and to some extent Bernie Sanders on the Democratic side – has capitalized on an anti-establishment streak in political sentiment. Trump also has better ratings among Republicans than from the public at large, and he continues to draw particular support from those who favor his controversial positions on immigration.
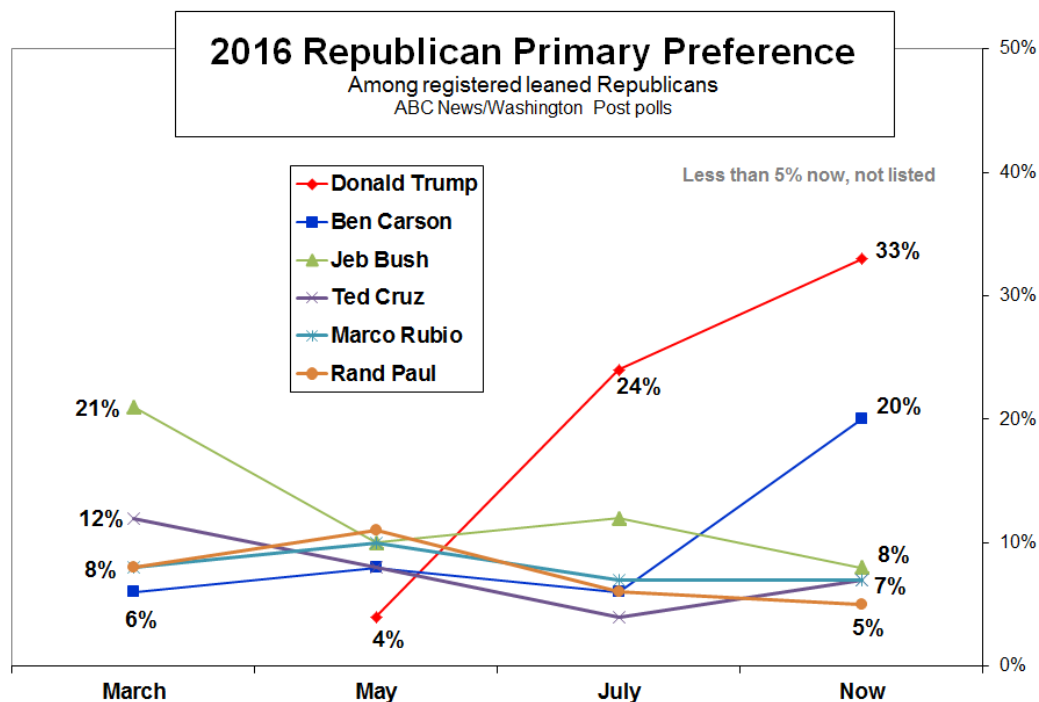
All told, among registered voters, 33 percent of Republicans and GOP-leaning independents now favor Trump for the nomination, with 20 percent for Carson – up 9 and 14 percentage points,

respectively, since July. Jeb Bush has crumpled to 8 percent, down from a field-leading 21 percent in March and his first single-digit result in ABC/Post polls this cycle. Among others, Scott Walker's tumbled to 2 percent, down 11 points since midsummer.

