



C-SPAN Supreme Court Survey

June 21, 2010

Methodology

Penn, Schoen and Berland Associates, LLC, conducted online interviews on June 18, 2010 among 1,512 general election voters in the United States. The margin of error for the entire sample is +/- 2.52 at the 95% confidence level.

Note: All numbers cited represent percentages (%). Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding error.

Tracking data cited in this report comes from the following studies:

- C-SPAN Supreme Court Survey September 2009
- C-SPAN Supreme Court Survey June 2009

Findings

1. Do you hear too much or too little about the workings of the Supreme Court?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Hear too little about the workings of the Supreme Court	62	61	64	60	61	59	65	67	65	60	57	56	66	66
About the right amount	35	36	33	36	35	37	33	31	32	37	39	41	30	32
Hear too much about the workings of the Supreme Court	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	3	3	2

2. Generally speaking, what is your view on how the Supreme Court is doing its job?
If you have no opinion one way or the other, please indicate "don't know".

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
The Supreme Court is doing an excellent job	3	5	2	3	3	4	3	2	3	7	7	5	2	3
The Supreme Court is doing a good job	26	30	23	23	25	29	28	22	28	20	25	30	24	24
The Supreme Court is doing a fair job	41	37	45	47	40	41	40	38	40	42	47	40	42	41
The Supreme Court is doing a poor job	12	14	9	8	9	9	12	20	12	9	8	8	13	14
Don't know	18	14	21	18	22	16	16	18	18	23	13	17	18	18

3. Generally speaking, which of the three branches of the federal government is best serving the public's interest?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
The Judicial Branch is doing the best job at serving the public's interest	48	51	45	37	45	48	47	59	52	25	41	35	58	52
The Legislative Branch is doing the best job at serving the public's interest	27	22	32	32	33	30	24	18	25	33	33	29	30	23
The Executive Branch doing the best job at serving the public's interest	25	27	24	32	22	23	29	24	22	41	26	36	12	25

4. Where do you typically get information about the Supreme Court? Please select all that apply.

(% All)		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Television	75	75	76	78	73	70	79	80	75	80	78	80	77	70
Newspapers	53	56	51	51	48	50	53	67	55	49	48	53	52	54
Online media	39	39	40	44	50	42	31	33	40	30	43	38	41	39
Websites	31	30	32	37	40	33	26	22	30	32	33	32	30	31
Radio	27	27	26	29	31	29	21	25	27	23	21	23	33	25
Magazines	15	17	13	16	15	14	15	18	14	14	20	15	12	17
Social media	13	11	14	23	19	16	7	4	12	12	15	15	13	11
Blogs	7	7	7	9	13	8	3	4	6	6	12	9	5	7
Books	6	7	5	10	7	7	5	5	6	9	5	7	5	7
School	4	4	4	17	6	3	1	0	3	10	6	6	4	2
Other	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	1

Note: multiple responses permitted

5. Of the following list, which issue or issues do you think the U.S. Supreme Court deals with most often?

(% All)		Sept '09	Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
			M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Free speech	37	43	39	35	42	40	40	32	30	37	34	32	37	34	38
Church and state	29	28	28	29	28	33	27	28	29	29	29	27	26	30	30
Affirmative action	28	32	31	26	27	22	27	31	34	27	29	33	29	23	31
Political campaigns/elections	26	22	21	29	27	36	30	20	16	22	38	33	30	23	23
Capital punishment	24	42	22	25	32	25	26	24	13	20	36	28	28	22	21
Federalism	22	26	24	20	20	21	24	22	19	21	24	23	22	23	20
Abortion	21	30	21	22	23	25	21	21	17	20	26	23	22	21	21
Gun rights	19	31	22	17	18	19	19	19	21	18	27	16	18	20	20
Property rights	17	18	22	13	19	16	18	15	20	17	15	18	17	15	19
Other	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	4	5	3	2	1	2	3	4

