

Mike Berman's

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ABOUT AMERICA

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LITTLE CHANGE IN PRESIDENT'S STANDING

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2008 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN Act II Has Begun

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2008 CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS

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WISDOM FROM SAUL TURTELTAUB

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THIS AND THAT

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RESTAURANTS From haute cuisine to comfort food

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STATE OF THE NATION

At the end of July, 67% said the country is on the wrong track. That is pretty much what the mood has been for the last several months.

The number who think the country is headed in the right direction, 19%, is the same as it was in June, and is the lowest right direction number during President Bush's tenure.

[NBC/WSJ 7/07]

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49% of Republican voters and 71% of Independents say the country is on the wrong track. Not surprisingly, 89% of Democrats also have this view. [Battleground Poll 2008 7/07]

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Although it has bounced about a bit, the perception of the U.S. economy by American consumers is down substantially since the first of the year.

33% now describe current conditions as excellent/good, whereas 52% gave it that rating in January. Only 20% think it is getting better, as opposed to 38% who had that view in January. [Gallup 8/07]

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30% of Americans think that their personal economic situation has gotten worse in the past 12 months, while 22% say it has gotten better. [NBC/WSJ 7/07]

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"Healthcare costs" heads the list of the most important financial problems facing families today. 19% volunteered this issue, followed by "a general lack of money/low wages" offered up by 15%. In 3rd place, with 8% each, are "cost of owning/renting a home" and "energy costs/oil and gas prices." [Gallup 7/07]

When given the option of selecting one or two items from a list of possible economic concerns, 44% selected the "cost of healthcare" with "jobs going overseas" being noted by 34%, and 22% selecting "the gap between rich and poor." [NBC/WSJ 7/07]

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Respondents to surveys are often asked to state one or two problems that are most important, or that the President or the Congress should tackle. Issues of a particular ilk are often lumped together for purposes of reporting results, e.g., all issues that relate to the economy.

Alternatively, respondents are asked to select the most important issue from a group of 6 to 10 issues selected by the pollster.

In a mid-July, Lake Research/Tarrance Group did a survey in which they asked respondents what they thought was the number 1 problem facing the country, i.e, what problem they and their family are most concerned about. Here are the results.

Iraq (23%), immigration (10%), healthcare (cost/quality) (9%), economy (6%), terrorism (5%), energy costs (gas for car) (4%),

jobs (3%). 7 other issues each garnered (2%) and 15 additional issues each garnered (1%). [Abortion drew 1%]

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The confidence of the American public in all institutions of national government, except for the military, has fallen appreciably in the last 7 years.

	<u>Great deal or Quite a bit</u>	<u>Very little or No confidence</u>
Military		
July 2007	67	10
January 2002	82	4
December 2000	63	10
Supreme Court		
July 2007	36	24
December 2000	52	13
Federal Government		
July 2007	16	42
July 2002	34	18
December 2000	28	19
Congress		
July 2007	14	44
May 2005	18	28
January 2002	37	18
December 2000	26	24

[NBC/WSJ 7/07]

	<u>Great deal/quite a lot</u>	<u>Some/very little</u>
Presidency		
2007	25	67
2005	44	--
2002	58	--
2000	42	--

[Gallup 6/07]

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73% support legislative action by the Congress to spend over \$100 billion to repair and rebuild bridges. Among Democrats 84% support the idea. Among Independents the support is 72%. Only 62% of Republicans favor such a program. [Gallup 8/07]

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61% believe that China is currently a serious economic competitor to the United States. For an additional 29% of us it

is only a matter of time before it becomes a serious economic competitor.

65% of Americans have little or just some confidence that food products produced in China are safe to eat. Only 8% have quite a bit or a great deal of confidence in those products. [NBC/WSJ 7/07]

72% of Americans say they are paying more attention to the country of production for goods they buy. And 85% are following the news about Chinese products at least somewhat closely. Interestingly, 66% blame either U.S. safety inspectors or U.S. businesses for the problems with the safety of these products. Only 32% blame Chinese manufacturers or Chinese safety inspectors. [Gallup 8/07]

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Do you think that taking military action in Iraq was the right or wrong thing to do? Here is what other Americans believe.

	8/07	9/06	7/05	9/04	9/03
Right thing	35	39	38	43	55
Wrong thing	46	44	49	43	32
Not sure	20	17	14	13	13

Do you think the situation for U.S. troops in Iraq is getting better or worse or not changing? Here is what others believe.

	8/07	9/06	9/05	9/04
Getting better	20	17	19	15
Getting worse	42	45	43	54
No real change	30	31	33	26

[Harris Interactive]

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U.S. actions in Afghanistan continue to have substantial support in this country.

- 70% say it was not a mistake to send military forces to Afghanistan
- 56% support sending additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan
- 52% favor moving U.S. troops from Iraq to Afghanistan

- 52% support the U.S. taking military action against terrorists in Pakistan, if it had actionable intelligence and the Pakistani government was not acting

[Gallup 8/07]

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American workers spend 46 minutes commuting to and from work on a typical day. 17% have a commute of 1 to 1.5 hours, and another 17% spend more than 1.5 hours a day commuting. (This calculation includes those who report spending 0 minutes commuting.) [Gallup 8/07]

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30 years ago, 45% of Americans reported smoking cigarettes in the past week. In July, only 21% reported smoking in the past week. [Gallup 7/07]

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The U.S. leads the list in ownership of firearms. U.S. citizens own 270,000,000 of the 875,000,000 known firearms in the world. This is approximately 9/10th of a gun for every adult and child in this country.

Of the 8,000,000 new guns manufactured worldwide each year, 4,500,000 are purchased in the United States.

Of the 875,000,000 firearms, it is estimated that 650,000,000 are in the hands of civilians, and 275,000,000 are in the hands of law enforcement and the military.

Only about 12% of civilian-owned guns are thought to be registered with authorities.