In the Democratic contest, Clinton's drop is dramatic, yet not enough to challenge her clear lead. She's supported by 42 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who are registered to vote, down from 63 percent in July, while Sanders has gained 10 points, to 24 percent, and Joe Biden's up by 9, to 21 percent. If Biden doesn't run, most of his support moves to Clinton, boosting her to 56 percent – exactly double Sanders' support in this case.
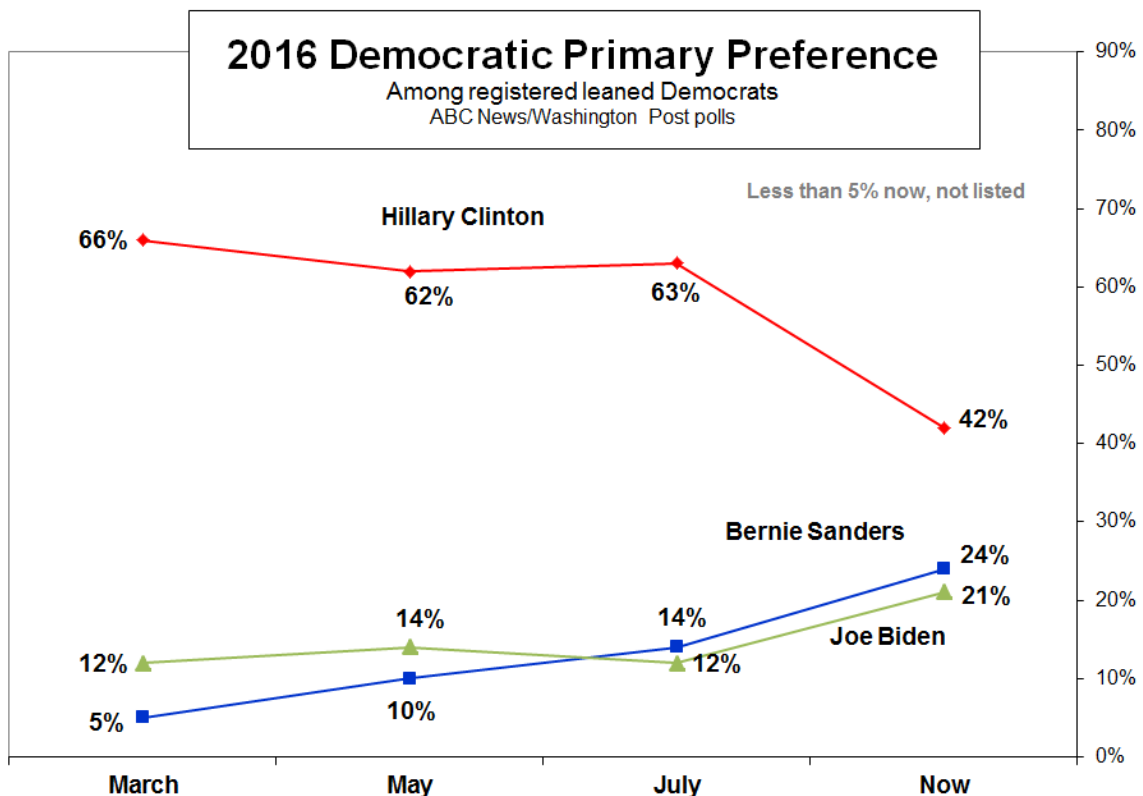
Even if still in a strong position, Clinton's trajectory leaves no question that she has trouble. Just 39 percent now see her as honest and trustworthy, matching her career low; that has dropped by 14 points since last summer. At 46 percent, her rating for empathy – understanding the problems of average Americans – is at a career low (albeit by a single point). Her support in the primary has tanked in particular among women, previously a mainstay of her candidacy, from 71 percent in July to 42 percent now.

The e-mail imbroglio is part of it. Fifty-five percent of Americans in this poll, produced for ABC by Langer Research Associates, disapprove of Clinton's handling of questions about the matter, 54 percent think she's tried to cover it up and 51 percent think she broke government regulations by using a private server for work-related e-mail during her time as secretary of state.

That said, Clinton may have hit a landing pad on the issue: Disapproval of her handling of the situation is no worse now than it was in May, and fewer than half, 44 percent, call it a legitimate issue in the presidential election, actually down a scant 4 points.

Clinton, in any case, benefits from another attribute: Fifty-six percent of Americans say she has the personality and temperament it takes to serve effectively as president. As noted, that's far better than it is for Trump. The public by 63-33 percent says he lacks the personality and temperament to serve effectively – and, by an even broader 67-29 percent, that he doesn't understand their problems. Just 35 percent see him as honest and trustworthy.

Yet, as covered in an analysis released Sunday, Clinton and Trump are essentially even among registered voters in a hypothetical matchup for the general election, 46-43 percent.

Two reasons are apparent: One is that Clinton's support – including her ratings on personal attributes – are considerably better among groups that are less apt to be registered to vote, such as young adults and racial and ethnic minorities. The other is that vote preferences at this stage of the campaign are driven more by partisanship, by Trump's positions on immigration and by his outsider status than by other factors.

ANTI-POLITICS – Anti-establishment sentiment is palpable, yet not monolithic. On one hand, 72 percent of Americans say they think most people in politics cannot be trusted; 48 percent feel that way strongly. And 64 percent call the political system "basically dysfunctional"; again most of them (46 percent overall) feel strongly about it.