Note: multiple responses permitted

6. Can you name any case heard by the U.S. Supreme Court?

(% All		Sept '09	June '09	Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
				M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes	33	49	56	31	35	32	37	36	30	30	36	21	22	31	37	32
Roe v. Wade	75	84	80	24	26	17	27	28	24	25	29	12	14	21	30	24
Brown v. Board of Education	9	9	9	3	3	8	3	3	3	1	3	7	3	3	2	3
Plessy v. Ferguson	3	3	2	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
Marbury v. Madison	3	1	-	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Other	10	1	9	3	5	4	6	5	3	4	4	1	4	6	5	4
No	67	51	51	69	65	68	63	64	70	70	64	79	78	69	63	68

Note: Those that entered "yes" were prompted to enter the name of an individual case. Only correct answers were counted as "yes" responses.

7. Currently, US Supreme Court Justices serve lifetime appointments. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree that US Supreme Court Justices should serve lifetime appointments?

(% All		Sept '09	Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
			M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Strongly agree	16	14	21	12	13	15	16	16	19	15	20	16	18	15	14
Somewhat agree	32	31	30	34	44	38	33	32	18	29	40	39	36	30	30
Somewhat disagree	28	36	24	31	32	30	30	24	26	29	23	33	27	28	29
Strongly disagree	24	20	25	23	11	18	21	28	37	27	17	13	18	27	27

8. When there is a nominee to the Supreme Court, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee holds televised confirmation hearings before voting on the nomination. Justice Sotomayor, the newest member of the court, was confirmed last summer.

Do you remember seeing some part of the Sotomayor confirmation hearings or perhaps that of another Supreme Court nominee?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes	68	70	66	48	64	68	71	77	68	63	73	69	66	68
No	32	30	34	52	36	32	29	23	32	37	27	31	34	32

9. *(Asked of the 68% who say they remember hearing some part of a confirmation hearing)* From what you can recall and thinking about the questions that Senators ask about **how Supreme Court nominees reason and would rule as a Justice**, would you say the Senators do a very good job, an okay job, a not very good job or not at all good job of asking questions that get at how a Supreme Court nominee reasons and how they would rule as a Justice?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Senators do <u>very good job</u> asking the right questions	12	8	15	13	14	11	13	7	9	27	21	19	11	5
<u>Okay job</u>	52	46	58	67	67	57	48	33	50	52	59	56	50	51
<u>Not very good job</u>	24	30	19	16	14	22	27	37	27	13	18	20	26	27
Senators <u>don't do a good job</u> at all asking the right questions	12	15	8	4	5	9	13	23	14	8	2	6	13	17

10. With regard to providing **insights on the qualifications of the Supreme Court nominee**, do you think the Senate confirmation hearings provide excellent insights, good insights, fair insights, or do the Senate confirmation hearings provide poor insights on the qualifications of the Supreme Court nominee?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Excellent insights provided by Senate hearings	5	6	5	4	5	6	6	3	4	12	7	8	5	3
Good insights provided by Senate hearings	36	33	39	47	44	35	36	21	32	44	47	46	31	29
Fair insights provided by Senate hearings	45	41	48	43	43	48	43	45	48	35	40	39	48	49
Poor insights provided by Senate hearings	14	21	9	6	8	11	15	31	16	9	5	8	16	19

11. Can you identify the individual just named by President Obama to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court? (*OPEN END*)

(% All		June '09	Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
			M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes (Elena Kagan)	19	43*	18	20	14	21	23	15	22	20	13	20	18	21	20
No	81	57	82	80	86	79	77	85	78	80	87	80	82	79	80

Note: Those that entered "yes" were prompted to enter the name of the individual nominated. Only correct answers were counted as "yes" responses.

*Denotes respondents from June '09 who properly identified the nominee at that time, Sonia Sotomayor

12. How supportive are you toward the nomination of Elena Kagan to the Supreme Court? If you have no opinion one way or the other, please indicate "don't care."