[Small Arms Survey 2007, Geneva-based Graduate Institute of International Studies]

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28% of Americans expect to inherit money or other valuables from a relative, while 72% believe that they will have money or other valuables to pass on to children or other relatives. [Gallup 8/07]

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60% of us approve of labor unions - 82% of those who reside in union households and 55% of those who do not. No surprise, 78% of Democrats approve labor unions, but only 41% of Republicans. Independents weigh in at 58%. [Gallup 8/07]

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50% of women and 68% of men would prefer to "work outside the home rather than stay at home to take care of their house and family." [Gallup 8/07]

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PRESIDENT BUSH

The question is not whether the President will be a liability to Republican candidates in the coming election, but how much of a liability he will be. As it now stands, he is likely to be a considerable liability.

56% of adults in America have negative feelings about the President (41% very negative). 33% rate him positively. This is about the same rating he received in June of this year. These are the worst ratings the President has received since he came into office.

He has a 31% job approval rating, which other than last month when it was 29%, is his worst score.

An average of 65% disapprove of his handling of the economy, foreign policy in general, and Iraq in particular.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
In general	31	63
On the economy	38	56
Foreign Policy	27	66
Handling Iraq	22	72

[NBC/WSJ 7/07]

In a series of 10 national surveys taken between 8/1-8/22 the President's approval rating was 33% and disapproval was 62%. [RealClearPolitics.com]

While 68% of Republicans still approve of the job the President is doing, that is down from the first part of the year when 80% rated him positively.

The one bright spot is that, when respondents were asked to record their impression of Bush separately from whether they approved or disapproved of the way he is handling his job, 57% approved of him personally; 35% had the contrary view. [Battleground Poll 2008 7/07]

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52% of Americans do not believe that George W. Bush has the "personality and leadership qualities a President should have."

And 57% believe that Bush's Presidency has been a failure.
[CNN/ORC 8/07]

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2008 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

The Presidential primary campaign is a play in multiple acts. Act II has begun.

During Act I the major candidates, for the most part, played quite nicely together and were basically positive. In fact, they might have been described as downright civil to each other.

During Act II the gloves have come off:

- * Clinton described Obama as being "irresponsible and frankly naive." Obama responded that the Clinton campaign was "concocting a 'fabricated controversy'."
- * Obama called Clinton "Bush-Cheney lite." Clinton responded that Obama was "getting kind of silly."
- * Dodd described as "irresponsible" Obama's seeming to support military action against Al Qaeda in Pakistan.
- * Obama hit back at other candidates who criticized him on foreign policy issues, commenting that he found it amusing that he was being attacked by those who helped to authorize and engineer the biggest foreign policy disaster in this generation.
- * Obama referenced Clinton in saying that conventional wisdom passes for experience in Washington.
- * Edwards took a shot at Clinton because she had appeared on the cover of Fortune magazine.
- * Edwards, talking about all of the picket lines he had walked in the last couple of years, was challenged by Biden, who asked him how many picket lines he had walked while he was in the Senate.
- * After Clinton seemed to suggest that a terrorist attack in the next few months would advantage the Republicans -- Dodd called her remarks "tasteless," and Edwards and Richardson attacked her for dealing with terrorism in a political context.
- * Romney charged that New York City, under Giuliani as Mayor, became a magnet for illegal immigrants, and Giuliani said that Romney stood by, looking the other way, as Governor of

Massachusetts, when cities and towns in that State declared themselves as "sanctuaries" for immigrants.

- * Fred Thompson took a shot at Giuliani for Giuliani's strong support of gun control when he was a Federal prosecutor and as Mayor of New York.
- * McCain has called Romney a "flip flopper."

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Theoretically, the Iowa caucuses will be held January 14th, followed by the Nevada caucuses on January 19th, the New Hampshire primary on the 22nd, and the South Carolina primary on January 29th. No other event would occur before February in the Democratic primary process. And, in the Republican contest there would be no contests at all prior to February 5th.

Scratch all of the above. There is no way that this exact combination of events will occur in that order. In fact, don't be surprised if you get up on Thanksgiving morning, 2007, and realize that the Iowa caucuses were the previous Monday and the New Hampshire primary is the next Tuesday.

The following seems to have occurred, so far, to change the official scenario.

Florida decided to move its primary to the same date as the South Carolina primary. This caused the Democratic Party Rules Committee to strip Florida of all of its delegate votes.

The South Carolina Republicans decided to move their primary to the 19th. The net result is that New Hampshire will move to the 12th or sooner because of its State law that requires that its primary be at least 7 days before any other primary.

Now Michigan is moving its primary to January 15th. The Democrats will likely take away its delegates as well.

Wyoming Republicans have decided to hold their caucuses on January 5th.

That also means that the New Hampshire primary will move to no later than January 8th.

And then there is Iowa, where State law says that its caucuses will be held at least 8 days before the 1st primary. That takes the caucuses to December 31st. Well, of course, the caucuses will not be held on New Year's Day.

The Republican National Committee is likely to take similar actions against Florida and Michigan, and perhaps South Carolina

and Wyoming. The apparent penalty is to take away half of a State's delegates.

Does it make any difference if these States lose their delegates to their respective national Party conventions? Probably not.

Long before the convention, the nominees of both Parties will be known. As soon as the two conventions convene each will hear a report from its Rules committee, likely recommending that the delegates from the offending States not be seated. Of course, by that time the nominee will effectively control the floor, so that either the Rules committee will, at the request of the nominee reinstate the delegates, or an effort will be made to get the delegates to overrule the recommendation of the Rules Committee.

All this proves once more that the conventions as we know them are at best anachronisms, and at worst a major time and money drag. It is long past the time to rethink their place in the scheme of Presidential politics.

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Democratic Party leaders in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Nevada, as well as National Party Chair Howard Dean, called upon the candidates for the Democratic Party nomination, to honor the schedule established by the Democratic National Committee.

Obama, Biden, Richardson, Dodd, Edwards, and Clinton have announced they will honor the Democratic Party schedule. Ostensibly, this means that the candidates agree not to campaign in those two States and any others that try to jump ahead of February 5th.