At the same time, more would like to see the next president be someone with political experience than someone from outside the political establishment, by 56-40 percent. And, by a wide margin, more would rather see the next president "fix the current political system" than "tear it down and start over," 76-21 percent.

Discontent, then, only goes so far – and it does have a strong partisan flavor. Among Democrats and Democratic leaning-independents, 69 percent prefer experience to outsider status. Among leaned Republicans, by contrast, that drops to 36 percent; 60 percent instead prefer an outsider.

```
                                       Prefer:
                               Experience    Outsider
        All adults                 56%          40
        Registered leaned Democrats     69          27
        Registered leaned Republicans   36          60
```

Regardless, these views have impacts. In the Democratic contest, Sanders's support rises to 34 percent among people looking for a political outsider; he's numerically ahead of Clinton's 28 percent in this group. Among those more focused on experience, by contrast, Clinton's support swells to 47 percent, while Sanders' subsides to 20 percent.

There's a similar effect in the GOP race. Among those looking for an outsider, Trump's support surges to 41 percent, Carson's to 25 percent; the two alone command two-thirds of this group.

Among those who see experience as more important, Trump has 23 percent support, Carson, 13 percent.

2016 Primary Preferences by Desire for Experience vs. an Outsider
ABC News/Washington Post poll

Legend: ■ Experience □ Outsider

Among leaned Democrats
- Hillary Clinton: Experience 47%, Outsider 28%
- Bernie Sanders: Experience 20%, Outsider 34%

Among leaned Republicans
- Donald Trump: Experience 23%, Outsider 41%
- Ben Carson: Experience 13%, Outsider 25%
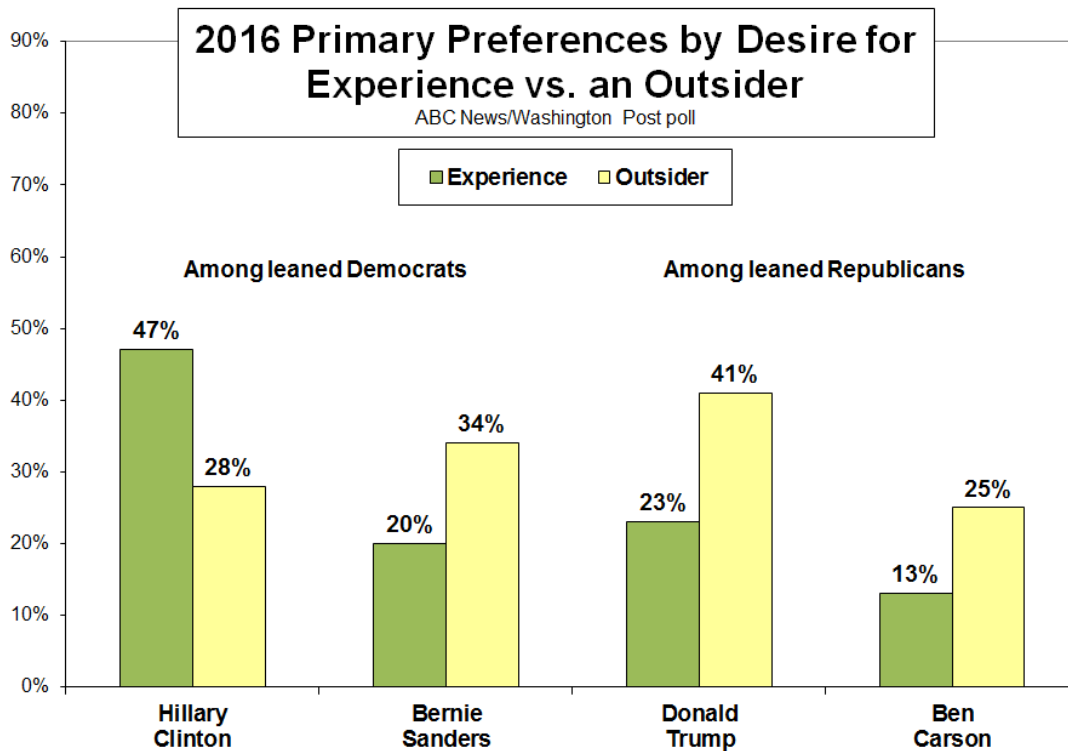
GOP GROUPS – Among groups, education continues to be one of the most striking differences in support for Trump; he's backed by 40 percent of leaned Republicans who lack a college degree vs. 19 percent of those who are college graduates. Less-educated voters are less likely to turn out, making this potentially a serious limitation for him.

