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NBC 4 New York/Wall Street Journal/Marist Poll*

Clinton Outdistances Trump in New York Before “Reality TV Debate”

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This NBC 4 New York/Wall Street Journal/Marist Poll Reports:

There are just hours to go until the first presidential debate which New Yorkers expect to be more like reality television than an informative discussion. In the contest, Democrats Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine, 57%, lead their Republican rivals Donald Trump and Mike Pence, 33%, by 24 points among likely voters statewide including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate. Seven percent do not support either candidate, 1% are for someone else, and 2% are undecided.

“Clinton and Trump face off tonight in New York, but the Empire State is far from a battleground state for these two New Yorkers,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “Clinton does well among the same voters she carries elsewhere. But, what makes New York different is the Democratic registration advantage and her ability to best Trump among white voters and men in the state.”

Looking at party, Clinton receives the support of most of her Democratic base, 92%. While 83% of Republican likely voters back Trump, one in ten members of New York’s GOP, 10%, are for Clinton. Among independents, Clinton garners the support of a plurality of voters, 42% to 37% for Trump. A notable 14% do not support either Clinton or Trump.

In this unprecedented campaign where both Clinton and Trump hail from New York, it is Clinton who is the hometown favorite among most demographic groups. Clinton, 89%, overwhelmingly leads Trump, 5%, among likely voters who are African American. Among Latino voters, Clinton, 65%, is ahead of Trump, 30%, by more than two to one. Among white voters, Clinton, 49%, is ahead of Trump, 41%, by 8 points.

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Clinton also draws strength from likely voters who are women. Among this group, Clinton, 65%, has more than double the support of Trump, 26%. She also has the backing of a plurality of men, 48% for Clinton to 41% for Trump. However, Trump, 48%, is ahead of Clinton, 40%, among *white* men who are likely to cast a ballot. Education level also comes into play. Clinton, 55%, leads Trump, 33%, by 22 points among white likely voters *with* a college degree. However, Trump, 50%, has a 10 point lead over Clinton, 40%, among whites *without* a college education.

Regionally, Clinton's support is bolstered by likely voters who live in New York City. Here, Clinton outpaces Trump, 74% to 20%. Clinton, 49%, also has a double-digit lead over Trump, 37%, among those who live Upstate. In the suburbs of New York City, Trump, 47%, and Clinton, 46%, are competitive.

69% of likely voters with a candidate preference say they strongly support their choice of candidate. More Clinton supporters, 71%, compared with Trump's backers, 64%, report they are firmly committed to their selection for president.

Likely voters in New York State overwhelmingly have a negative opinion of Trump, 68%. Not quite three in ten likely voters, 28%, have a favorable opinion of him. When it comes to Clinton's likeability, voters divide. 49% of the likely electorate have a favorable impression of Clinton while 47% have an unfavorable one.

Looking at the multi-candidate field, Clinton receives the support of 52% of likely voters statewide to 31% for Trump. Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson garners 7% while Green Party candidate Jill Stein has 5%. Two percent report they plan to support someone else, and 3% are undecided. Of note, Johnson has the backing of 15% of independents who are likely to vote.

The First Presidential Debate

With the minutes ticking down to tonight's presidential debate, 37% of registered voters in New York State expect a debate where Clinton and Trump make nasty comments about each other. 27% think the debate will be a forum where important issues are discussed, and 21% say the two candidates will just repeat lines from their campaign speeches. Six percent believe a major gaffe or mistake will occur, and 9% are unsure.

In the debate, who do you think is more likely to do each of the following:				
New York Registered Voters				
New York Registered Voters	Hillary Clinton	Donald Trump	Neither	Unsure
Know about the issues	72%	20%	3%	5%
Win the debate	56%	30%	2%	12%
Answer the questions directly	55%	33%	8%	4%
Inspire you	47%	29%	20%	4%
Deliver a knockout answer or comment	43%	45%	4%	9%
Make a major mistake	18%	72%	2%	9%

NBC 4 NY/WSJ/Marist Poll New York Registered Voters September 2016

“Many New Yorkers plan to watch the debate, and expectations are high for Hillary Clinton from these ‘blue state’ voters,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “They think she will demonstrate better command of the issues, answer questions more directly, and think Trump will make a major mistake. They think he is just as likely as Clinton, however, to have the knockout line of the evening.”

Who Will Win?

Who do registered voters think will be the winner of the debate? A majority of registered voters, 56%, think Clinton will emerge victorious. The opinion that Clinton will win the debate spans most demographic groups with a few notable exceptions. 73% of Trump’s supporters, 66% of Republicans, and 54% of those who identify as conservative or very conservative believe Trump will defeat Clinton in the debate. Still, 13% of Trump’s backers, 23% of Republicans, and 32% of those who say they are conservative or very conservative think Clinton will be victorious. Clinton, 46%, edges Trump, 39%, on the question of who will win the debate among white voters without a college education. White male voters divide. 45% claim Clinton will prevail as the winner of the debate, and 42% say Trump will score the most points.