Apparently, the pledge does not include fundraising. Can a candidate show up in one of those States to attend a fundraiser on his or her behalf? If that is permissible, does it include a fundraiser that only charges \$10-25 per head? Can a candidate send mail, telephone calls or emails into those States? Stay tuned.

Looking at the current polls in Florida and Michigan this does not appear to be a "politically expensive" decision for anyone but Clinton. As of mid-August, Clinton has a 21-point lead over Obama in Florida, and a 16-point lead in Michigan.

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In 2004, the 4 States that the Democratic National Committee has "allowed" to proceed with primaries and caucuses before the

February 5th window opens had a total of 646,900 persons participating.

This represents 3.8% of the total of 16,804,000 who participated in all of the primaries and caucuses that year.

	<u>Total turnout</u>	<u>% of Kerry G.E. vote</u>	<u>% of VEP</u>
Iowa	124,900	16.8	6%
N.H.	219,800	64.5	23%
S.C.	293,800	44.4	10%
Nevada	9,000	3.3	0.6% *

* To be fair, given the work being done in Nevada in anticipation of its 2008 caucus, these numbers do not fairly represent the level of participation that is likely in 2008.
[Data for the above from Pollster.com]

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Republican state party organizations were required to submit their primary/caucus plans to the Republican National Committee. How the party's Rules Committee deals with those plans remains to be seen.

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Americans say they are generally quite comfortable with an African-American, a Jew, a woman, an Hispanic or a Mormon as President of the United States.

	<u>Entirely/Somewhat Comfortable</u>	<u>Somewhat/Entirely Uncomfortable</u>
African American	86	12
Jewish	81	17
Woman	79	19
Hispanic	75	24
Mormon	63	34

[ABC/WP 7/07]

A substantial majority say they would vote for an African-American, a woman, an Hispanic or a Mormon, but they don't think America is as ready to vote for those folks as they are.

	<u>Would you vote for</u>	<u>Is America ready elect</u>
African American	92	59
Woman	85	58
Hispanic	80	40
Mormon	65	35

[Newsweek 7/07]

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Most significant candidates for President have declined to take public financing in the primary period. There is some question whether the two ultimate Party nominees will take general election public financing. This has led to increasing calls for public financing of elections. But public response is not all that clear.

In a WP/Kaiser/Harvard survey in May 2007, respondents were asked whether they favored a system of public financing funded by the Federal government, a system of private financing by individuals and political groups, or a combination of the two.

16% chose public financing, 25% private financing, and 55% a combination of the two.

In a Gallup poll taken a month earlier, 22% chose public financing, 45% chose private funding, and 28% chose a combination of the two.

In a survey in early June, respondents were asked whether they supported a system under which candidates would receive grants from a public election fund and could not spend private donations. 74% supported such a system. Partisan support ranged from 80% of Democrats and 78% of Independents to 65% of Republicans. [Lake Research Partners/Bellwether Research]

In an August survey, public financing by the Federal government was deemed unacceptable by 57% of respondents. [Gallup 8/07]

And in a totally open-ended question as to what the number one problem is facing the country, that the respondents and their families are most concerned about, campaign finance reform did not even hit the 1% level. [Battleground Poll 2007 Tarrance Group & Lake Research Partners]

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The point is often made that early State polls, e.g., 6 months before an election event, are not particularly good indicators of what will ultimately happen. That is certainly true. If you have any doubts, just track through the polling from the 2003 Democratic primary race.

However, these polls do have an important effect. A good poll for a particular candidate means a great deal to the psyche of the volunteers and workers for that candidate.

So, when in late July, the ABC/WP survey showed that Obama had moved up in Iowa to a virtual tie with Clinton and Edwards,

it surely gave heart to his paid and volunteer staff in that State.

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Days to Go

as of 9/8/07

Iowa Caucuses - 128?
New Hampshire Primary - 136?
February 5, 2008 - 150
General Election Day - 423
Inauguration Day 2009 - 500

[NBC-First Read]

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THE FIELD

The field has diminished only slightly with Tommy Thompson's announcement, after the Iowa Straw Poll, that he is out of the race.

Technically there are 8 Republicans and 8 Democrats still in the race. The reality is something else.

There is 1 Republican likely yet to get in - Fred Thompson - and 2 Republicans who are still in the "wait and see" mode, Newt Gingrich and Chuck Hagel.

There is 1 Democrat in the "wait and see" mode - Al Gore.

There are long shots in the field, e.g., Republican Mike Huckabee; and then there are the "longest of long shots," e.g., Democrat Dennis Kucinich.

The chart that follows has been modified accordingly.

There is still no word as to whether the Green Party will field a candidate. Mike Bloomberg has said quite specifically that he will not be a candidate, and Sam Nunn has now suggested that he might enter as an Independent candidate, perhaps under the "Unity '08" banner.

<u>Name</u>	Talks About <u>Running</u>	Set up Explore <u>Committee</u>	Announces Presidential <u>Bid</u>	Out of the game
<u>Republican</u>				
Gingrich	X	(wait and see)		
Giuliani	X	11/20/06		
Hagel	X	(wait and see)		
Huckabee	X	1/27/07	1/28/07	
McCain	X	11/15/06	11/15/06	
Romney	X	1/3/07	1/3/07	
Thompson, F	X	(wait and see)		

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[Longest of long shots]			
Brownback	X	12/4/06	12/20/07
Hunter	X	1/12/01	1/25/07
Paul	X	1/11/07	3/12/07
Tancredo	X	1/16/07	4/2/07

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[Out or not likely to enter]				
Allen	X	----	----	No start
Cox	X	(wait and see)		
Frist	X	----	----	11/29/06
Gilmore	X	1/9/07	1/9/07	7/14/07
Keating	X	----	----	1/18/07
Pataki	X	(wait and see)		
Santorum	X	----	----	No start
Thompson, T	X	12/15/06	4/4/07	8/12/07