Trump has some troubles on personal attributes even within his party. Among registered leaned Republicans, 35 percent see him as unqualified to be president, 44 percent think he doesn't have the kind of personality and temperament it takes to serve effectively and 47 percent say he doesn't understand their problems. None reaches a majority, but, for in-party ratings, these are potential concerns for Trump.

Carson, for his part, has 25 percent support from college-educated leaned Republicans – putting him numerically ahead of Trump in this group. And he does better with strong conservatives than with moderate leaned Republicans, while Trump's support is less tied to ideology. Walker, meanwhile, has lost support especially among strong conservatives.

DEM GROUPS – In the Democratic contest, Clinton and Sanders run essentially evenly among whites, 31 vs. 33 percent; Clinton's lead relies on nonwhites, among whom she has 57 percent support, to Sanders' 13 percent. It's the only major demographic group in which Clinton still maintains a clear majority.

Clinton's support from nonwhites has dropped, by 14 points, from 71 percent in July. But her support from whites has fallen farther, by 25 points, in the same time.

As noted, too, Clinton's support among women has cratered by 29 points since July. Among men she's lost 9 points in the same period, from 52 to 43 percent. Her gender gap has evaporated.

MODELS – Fifty-seven percent of all Americans say they oppose Trump's positions on immigration issues. Among leaned Republicans who are registered to vote, however, that shifts; 59 percent in this group back Trump on immigration.

That's key to his support. Statistical models indicate agreement with Trump's anti-immigration views is the strongest independent predictor of supporting him for the nomination. Next strongest is preference for a political outsider – making these two areas that Trump may be expected to emphasize in the GOP debate this week, and beyond.

Among leaned Democrats, meanwhile, support for Clinton is most strongly predicted by the sense that she's honest and trustworthy, as well as being nonwhite. She, therefore, may focus in the campaign ahead on seeking to restore her honesty rating – and on building up her presumed firewall in the South, outside the confines of Iowa and New Hampshire, where racial and ethnic minorities are comparatively few and far between.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone Sept. 7-10, 2015, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults, including 821 registered voters. Results have a margin of sampling error of 3.5 points for the full sample and 4.0 for registered voters, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 33-22-35 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents, among all adults, and 34-25-33 percent among registered voters.

The survey was produced for ABC News by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y. See details on the survey's methodology here.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

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

Media contacts: Van Scott, (212) 456-7243, or Julie Townsend, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow.

```
* in data columns = less than 0.5 percent

1-2, 7-8, 21-31 held for release; 6 previously released.

3. (ASKED OF LEANED REPUBLICANS) I'm going to read a list of possible candidates for
the Republican nomination for president in 2016. If the 2016 Republican presidential
primary or caucus in your state were being held today, for whom would you vote? Which
candidate would you lean toward?
```

9/10/15 - NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE

Among gen pop:

| | --------- 2015 --------- | | | | ---------- 2014 ----------- | | | |
	9/10	7/19	5/31	3/29	12/14	10/12	4/27	1/23
Jeb Bush	10	13	13	20	15	15	14	18
Ben Carson	18	6	7	7	7	6	NA	NA
Chris Christie	1	4	5	6	8	7	10	13
Ted Cruz	7	4	7	13	8	4	6	12
Carly Fiorina	2	*	2	1	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jim Gilmore	*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lindsey Graham	*	*	1	1	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mike Huckabee	3	7	9	8	6	11	13	NA
Bobby Jindal	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	NA
John Kasich	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	NA
George Pataki	*	2	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Rand Paul	4	6	11	9	11	12	14	11
Rick Perry	1	3	2	2	5	6	6	NA
Marco Rubio	6	9	9	7	6	8	7	10
Paul Ryan	NA	NA	NA	NA	11	8	11	20
Rick Santorum	1	1	3	2	3	3	NA	NA
Donald Trump	34	23	5	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Scott Walker	2	11	11	12	6	1	5	NA
Other (vol.)	2	1	*	1	*	1	1	2
None of these (vol.)	2	5	1	3	2	3	4	4
Would not vote (vol.)	2	1	1	1	*	1	*	1
No opinion	3	2	6	4	7	10	5	9