Knows the Issues

A similar pattern holds true on the question of whether Clinton or Trump will know about the issues. 72% of registered voters report Clinton will know about the issues. Republicans divide on this question. 47% of the New York GOP say Trump will have a firm grasp of the issues driving the campaign while 44% of Republicans assert Clinton will have the upper hand. Even 34% of Trump’s supporters and 48% of voters who are conservative or very conservative believe Clinton will outperform Trump on the issues.

Is More Straightforward

55% of registered voters contend Clinton will be more likely than Trump to answer the questions directly. Again, notable proportions of men, 47%, voters who identify as conservative or very conservative, 32%, Republicans, 21%, and Trump’s supporters, 11%,

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think Clinton has the advantage in this area. 48% of white voters without a college education think Clinton will address the questions head on compared with 45% who have this view of Trump.

Will Inspire Voters

On the question of which candidate is more likely to inspire voters, a plurality, 47%, say Clinton is more likely to do so compared with 29% who say Trump will hearten them. One in five voters, 20%, do not think either candidate will inspire them. Four percent are unsure. Interestingly, more than one in ten Clinton supporters, 13%, and nearly one in five Trump backers, 17%, do not think their respective candidate of choice will rally voters. While 76% of Democrats think Clinton will inspire voters, 67% of Republicans say Trump will do so. 13% of Democrats and 17% of the GOP report neither will invigorate voters. Looking at gender, while 56% of women say Clinton will inspire voters during the debate, only 35% of men say Trump will do the same. 38% of male voters say Clinton is more likely to rally voters, and 23% report neither will do so.

Will Have the Knockout Comment

Voters divide about whether Clinton, 43%, or Trump, 45%, will deliver a knockout answer or comment. Here, notable proportions of groups considered to be Clinton's staunchest backers -- 46% of white voters with a college degree, 40% of women, 24% of Clinton's supporters, 27% of African Americans, 26% of Democrats, and 25% of those who identify as liberal or very liberal -- concede that Trump will have a knockout response.

Will Make a Mistake

Trump is perceived by 72% of the New York electorate to be the candidate who will make a major mistake in the debate. In fact, Trump's supporters divide on the question. 45% say Trump will err in the matchup compared with 42% of those who say Clinton will make a mistake. Majorities of Republicans, 51%, and those who identify as conservative or very conservative, 54%, believe Trump, not Clinton, will make an error in tonight's debate.

Tuning into Reality TV

New York voters are likely to tune into tonight's debate. 86% of registered voters statewide, including 44% who say they will watch all of it, say they will view, at least, some of the encounter between Clinton and Trump. When it comes to the nature of the debate, 63% of registered voters think it will be more like a reality television show than an informative discussion, 31%.

Minds Made Up?

Despite interest in the debate, more than two-thirds of registered voters, 67%, say the debate will have little effect on their vote, 19%, or will not influence their vote at all, 48%. 33% report the debate will help them decide their vote a great deal, 7%, a good amount, 8%, or to some extent, 18%. A majority of Clinton's supporters, 51%, compared with 42% of Trump's supporters, say the debate will have no effect on their vote.

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U.S. Senate: Schumer vs. Long

Turning to the U.S. Senate race in New York, incumbent Democratic Senator Charles Schumer, 70%, leads his Republican challenger Wendy Long, 24%, by 46 points among likely voters in New York State including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate. Less than 1% are for another candidate, and 6% are undecided. A majority of likely voters with a candidate preference for U.S. Senate, 54%, report they strongly support their choice of candidate.

Approval Ratings

Schumer's job performance continues to be well-received by registered voters in New York. 53% of the statewide electorate thinks Schumer is doing either an excellent, 17%, or good, 36%, job in office. This is similar to the 54% approval rating Schumer received when this question was last reported in May 2015.

Democratic Senator Kirsten Gillibrand receives a job approval rating of 43% among registered voters statewide. This includes 11% who think Gillibrand is doing an excellent job in office and 32% who say she is doing a good one. Previously, Gillibrand's approval rating stood at 45%. 35% of the electorate currently report Gillibrand is doing a fair, 26%, or poor, 9%, job, and 21% have either never heard of Gillibrand or are unsure how to rate her performance in the U.S. Senate.

40% of registered voters consider the job performance of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo to be excellent, 8%, or good, 32%. Cuomo's approval rating is almost identical to the score he received in April, 41%. A majority of voters, 55%, currently say Cuomo is doing either a fair, 38%, or poor, 17%, job in office.

53% of registered voters statewide rate President Barack Obama's job performance as either excellent, 23%, or good, 30%. This is similar to the 52% score the president received in April. 46% currently have either a fair, 18%, or poor, 28%, impression of how Mr. Obama is doing his job. When asked whether voters *approve or disapprove* of the job President Obama is doing, 57% say they approve. 36% disapprove. Among New York residents overall, 60% report they approve of how the president is performing in his post.

Direction of the State

When thinking about the direction of New York State, a majority of voters, 51%, think the state is moving in the wrong direction while 42% believe it is going in the right one. In April, 43% of registered voters asserted the state was on track while 48% said it was off course.

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