Independent

Nunn	X			
Bloomberg	X		(Says will not run 8/21/07)	

Green Party

Nader	X			
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Democrat

Biden	X	----	1/7/07	
Clinton	X	1/20/07	1/22/07	
Dodd	X	----	1/10/07	
Edwards	X		1/3/07	
Gore	X	(wait and see)		
Obama	X	1/16/07	2/10/07	
Richardson	X	1/22/07	1/22/07	

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[Longest of long shots]			
Gravel	X	----	4/4/06
Kucinich	X	----	12/29/06

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[Out or not likely to enter]				
Clark	X	(wait and see)		
Daschle	X	----	----	No start
Bayh	X	12/3/06	----	12/16/06
Feingold	X	----	----	11/12/06
Kerry	X			1/24/07
Sharpton	X	(wait and see)		
Vilsack	X	----	11/9/06	2/23/07
Warner	X	----	----	10/12/06

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DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

Hillary Clinton has consistently led the Democratic primary field since the 1st of the year. There has been no national poll in which she was not #1.

Here are Gallup surveys, at roughly mid-month since January.

	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Edwards</u>
August	42	21	11
July	34	25	9
June	33	21	11
May	35	26	12
April	31	26	16
March	35	22	14
February	40	21	13
January	29	18	13

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In a mid-August Gallup poll, Hillary Clinton leads the field with 42%, followed by Barack Obama at 21%, John Edwards at 11%.

94% of Democrats say they are familiar enough with Clinton to rate her. 85% say that about John Edwards, and 84% about Barack Obama.

77% are familiar with all 3 candidates. Among those Democrats that know all 3 of them, 43% support Clinton. She garners 53% of the vote among Democrats who are not familiar Obama or Edwards or both. [Gallup 8/07]

It seems likely that, short of some significant mistake on the part of one of the leading candidates, the relative positions of the candidates in national surveys will continue at least until the Iowa caucuses.

If another candidate, especially Obama, achieves a significant victory in Iowa, the national momentum of the race could well change.

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There is a clear preference among Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents for a candidate "who has a strong desire to change the system for getting things done in Washington" (73%) over a candidate that "has experience getting things done in the current system in Washington" (26%).

96% say that it is desirable that the next President have the characteristics to bring about change in Washington. However, 57% also say that about having a lot of experience in Washington. [Gallup 8/07]

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When it comes to the individual early State races, the current results are not that dissimilar to the national race.

While in Iowa the #1 position has moved back and forth between Clinton and Edwards, and Obama is very much in the mix, at least at this stage, Clinton leads in most key races.

Among the 4 States authorized by the DNC to hold contests before February 5th, she has clear leads in 3 of 4. In the 2 pre-February 5th outliers, Florida and Michigan, she has substantial leads in each. And a quick look at a couple of large February 5th States, California and New Jersey, shows Clinton having commanding leads in both.

Here are the averages of polls in the aforementioned States, as compiled by RealClearPolitics.com. Number in () is the number of surveys that are included in the average.

State	Date	Clinton	Edwards	Obama	Richardson
Iowa	8/17-29 (4)	26	21	22	12
NH	8/9/-29 (2)	37	14	20	8
Nev	8/14-16 (1)	33	15	19	11
SC	8/20-29 (3)	32	16	22	2
Mich	8/26-9/4 (2)	42	15	21	3
Fla	8/10-13 (2)	42	14	22	-
Calif	7/30-8/12 (2)	45	13	23	-
NJ	8/24-26 (1)	49	8	22	-

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The Delegate Path to Nomination

There are 4,360 delegates to the 2008 Democratic National Convention, with 2,181 delegates required to secure the nomination.

If Florida and Michigan do "lose" their delegates as a result of conducting primary elections outside the National Party-determined window, the total number of delegates will be reduced to 3,994, and the number needed to be nominated is reduced to 1998.

Of the total delegates, 3512 are allocated based on primary and caucus events, while 848 are automatic and unpledged delegates [the so-called "super delegates"].

Pollster.com does an "analysis" of the number of delegates "won" by each candidate, based on the latest State polls (some of which are quite old) and not allocating delegates from any State

in which there are no polls. [The analysis ostensibly follows the apportionment rules of the Democratic Party.]

As of September 2nd, that analysis shows Clinton - 1223; Obama - 676; Edwards - 473; and Richardson - 129.

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THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

In much the way Clinton has done in the Democratic primary, Giuliani has led the Republican primary field since January. He has not been headed in any national poll during the period.

Here are the Gallup surveys, at roughly mid-month, since January.

	Giuliani	Thompson	Romney	McCain
August	32	19	14	11
July	30	20	8	16
June	28	19	7	18
May	29	12	8	23
April	35	10	9	22
March	31	12	3	22
February	40	--	5	24
January	31	--	7	27

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In the mid-August Gallup, Rudy Giuliani leads with 32%, followed by Fred Thompson at 22%, Mitt Romney at 14%, and John McCain at 11%.

There is less stability among the Republicans. 91% of Republicans are familiar with Giuliani, 87% with McCain, 64% with Romney, and 56% are familiar with Thompson.

Only 46% of Republicans are able to rate all 4 of the top candidates. Among this group Thompson leads Giuliani by 33% to 25%, followed by Romney and McCain. Among the larger group of Republicans (54%) who are not familiar with all 4 of the candidates, Giuliani leads with 38%, followed by McCain at 18%, Thompson at 12%, and Romney at 6%.

However, the Republican race has a different cast than the Democratic race when the individual States are reviewed.

Romney leads in 3 of the 4 States that are authorized before February 5th. Giuliani leads in 1.

When it comes to the 2 outlier States, Romney has a slight lead over Giuliani in Michigan, and Giuliani has a substantial lead in Florida.

Giuliani has strong leads in California and New Jersey.

There are no publicly available results from Wyoming, where the Republicans plan to hold a caucus on January 5th.