Among reg voters:

| | --------- 2015 ---------- | | | | ---------- 2014 ----------- | | | |
	9/10	7/19	5/31	3/29	12/14	10/12	4/27	1/23
Jeb Bush	8	12	10	21	14	13	12	18
Ben Carson	20	6	8	6	8	7	NA	NA
Chris Christie	1	3	6	7	7	8	9	14
Ted Cruz	7	4	8	12	8	4	7	12
Carly Fiorina	2	*	2	1	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jim Gilmore	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lindsey Graham	*	*	1	1	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mike Huckabee	3	8	9	8	7	12	14	NA
Bobby Jindal	1	2	*	1	3	2	2	NA
John Kasich	3	2	3	1	2	2	1	NA
George Pataki	*	1	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Rand Paul	5	6	11	8	10	12	15	11
Rick Perry	1	4	2	1	5	6	5	NA
Marco Rubio	7	7	10	8	7	8	6	10
Paul Ryan	NA	NA	NA	NA	11	9	12	18
Rick Santorum	1	1	4	2	3	4	NA	NA
Donald Trump	33	24	4	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Scott Walker	2	13	11	13	7	2	5	NA
Other (vol.)	1	*	*	1	*	1	2	2
None of these (vol.)	1	4	2	3	2	3	4	4
Would not vote (vol.)	1	1	1	1	*	0	*	1
No opinion	3	2	5	4	6	9	5	9

4. (ASKED OF LEANED DEMOCRATS) I'm going to read a list of possible candidates for the Democratic nomination for president in 2016. If the 2016 Democratic presidential primary or caucus in your state were being held today, for whom would you vote? Which candidate would you lean toward?

9/10/15 - NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE

Among gen pop:

```
                        ---------- 2015 ---------   ---------- 2014 ----------
                        9/10   7/19   5/31   3/29   12/14  10/12   6/1   1/23
Joe Biden                21     14     14     11     14     13     12     12
Lincoln Chafee            1      1      1     NA     NA     NA     NA     NA
Hillary Clinton          46     62     63     66     63     65     66     73
Andrew Cuomo             NA     NA     NA     NA     NA     NA      2     NA
Martin O'Malley           2      1      2      1      1      1      1     NA
Bernie Sanders           20     14      9      4      4      1      2     NA
Brian Schweitzer         NA     NA     NA     NA     NA     NA      1     NA
Elizabeth Warren         NA     NA     NA     11     11     10      7      8
Jim Webb                  1      2      2      2      3      3      2     NA
Other (vol.)              1      2      2      *      *      0      0      1
None of these (vol.)      4      2      3      1      1      2      2      2
Would not vote (vol.)     2      1      1      1      1      *      *      *
No opinion                4      2      2      3      2      5      4      3
```

Among reg voters:
```
                        ---------- 2015 ---------   ---------- 2014 ----------
                        9/10   7/19   5/31   3/29   12/14  10/12   6/1   1/23
Joe Biden                21     12     14     12     14     13     12     11
Lincoln Chafee            1      *      1     NA     NA     NA     NA     NA
Hillary Clinton          42     63     62     66     61     64     69     73
Andrew Cuomo             NA     NA     NA     NA     NA     NA      2     NA
Martin O'Malley           2      1      3      *      *      1      2     NA
Bernie Sanders           24     14     10      5      4      1      2     NA
Brian Schweitzer         NA     NA     NA     NA     NA     NA      1     NA
Elizabeth Warren         NA     NA     NA     12     13     11      7      9
Jim Webb                  1      2      1      1      3      2      1     NA
Other (vol.)              1      2      2      *      *      0      0      *
None of these (vol.)      5      3      4      2      1      3      2      3
Would not vote (vol.)     1      1      1      1      1      0      0      *
No opinion                3      2      1      2      2      5      2      4
```

5. (ASKED OF LEANED BIDEN SUPPORTERS) Who would your second choice be? Which candidate would you lean toward as your second choice?

