“Know Your Customer”
Key Findings and Insights from our Survey of Young Americans’ Attitudes Toward Politics and Public Service

Harvard Public Opinion Project

Presented by:

John Della Volpe
Director of Polling

24 November 2014
KEY FINDING #1: SOLID MAJORITY CAME OF AGE POST OBAMA ’08; YOUTH LACK STRONG PARTY ALLEGIANCES, VOLUNTEER MORE THAN VOTE

58% were not eligible to vote in 2008

42% self-ID Independents

2-pt difference between self-ID liberals & conservatives

38% follow politics closely

18% consider themselves politically engaged

31% volunteer

Eligible to vote in 2008

Democrat

Liberal

Closely

Engaged

Vol. for community service

Not eligible

Republican

Conservative

Not closely

Not engaged

Did not volunteer
KEY FINDING #2: YOUTH VOTE IS MORE THAN “COLLEGE VOTE;” RELIGION IS IMPORTANT ON PERSONAL BASIS; DIVERSE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

- **28%** attend college/grad school
- **62%** say religion plays important role in their life
- **55%** have close friend of different sexual orientation
- **77%** have close friend of different race

- **HS/2-Year**: Blue
  - **College/Grad School**: Red
  - **Not enrolled/Other**: Gray
- **Important**: Blue
  - **Not important/No preference**: Red
- **All/most/some of different sex. orientation**: Blue
  - **No friends of different sexual orientation**: Red
- **All/most/some of different race**: Blue
  - **No friends of different race**: Red
KEY FINDING #3: OUTLIERS NO MORE, SIGNS POINT TO YOUTH VOTE AS LESS DEMOCRATIC IN 2016; RETURNING TO PRE-OBAMA MARGINS

Democratic Margin of the Youth Vote, Congressional Elections 1982-2014

Source: NYT Portrait of the Electorate

Approval Rating of President Obama

Source: NYT Portrait of the Electorate
KEY FINDING #4: WHILE THERE’S NOW LESS SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATS, REPUBLICANS MUST EARN TRUST OF YOUTH

WHICH PARTY DO YOU TRUST?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>Foreign Policy</th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Health Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35% approve Democrats in Congress
23% approve Republican in Congress
KEY FINDING #6: ACROSS THE BOARD, THERE IS SIGNIFICANTLY LESS TRUST IN GOVERNMENT TODAY THAN 5 YEARS AGO

Trust in Institutions, 2010 - 2014

- MILITARY: 53% (2010) to 47% (2014)
- SCOTUS: 45% (2010) to 36% (2014)
- PRESIDENT: 44% (2010) to 36% (2014)
- UNITED NATIONS: 40% (2010) to 32% (2014)
- FEDERAL GOVT.: 29% (2010) to 20% (2014)
- CONGRESS: 25% (2010) to 14% (2014)
**KEY FINDING #5: YOUTH ATTITUDES ABOUT GOVERNMENT GENERALLY & SPECIFIC POLICIES COMPLEX, NOT FULLY FORMED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about moral direction of country</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic health insurance is a right for all people</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting taxes is effective way to increase economic growth</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education system would be better with more school choice</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. should spend more to reduce poverty</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should do more to combat climate change, even at expense of jobs</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. spending is an effective way to increase economic growth</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious values should play more important role in govt.</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes necessary to attack 1st, rather than waiting to respond</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified minorities should be given preference in hiring/education</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY FINDING #7A: ECONOMY IN CONTEXT: STUDENT DEBT IS A PERSONAL ISSUE, OF PRIMARY CONCERN AND WILL TAKE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO SOLVE

8-IN-10 SAY THAT STUDENT DEBT IS A PROBLEM, THE ISSUE UNITES BOTH PARTIES

70% say that financial circumstances played a role in whether or not they pursued college education.

79% say colleges deserves most of the blame

30% say federal government deserves most blame

11% say students deserve most of the blame
KEY FINDING #7B: ADDRESSING FUNDAMENTALS OF INCOME GAP ONE OF QUICKEST WAYS TO YOUTH VOTE IN 2014

Do you personally believe the gap in income between the rich and everyone else in America is a …

- Major problem: 52%
- Minor problem: 20%
- Not a problem: 13%
- Unsure: 14%

Over the course of your lifetime, would you say the gap in income in America between the rich and everyone else in America:

- Increased: 64%
- Decreased: 3%
- Same: 16%

In general, whose policies would you say are more responsible …?

- 33% both parties equally
- 25% GOP
- 8% Democrat
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