Here are averages of polls in the aforementioned States as compiled by RealClearPolitics.com. The number in () reflects the number of surveys in the average.

State	Date	Giuliani	McCain	Romney	Thompson
IA	8/17-29(4)	14	7	32	13
NH	8/9-29(2)	22	12	30	10
Nev	8/14-16(1)	18	8	28	18
SC	8/20-29(3)	22	14	10	21
Mich	8/26-9/4(2)	18	12	32	14
Fla	8/10-13(2)	32	8	13	18
Calif	7/30-8/12(3)	37	13	12	16
NJ	8/24-26(1)	51	7	9	12

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The Delegate Path to Nomination

There are 2,517 delegates to the 2008 Republican National Convention, with 1,259 delegates required to secure the nomination.

If Florida and Michigan do "lose" 1/2 of their delegates as results of conducting primary elections outside the National Party-determined window, the total number of delegates will be reduced to 2,430, and the number needed to nominated is reduced to 1,216.

Of the total delegates, 1852 are allocated based on primary and caucus events, while 665 are unpledged delegates.

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You'll recall that in Vol.73, "The Washington Watch" pointed out that, historically, the Republican candidate who has led in the Gallup poll one year before the Republican convention was been the Party's nominee. The relevant Gallup poll shows Rudy Giuliani has a comfortable lead over the GOP field on September 1st, one year before the start of the Republican convention.

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On September 6th, Fred Thompson became a formal candidate for the Republican nomination. Will he do as well as an official candidate as an "informal" candidate? Time will tell.

Thompson first showed up in a Gallup survey in late March, registering 12% support. By mid-June he hit 19% and has not really grown since then; in mid-August he scored 19%.

[Although the circumstances are different, Ronald Reagan did not announce his campaign for President until November 13, 1979. He had previously announced a Presidential campaign on November 20, 1975. See "Let Us Remember" below.]

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John McCain's campaign is in a trough. It is hard to see how he recovers. In the spring McCain was registering 20-25% in national polls of Republican candidates. In recent polls he has averaged 11%.

In recent State polls of Republicans, McCain is running 5th in Iowa, 3rd in New Hampshire, 3rd in South Carolina, and 4th in Nevada.

Documents being circulated by the McCain campaign equate his current circumstances with those of Ronald Reagan in 1979. The big difference is that Reagan was never bested in the Gallup national poll during the primary election.

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Keep an eye on Mike Huckabee. With little money, but an engaging public presence and strong conservative credentials, the former Governor of Arkansas is drawing attention. He is not going to be the Republican nominee for President, but he could be quite high on the V.P. list for someone like Giuliani. [He draws my attention because he lost over 100 pounds, the hard way, and has kept it off.]

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The Ames Straw Poll

Politics is full of rituals. The Republicans' Ames straw poll is one of them. And like other rituals, at least in modern times, it doesn't seem to mean a whole lot in the broader scheme of things.

What does seem to mean something is who is leading in the national polls at the time of the Ames straw poll.

1979 - George Bush won the Straw poll with 36% of the vote, John Connolly and Bob Dole were 2nd, with 15% each. Ronald

Reagan led in the Gallup poll, 29% to Jerry Ford's 21%. Reagan was nominated.

1987 - Pat Robertson won the Straw poll with 34%, Bob Dole was 2nd with 25%, George Bush was 3rd with 23%. Bush led in the Gallup, with 40% to Dole's 20%. Bush was nominated.

1995 - Bob Dole tied with Phil Gramm for 1st place in the Straw poll with 24%, and Pat Buchanan was 3rd with 18%. Dole led in the Gallup, with 31% to Gramm's 8%. Dole was nominated.

1999 - George W. Bush won the Straw poll with 31%, Steve Forbes was 2nd with 21%. Bush led in the Gallup with 61%. Bush was nominated.

2007 - Mitt Romney won the Straw poll with 32%, Mike Huckabee finished 2nd with 18%. Rudy Giuliani was leading in the Gallup, with 30%, followed by Fred Thompson at 19%. [?] was nominated.

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By the way, only 14,306 folks showed up for the most recent Straw poll.

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LET US REMEMBER

At this time in 1991, Mario Cuomo was still leading in national polls in the Democratic primary.

In 2003 by this time, Lieberman had lost his lead to Dick Gephardt, who was leading marginally over Dean, Lieberman, Kerry, and Clark in that order.

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And then there is the 1979 Ronald Reagan campaign. In July 1979, his campaign reported that it was \$20,000 in debt. By September that debt had mounted to \$500,000.

There were a number of major shakeups in the campaign, with the last one coming on the day of the New Hampshire primary (February 26), after Reagan had lost the Iowa Caucuses on January 21st. Of course, Reagan went on to win the nomination and the general election.

Notably, he led in the Gallup poll nationally throughout this period.

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THE GENERAL ELECTION

General election polls taken this early aren't worth much, but here they are for your prurient interest.

The Democracy Corps survey aggregated 4,000 interviews conducted over a 4 month period ending in early August and found that Democrats had a 12 point (51% to 39%) lead in a generic Presidential ballot.

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Here are a series of "general election" matchups between the leading Democratic and Republican candidates. [These results are based on recent averages or most recent single polls, if average not available. Source: RealClearPolitics.com]

		<u>Giuliani</u>	<u>Thompson</u>	<u>Romney</u>	<u>McCain</u>
Clinton	45	44	-	-	-
Clinton	48	-	41	-	-
Clinton	46	-	-	-	42
Clinton	48	-	-	38	-
Obama	46	42	-	-	-
Obama	49	-	36	-	-
Obama	45	-	-	-	39
Obama	50	-	-	37	-
Edwards	45	43	-	-	-
Edwards	48	-	36	-	-
Edwards	51	-	-	37	-
Edwards	44	-	-	-	40

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In an aggregate of Gallup interviews done during June/July 2007, voters split evenly, 48%/48%, in a matchup between Clinton and Giuliani. When looked at through the prism of church attendance, Giuliani wins among those who attend church weekly and Clinton wins among those who seldom/never go to church.