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Very supportive	8	7	8	4	7	9	9	7	6	18	11	18	1	3
Somewhat supportive	30	29	30	29	25	33	31	25	27	37	33	41	18	28
Somewhat unsupportive	14	14	13	12	12	15	15	11	15	7	13	6	20	16
Very unsupportive	16	22	11	9	13	14	13	32	19	4	5	3	30	18
Don't care	33	28	38	45	42	29	32	25	33	34	38	32	31	35

13. All current Supreme Court justices were previously judges on lower courts. But there is no requirement that justices be former judges. For most of American history, Supreme Court appointees were usually individuals who served as Cabinet members, Governors, or Senators.

Do you think the next Supreme Court justice should be someone who is currently a judge or would it be useful to have someone from a different background, such as high public office? If you have no opinion one-way or the other, please indicate, "Don't care."

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes, more judges	48	48	48	48	53	49	46	45	50	36	44	42	59	45
No, useful to have someone from a different background	37	38	35	34	32	36	39	41	35	48	38	44	28	37
Don't care	15	14	16	18	15	14	15	14	15	15	17	14	13	18

14. All eight current Supreme Court justices are graduates from Harvard, Columbia, or Yale law schools.

If it were up to you, would you prefer the next Supreme Court justice come from one of the same law schools as the current justices, or would it be useful if the next Supreme Court justice had a different background? If you have no opinion one way or the other, please indicate "Don't care."

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes, same as now, Harvard, Columbia, Yale, or another Ivy League law school	16	16	15	24	18	15	15	11	14	15	24	18	18	12
No, useful if different educational experience	63	63	63	64	61	63	61	69	63	67	63	63	61	65
Don't care	21	21	22	12	21	22	24	20	23	18	14	19	21	23

15. If Elena Kagan is confirmed to become a Supreme Court Justice, how many women Justices will there be on the court?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
3	47	48	45	36	43	46	48	55	49	40	39	46	50	44
Incorrect	52	51	54	67	55	52	51	43	49	61	60	53	50	56

Note: Voters were prompted to enter the number of women Justices on the court. Only correct answers of 3 were counted above as correct.

16. In your opinion, how important of an issue is a Supreme Court justice's gender?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Very important	9	6	12	16	10	10	8	5	6	17	18	15	5	7
Somewhat important	27	21	33	34	32	29	26	17	24	30	37	31	28	23
Not very important	34	37	31	23	33	32	34	46	38	23	21	27	41	35
Not at all important	30	36	24	26	25	29	33	32	31	30	24	26	26	35

17. The U.S. Supreme Court currently does not allow television coverage of its oral arguments.

Please indicate if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the U.S. Supreme Court should allow television coverage of its oral arguments.

(% All		Sept '09	June '09	Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
				M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Strongly agree	24	30	27	29	20	17	22	24	27	28	25	20	26	25	24	24
Somewhat agree	39	35	34	33	43	43	39	43	35	34	37	38	43	40	41	35
Somewhat disagree	24	22	19	23	25	31	27	21	23	23	25	23	22	24	23	25
Strongly disagree	13	13	19	15	12	8	12	13	15	15	13	19	8	11	12	16

18. *(Asked of the 63% who say they agree that the Supreme Court should allow television coverage of oral arguments)* Some Supreme Court experts say they would support full-length, unedited, gavel-to-gavel television coverage of oral arguments. However, other experts fear that television news outlets will take clips from oral arguments that are out of context and sensationalize small portions of entire oral arguments. Would you still agree that Supreme Court oral arguments should be televised if it meant clipped, shortened, and otherwise edited-for-TV coverage of Supreme Court oral arguments?

(% All		Sept '09	Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
			M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes, I still agree that oral arguments should be televised	56	54	64	48	47	55	56	60	52	54	56	60	59	51	56
No, I now have second thoughts about televising oral arguments	44	46	36	52	53	45	44	40	48	46	44	40	41	49	44

19. *(Asked of the 37% who say they disagree that the Supreme Court should allow television coverage of oral arguments)* Oral arguments concerning cases before the Supreme Court have always been open to the public, but seating is extremely limited and the hearings are in Washington DC. Knowing this, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the U.S. Supreme Court should allow television coverage of its oral arguments.

