



Price of War on U.S. Society: A Political Issue? *Split Among College-Educated Drives Attitudes On Progress U.S. Has Made Since 9/11—Issues for Eggheads*

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Between September 3-5, 2002, Ipsos-Reid interviewed a representative sample of 1000 adults nationwide by telephone. The margin of error is $\pm 3.1\%$. The study was conducted and paid for by Ipsos-Reid.

Americans generally feel the country is better off, rather than worse off, when it comes to its direct, specific response to the terrorist threat brought home by the attack of September 11, 2001. When it comes to the broader social effects of the year-long period of America's war on terrorism, however, many of the best-educated Americans express doubts. That could cause Republicans problems with Independent voters.

America is better off, rather than worse off, when it comes to the government's preparedness to prevent future attacks (73% better to 18% worse off), airport security (72%-18%) and how the U.S. deals with terrorism (71%-23%). More than four-in-five Republicans and political Independents agree progress has been made on those issues, as do about three-in-five registered Democrats. Democrats are somewhat less positive than Republicans and Independents—but still strongly positive—on questions of specific responses to terrorism. That is something on which Americans agree.

Fewer than half believe America is better off when it comes to broader social changes the war has wrought—individuals' sense of personal safety (47% better to 32% worse off), U.S. standing in the world (44%-46%), protection of civil liberties for people in the U.S. (43%-46%) and especially people's tolerance of diversity (32%-56%).

Regarding these broader, war-related social changes, political differences emerge between Republicans and Independents on the question of how safe they feel in the world—whether in their private world (personal safety) or the public world (America's standing in the world. On the questions of tolerance and especially on civil liberties, however, Republicans are isolated in feeling good about what's happened in the past year, and Independents are closer to Democrats in the doubts that have been raised.



Education explains the difference. Republicans (35% have a four-year college degree, 26% high school or less) and Independents (38% college degree, 28% high school educated or less) tend to be better educated than Democrats (29% college degree, 37% high school or less). **And better-educated Americans are much more likely to express doubts about what has happened in the past year on personal safety, America's standing in the world, civil liberties and tolerance.** The better-educated elites pay attention to these issues, and are more concerned about them.

The division among the college-educated on this issue—between college-educated Republicans and college-educated Independents in particular—may be a new fault line in American politics. Whether the division will be significant in American elections depends on how much importance people place on these issues. Results of this poll show, however, that those with a college degree—more than those with only some college experience, and those with no college experience—are least likely to see anything positive in changes on feelings of personal safety, America's standing in the world, tolerance and the defense of civil liberties.

Three-in-four Americans, including 70% or more among Democrats, Independents, Republicans, the best and least educated, all agree that when it comes to the economy, we are worse off rather than better off since September 11, 2001. On that Americans agree, and that economic factor will probably be the most important when Americans vote in November.

But the most unusual aspect of politics in 2002 has been the dramatic, across-the-board boost President George W. Bush enjoyed at the end of last year and the beginning of this year as a result of his resolute response to the events one year ago. That led to stratospheric job approval ratings that did *not* translate into much of an edge for Republicans on preference for which party should control Congress after this fall's election. Since early this year, Bush's job approval ratings have declined steadily, and that decline has yielded a narrow Democratic advantage today in the midterm elections.

A year later, how do people assess the performance of national elected officials? That IS a political question. Overall, 52% of all Americans agree that the job performance of national elected officials is better since September 11, 2001—including 66% of registered Republicans, but only 43% of registered Democrats, and exactly 50% of registered Independents.



Since September 11, 2001, would you say....[ITEM] is better off or worse off?

Percentages who say each is “better off” since 9/11

		Registered Voters: Party Identification			Education		
	All Adults	Repub- licans	Demo- crats	Inde- pend- ents	HS or less	Some college	Col- lege degree
The government's preparedness to prevent future attacks	73%	82%	64%	81%	69%	78%	71%
Airport security	72%	76%	73%	71%	72%	77%	68%
How the U.S. deals with terrorism	71%	82%	62%	80%	66%	74%	71%
The job being done by national elected officials	52%	66%	43%	50%	47%	56%	51%
Your sense of personal safety	47%	58%	42%	53%	54%	48%	39%
The standing of the U.S. in the world	44%	53%	35%	46%	48%	46%	36%
The protection of civil liberties for people in the U.S.	43%	48%	39%	39%	50%	44%	33%
People's tolerance of diversity and for others who are different than them	32%	35%	30%	28%	34%	36%	26%
The state of the U.S. economy	17%	22%	12%	19%	22%	15%	14%

Source: Ipsos-Reid US Public Affairs, poll of 1000 adults conducted September 3-5, 2002.



Ipsos-Reid U.S. Public Affairs, the Washington, D.C.-based division of Ipsos-Reid, is part of the world's fourth largest polling and market research organization, the Ipsos group, based in Paris. Ipsos-Reid U.S. Public Affairs is a non-partisan, objective public affairs research organization made up of Democratic and Republican campaign and political polling veterans. It was established in Washington in August 2001, and it is led by Thomas Riehle, who has more than 15 years of experience as a political pollster in Washington.

To view the latest poll results and research from Ipsos-Reid U.S. Public Affairs please go to:

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