	<u>Clinton</u>	<u>Giuliani</u>
Weekly	42%	53%
Nearly weekly/ monthly	42	54
Seldom/never	54	43

* * * * *

Potential voters who have a current choice in hypothetical general election matchups, as well as those who do not have a current choice, were asked whether they would vote for a 3rd Party candidate. 59% said no, 22% said yes, and 20% were unsure.

When faced with Michael Bloomberg as a candidate, 82% said they would not vote for him. [GWU Battleground Poll 7/07]

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In mid-August, Karl Rove gave a series of interviews following his announcement that he was going to shortly leave the Administration.

Among the things he said about Hillary Clinton, were "There is no front-runner who has entered the primary season with negatives as high as she has in the history of modern polling." "She enters the general election campaign with the highest negatives of any candidate in the history of the Gallup Poll." He added that, as a result, she was "fatally flawed" in her quest for election to the Presidency.

Shortly thereafter, the Gallup Organization put out one of its regular briefing memos with the intention of dealing with the Rove assertions.

Among other things, Gallup wrote, "Clinton's current unfavorable ratings are in reality not much different from what other past candidates have had in the year they won election. Second, her image has been more negative than positive several other times during the past 15 years, but often has recovered and could do it again. Last, despite Clinton's high unfavorables, she remains competitive with the Republican candidates in Gallup's Presidential test elections."

Here are some comparisons noted by Gallup.

	<u>Favorable Unfavorable</u>	
2007		
Clinton	47%	48%
2004		
Bush	52%	47%
Kerry	52%	45%
2000 (excluding post-election vote count period)		
Bush	51%	41%
gore	53%	42%
1996		
Clinton	54%	44%
Dole	46%	47%
1992		
Clinton	42%	49%
Bush	38%	58%

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ELECTORAL COLLEGE REFORM

Currently, two States, Nebraska (5 electoral votes) and Maine (4 electoral votes), allocate their electoral votes by Congressional districts. In all other States electoral votes are allocated on a Statewide, winner-take-all basis.

Earlier this year Democrats in North Carolina proposed allocating that State's 14 electoral votes on a Congressional District basis. The goal was to pick up 4 electoral votes for Democratic Presidential candidates in a State that regularly delivers its electoral votes to the Republican candidate. North Carolina Democrats were talked out of going forward with their plan.

And then comes California. An initiative has been filed, by a Republican lawyer, that would allocate the State's 55 electoral votes on the basis of Congressional Districts won, with the Statewide plurality or majority winner getting the extra 2 electoral votes.

An effort is being made to get the proposition on the June 3, 2008, State primary ballot. If it succeeds, California's electoral votes would be allocated on a Congressional District basis in 2008.

The first step for the proponents is to acquire the 433,971 signatures required to get the proposition on the ballot. If that effort is successful...standback! Millions of dollars will flow into that contest, and there are no limits as to amounts or sources.

To add to the drama, with the Presidential primary scheduled for February 5th, this will be the 2nd Statewide election in California in a 4-month period. Turnout will likely be affected.

If this had been the rule in 2000, George Bush would have received at least 19 additional votes, bringing his total electoral votes from 271 to 290. Al Gore's total would have fallen from 266 to 247.

In 2004, Bush would have picked up an additional 22 electoral votes, raising his total votes from 286 to 308 and lowering John Kerry's total from 251 to 229.

A recent Field poll (+/-4.5%) asked if respondents favor allocating the States' electoral votes on the current winner-take-all basis or on a District-by-District basis. District-by-District won 47%-35%. Democrats split dead even on the issue, 41%-42%. Republicans supported change by 29 points, as did Independents by 9 points.

Respondents were then told that if this method had been in place in the past 4 Presidential elections, Republicans would have received as many as 22 additional electoral votes. Democrats were then less inclined to support the change, by 43% - 27%. Republicans were more inclined to support the change 61%-14%, and Independents were less inclined to support change by 9 points.

Respondent preferences from both questions were then combined, with the result that change to the District-by-District method still won 49%-42%. Democrats clearly opposed change, 53%-41%, as did Independents by 51%-37%. Republicans wholeheartedly supported the change, 70%-24%.

* * * * *

While on the subject of electoral votes, here is what is likely to happen, in terms of House seats, after the 2010 census.

8 states will gain seats - Texas +4; Arizona and Florida +2 each; Georgia, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington +1 each.

11 states will lose seats - New York and Ohio -2 each; Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania -1 each.

States won by Bush in 2004 will pick up 11 seats and lose 5 seats. States won by Kerry in 2004 will lose 8 seats and pick up 2 seats. This would have resulted in Bush winning in 2004 by 292 electoral votes to 245 electoral votes.

[For those of you whose instinct is to let me know that total electoral votes in each year only add up to 537, remember there was one faithless Democratic elector in each election.]

* * * * *

THE CONGRESS

In six national surveys taken after Congress had recessed for the month of August, the average job approval rating for Congress was 22%, with disapproval at 68%. [Polling Report, 8/6-8/22/07]

The 18% approval rating recorded by Gallup in mid-August was the lowest since it began rating the Congress in 1974. The only other time in which this low an approval rating was scored was in March 1992, at the time of the House banking scandal.

The disapproval rating of 76% in August was the 2nd highest recorded, the low point of a 78% disapproval rating coming in

March 1992. [The high point for Congressional approval came after 9/11, when its approval rating hit 84% in October 2001.]

The primary reasons for the high level of disapproval have to do with inaction vs action as reflected in a more recent Gallup poll.

Respondents were given the opportunity to express in their own words the reasons why they disapprove of the Congress. 6 reasons hit double digits: Not doing/passing anything (19%); Not making progress in ending the war in Iraq (16%); Need to pay more attention to the needs of the people (14%); Too partisan/Party politics (11%); Too beholden to special interest/lobbyists (11%); Need to stand up to the president more (10%). [Gallup 8/07]

At the time the Democrats took back control of Congress in November 2006, the approval rating of Congress stood at 26%, disapproval at 63%.