9/10/15 – NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE

```
                      - Among gen pop -
                      9/10/15   7/19/15
Lincoln Chafee           1         1
Hillary Clinton         59        69
Martin O'Malley          2         2
Bernie Sanders          24        15
Jim Webb                 2         4
Other (vol.)             1         2
None of these (vol.)     4         3
Would not vote (vol.)    2         1
No opinion               5         3
```

```
                      --- Among RVs ---
                      9/10/15   7/19/15
Lincoln Chafee           1         1
Hillary Clinton         56        68
Martin O'Malley          3         2
Bernie Sanders          28        16
Jim Webb                 2         5
Other (vol.)             1         2
None of these (vol.)     5         3
Would not vote (vol.)    1         1
No opinion               4         3
```

On another subject,
9. Do you think most people in politics can or cannot be trusted? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	-------- Trusted --------			------ Not trusted ------		No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
9/10/15	23	5	18	72	24	48	5

10. Do you think the current political system in the United States is basically functional or basically dysfunctional? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	------- Functional-------			---- Not functional -----		No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
9/10/15	33	12	21	64	18	46	3

11. When thinking about the kind of person you'd like to see as the next president, which of these is more important to you - (someone with experience in how the political system works) or (someone from outside the existing political establishment)?

	Experience in how the political system works	Outside the existing political establishment	No opinion
	---	---	---
9/10/15	56	40	4

12. When thinking about the kind of person you'd like to see as the next president, which of these is more important to you - (someone who wants to fix the current political system) or (someone who wants to tear it down and start over)?

	Fix current system	Tear it down	Leave it alone (vol.)	No opinion
	---	---	---	---
9/10/15	76	21	1	3

Thinking about Donald Trump...
13. Given what you've heard or read about them, would you say you support or oppose Trump's proposals on immigration? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	-------- Support--------			-------- Oppose ---------		No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
9/10/15	34	21	13	57	12	45	9

14. Regardless of whether or not you'd vote for him, do you think Trump is or is not qualified to serve as president?

	Is qualified	Is not qualified	No opinion
	---	---	---
9/10/15	37	60	2

15. Please tell me whether the following statement applies to Trump, or not:

9/10/15 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. He is honest and trustworthy	35	59	6
b. He understands the problems of people like you	29	67	4
c. He has the kind of personality and temperament it takes to serve effectively as president	33	63	4

Now thinking about Hillary Clinton...
16. Please tell me whether the following statement applies to Clinton, or not:

9/10/15 - Summary Table

	Yes	No	No opinion
a. She is honest and trustworthy	39	56	5
b. She understands the problems of people like you	46	51	4
c. She has the kind of personality and temperament it takes to serve effectively as president	56	41	3

Trend where available:

a. She is honest and trustworthy

	Yes	No	No opinion
9/10/15	39	56	5
5/31/15	41	52	7
3/29/15	46	46	7
6/1/14	53	42	5
4/13/08	39	58	3
5/15/06	52	42	6

b. She understands the problems of people like you

	Yes	No	No opinion
9/10/15	46	51	4
5/31/15	49	46	5
3/29/15	47	48	5
6/1/14	54	41	5
5/15/06	54	43	3

c. No trend

17. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Hillary Clinton is handling questions about her use of personal e-mail while she was secretary of state?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
9/10/15	34	55	11
5/31/15	31	55	14

18. Do you think Clinton's use of personal e-mail while she was secretary of state is or is not a legitimate issue in next year's presidential election?

	Legitimate	Not legitimate	No opinion
9/10/15	44	49	6
5/31/15	48	45	7

19. Given what you've heard or read about it, do you think Clinton (stayed within government regulations) in her use of personal e-mail, or do you think she (broke government regulations)?

	Stayed within regulations	Broke regulations	No opinion
9/10/15	32	51	18

20. Do you think Clinton has (honestly disclosed the facts) about her use of personal e-mail while secretary of state or has (tried to cover up the facts)?

	Honestly disclosed	Cover up the facts	No opinion
9/10/15	34	54	11

*** END ***