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Strongly agree	25	27	24	20	24	24	28	28	24	28	32	24	26	26
Somewhat agree	35	35	36	52	43	32	30	31	34	41	35	42	35	30
Somewhat disagree	24	21	26	22	22	27	24	20	26	16	20	21	25	25
Strongly disagree	16	17	14	7	11	17	18	22	16	14	14	13	14	19

20. The content typically televised live and unedited concerning the work of the Supreme Court today is mostly either Senate confirmation hearings for new nominees to the Court or the President's State of the Union address.

How accurately do you think televised Senate hearings or Presidential statements portray the work of the Supreme Court?

(% All)		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Very adequately	7	8	7	11	7	9	8	2	5	16	11	12	4	5
Somewhat adequately	42	38	46	48	47	42	43	33	38	51	57	51	37	39
Not very adequately	41	41	40	38	40	40	38	51	45	29	26	32	47	44
Not at all adequately	9	12	7	4	7	8	12	14	11	4	6	4	12	12

21. Do you think greater visibility of the Supreme Court that would come from televising oral arguments would [increase/ decrease] public respect for the proceedings of the Court, or would it stay about the same?

(% All)		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Increase respect	49	51	47	48	50	49	47	51	49	45	52	52	48	47
Stay the same	35	35	35	36	34	31	38	35	34	41	34	34	31	38
Decrease respect	16	14	18	17	16	20	14	14	17	14	14	14	21	15

Note: Certain respondents were randomly selected to hear either question 22 or question 23. No respondent heard both questions.

22. Last year the British Supreme Court opened its proceedings to television cameras. Does this change your opinion on whether the U.S. Supreme Court should open its oral arguments to television cameras?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes it does- makes me want TV cameras in the U.S. Supreme Court more	31	39	25	35	32	33	27	25	29	32	41	36	27	28
Yes it does-makes me want TV cameras in the U.S. Supreme Court less	6	6	5	6	6	6	5	6	5	8	8	6	6	4
No change	57	50	61	48	57	54	61	60	59	53	45	52	61	59
Don't care	7	5	8	11	5	7	7	8	7	7	6	7	6	9

23. Most state Supreme Courts permit some of their proceedings to be televised. Does this change your opinion on whether the U.S. Supreme Court should open its oral arguments to television cameras?

(% All		Gender		Age					Race			Party ID		
		M	F	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Wht	Blk	Hisp	D	R	I
Yes it does- makes me want TV cameras in the U.S. Supreme Court more	35	36	33	47	32	40	29	31	33	38	34	37	38	31
Yes it does-makes me want TV cameras in the U.S. Supreme Court less	7	6	7	15	6	8	4	4	4	7	13	7	4	7
No change	52	53	52	30	55	46	60	60	56	52	42	52	51	54
Don't care	7	5	8	9	7	6	7	5	7	3	11	4	7	8

Demographics

Are you...?

All (%)	
Male	47
Female	53

Into which of the following categories does your age fall?

All (%)	
18-24	10
25-34	18
35-49	29
50-64	27
65 and over	16

Do you consider yourself to be a...

All (%)	
Strong democrat	22
Weak democrat	13
Weak republican	10
Strong republican	19
Independent	34
Other	2

For statistical purposes only, we need to know your total family income. Into which of the following categories does your total family income fall?

All (%)	
Less than \$15, 000	8
\$15, 000 to \$30, 000	16
\$30, 000 to \$50, 000	25
\$50, 000 to \$75, 000	24
\$75, 000 to \$100, 000	14
\$100, 000 to \$150, 000	9
\$150, 000 to \$200, 000	2
More than \$200, 000	1

What is the last level of formal education you completed?

All (%)	
Grade school	0
Some high school	1
High school graduate	16
Some college	32
College graduate	35
Graduate school	13
Technical or vocational school	3

Which of the following best describes your ethnicity or racial background?

All (%)	
White, Caucasian, European- American, European	73
Black, African- American, Caribbean- American, African	12
Hispanic, Latino	9
Asian, Asian-American	4
Middle Eastern, Arab	1
Native American, American Indian	1
Other	1

Regions

All (%)	
Northeast	16
Midwest	24
South	39
West	20