At this time in 1993, preceding Republican takeover of control of the Congress in 1994, approval stood at 23% approval, 69% disapproval.

As noted earlier, only 14% have a great deal/quite a lot of confidence in the Congress as an institution.

Yet in July, notwithstanding the fact that the Democrats have been in charge for 8 months, when the NBC/WSJ tested 20 different issues on the question of which Party would do a better job, the Democratic Party was picked by respondents on 16 of the issues, including dealing with global warming, healthcare, gas prices, energy policy, education, homeownership, the economy, Iraq, immigration, ethics in government, taxes, China, improving America's standing in the world, reducing the Federal deficit, controlling government spending, and protecting America's interest on trade issues.

Republicans are seen as likely to do a better job on dealing with the war on terrorism, promoting strong moral values, dealing with homeland security, and promoting a strong military.

* * * * *

There is a further apparent inconsistency between the low rating of the Congress and the ratings that are given to the Democrats in Congress as a group and the Republicans in Congress as a group.

Democrats in Congress have an approval rating of 46% and Republicans in Congress have an approval rating of 34%.

* * * * *

THE U.S. SENATE

Democrats	49	
Republicans	49	
Independents	2	(caucus Dem)

Democrats are working hard to increase their span of control in the Senate, and there are some possibilities. There are no obvious races in which the Republicans are likely to pick up a seat.

Colorado remains the most likely Democratic pickup. New Hampshire as a possible Democratic pickup is still a possibility if Jeanne Shaheen decides to run. So far there are no public signs of a possible campaign on her part.

Virginia will certainly be a target for an additional Democratic seat, now that John Warner (R) has announced that he will not seek re-election. Congressman Tom Davis (R) will likely seek the Republican nomination to replace Warner, and there is a possibility that former Governor Jim Gilmore, who early on entered and departed the Presidential race, might decide that this is the race for him. Former Democratic Governor Mark Warner, who eschewed a race for President and is often talked about as a possible Vice Presidential pick, will likely enter the race.

Mary Landrieu (D) seems to be a little stronger in Louisiana, with no significant opponent emerging.

Tim Johnson (D) of South Dakota is on a path to return to the Senate right after Labor Day. Once that happens the Republicans will likely gin up an opponent or two in short order.

Democrats continue to talk about the Maine race, with Congressman Tom Allen (D) taking on incumbent Senator Susan Collins (R). This has to be seen as a long shot.

In Alaska, incumbent Ted Stevens (R) has a marginally positive favorability rating, but in polling in a hypothetical Republican primary against sitting Alaska Governor, Sarah Palin (R), he gets beaten. There are no signs that Palin is thinking about running against him. Incidentally, there are local supporters of the Governor who have launched a campaign to draft her as the Vice Presidential candidate on the 2008 Republican national ticket.

Stevens is dealing with a continuing corruption scandal in Alaska in which his name has come up along with that of his son. The strongest Democratic candidate against him would likely be Mark Begich, the Mayor of Anchorage.

In Minnesota, incumbent Norm Coleman (R) faces the reality that 49% of Minnesotans would consider a new face in next year's

election. He has a negative job rating of 58%. On the upside for him, he has a strong lead in hypothetical races against his two possible Democratic opponents, Al Franken and Mike Ciresi.

* * * * *

Here is how the 33 Senate elections (12 Democratic incumbents, 21 Republican incumbents) look to me at this time (underlining reflects retirement). (D=Dem incumbent in office, R=GOP incumbent in office, I=Ind. incumbent in office)

Safe	Leaning		Leaning	Safe
<u>Democratic (9)</u>	<u>Democratic (3)</u>	<u>Toss-Up (1)</u>	<u>Republican (6)</u>	<u>Republican (13)</u>
Delaware	Arkansas	<u>Colorado</u>	Alaska	Alabama
Illinois	Louisiana	<u>Virginia</u>	Maine	Georgia
Iowa	South Dakota		Minnesota	Idaho
Massachusetts			New Hampshire	Kansas
Michigan			North Carolina	Kentucky
Montana			Oklahoma	Mississippi
New Jersey				Nebraska
Rhode Island				New Mexico
West Virginia				Oregon
				South Carolina
				Tennessee
				Texas
				Wyoming

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Ind</u>
Seats not up in 2006	37	28	2
Safe in 2006	9	13	0
Leaning in 2006	3	6	0
Total	49	48	2
Toss-ups	2 (2R)		

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THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats 233 (2 vacancies)
Republicans 202

It is still quite early to get a handle on whether the alignment in the House is likely to change in the 2008 election.

In the Democracy Corp compilation discussed previously, Democrats had a 9 point (51% to 42%) edge over the Republicans in a generic congressional ballot.

WW returns again to the Cook Political Report for an assessment of House races.

	<u>8/23/07</u>
Solid Dem	201
Likely Dem	17
Lean Dem	15
Total Dem	233
TossUP	2
D	0
R	2
Lean GOP	15
Likely GOP	19
Solid GOP	166
Total GOP	200

* * * * *

WISDOM FROM SAUL TURTELTAUB

Wisdom learned from a hospital stay: Warm food that is served cold, is tastier than cold food served warm.

What is better about being a pigeon than a human being? It is that, if a pigeon decides to commit suicide by jumping off a building, and changes his mind half way down he can always get out of it.

The optimist says "Tomorrow will be better." The pessimist says, "Tomorrow????"

You know you need a hearing aid when the last silent movie you saw was Spiderman.

Shouldn't we replace our elected officials with the people they defeated when the winner's approval rating drops below the approval rating of the defeated candidate? [9/07]

* * * * *

THIS AND THAT

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible. (George Burns)

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year. (Victor Borge)

We could certainly slow the aging process down if it had to work its way through Congress. (Will Rodgers)

Don't worry about avoiding temptation. As you grow older,
it will avoid you. (Winston Churchill)

* * * * *

Number of different family relationships for which Hallmark makes
cards - 105

Average life span of a major league baseball - 7 pitches

Portion of land in the U.S. owned by the government - 1/3

Portion of Harvard students who graduate with honors - 4/5

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RESTAURANTS

* * * * *

Proof

775 G St. NW
Washington, D.C.
202-737-7663
www.proofdc.com

I went to Proof with Chris, which is always a treat given
her knowledge of fine food and wine.

The restaurant is one large area that is divided between a
lounge and a dining room.

As you enter the restaurant, the bar and lounge area are
dead ahead. The bar has 14 high stools.

There is an "cruvinee" behind the bar. It is not unusual to
see a cruvinee that holds 3-4 bottles, but this one holds 32
bottles. It dispenses wines in your choice of 2, 6, and 8.5
ounce portions. (In modern parlance the cruvinee is called an
Enomatic.)

The lounge area will seat up to 35 people in total and the
full menu is available. However, I think there may well be too
many people milling around the lounge on a busy night to fully
enjoy a full dinner in this area.

To the right, past the lounge, is the dining room. It is
set up in two long sections, with a divider lengthwise down the
middle, which makes each side seem a little more intimate than if
it were one large area. The section on the left has 5 - 4-person
booths, and there are also a number of 2 tops and 4 tops in this

section. In the section on the right there are 2 tops and 4 tops. In total the dining area will seat up to 84 people.

At the far end of the room is a wine "cellar," with bottles visible through the floor to ceiling glass wall.

To the left of the wine area there is a cheese station. Here, two folks work preparing portions of dozens of cheeses. Just past this station, if you look to the left, you can see the kitchen in action, and then you are at the restrooms. More on them later.

The whole restaurant is somewhat dim, but there is plenty of light around the bar and over the dining tables so those with slightly dimming vision can easily read the menu.

The dinner menu has 6 sections: Charcuterie, First Courses, Second Courses, Alsos, Cheese and Desserts.

Under Charcuterie there are 12 choices ranging from Soppressetta to Marcona Almonds.

13 First courses - Wagyu Beef Sashimi to Yukon Gold Potato Gnocchi.

6 Second courses - Roasted Alaskan Halibut to Grilled Hanger Steak.

4 Alsos - Roasted Wild Mushrooms to Sauteed Zucchini & Summer Squash.

22 Cheeses - 8 Cow cheeses, 6 Sheep cheeses, 7 Goat cheeses, and 1 Blend.

6 Desserts - Sticky Toffee Pudding Cake with vanilla ice cream and butterscotch sauce to Chocolate Bundt Cake with chocolate hazelnut mousse and chocolate sorbet.

There is also a Chef's Six Course Tasting Menu, but everyone in the party has to participate.

Chris and I shared the following:

Starters - Jamon Serrano (Spanish ham); Pickled Okra; Roasted Baby Beets with sherry mustard vinaigrette, aged goat cheese, toasted hazelnuts; Roast Flatbreads with Ricotta, olive oil, lemon thyme, pea shoots, sea salts.

Entrees - Glazed Sablefish, potato puree, pea shoots, wild mushrooms, miso sauce; Crispy Panko Chicken, lemon grass jasmine pilaf, slaw, salsa verde; Sauteed Baby Bok Choy.

Dessert - Honeyed Goats Cheesecake, pink peppercorn shortbread, raspberries, passion fruit.

Every dish was excellent.

(On subsequent visits I was able to sample the Champagne Pate, the Stickey Toffee Pudding Cake with vanilla ice cream and butterscotch sauce, and the Grilled Lamb Burger served on a brioche bun with "chick pea fries (they look like thick french fries, but the taste is quite different).

As you know, this writer is not a wine aficionado, but Chris is, and she described the wine selections as "one of the most impressive wine lists I have ever seen." And she enjoyed those that she tasted. Chris also noted that the glassware used for wine was as good as the wines.

The wine list is expansive and many of the choices are downright expensive. One bottle that caught my eye, St. Emilion, 1947 Chateau Cheval Blanc, has a price of \$11,000. If that is a little pricey for you, the 1982 is \$2,400 and the 1996 is available at the bargain price of \$450.

My friend Al Eisele, of "The Hill," has written in more detail about the wine collection. Get a copy of "The Hill" for August 2nd, in the Capital Living section, for his comments.

Maria was our serving person. If there is a prize for the serving person who best represents the restaurant and all its qualities, Maria would certainly be in the finals, if not the ultimate winner.

She spoke glowingly of her co-workers, the managers, the general working conditions, and how much she enjoyed working as a serving person. When asked where else she had worked she ticked off a half dozen D.C. food emporiums, but made it clear that Proof was her favorite.

When asked what wines she would suggest she asked about general preferences before making suggestions. When asked about her favorites for various courses she had ready suggestions.

Suffice to say, the service was excellent. (Our service was significantly more attentive than Al reported in "The Hill," but we were in the dining room and he was in the lounge.)

The men's room is dark, black and shiny.

As you enter you face two, rather unusual, black wash basins. There is no bowl in these washbasins. Instead they are essentially flat, with a small channel that runs all the way around, ending with a drain at the back of the wash basin. There is obviously enough slope in the center of the wash basin and in

the channels so that water that hits the center of the wash basin runs off into the channels and thereafter to the drain.

To the right are two black ceramic hanging urinals divided by a partial shiny black metal divider. The back end of the room is the large commode area, that is walled off by partial black metal walls and doors.

The floor is covered with large, dark charcoal grey, slightly spackled tiles. The walls are covered with large black shiny tiles, except for the back wall of the commode area which is painted red from a height of about 4 feet to the ceiling.

And then there is the art work. From the far left wall, over the washbasins and into the commode area, there is a picture in the tiles of a nude supine women; she has no head and her chest is exposed. Her feet are found inside the commode area.

Each of the urinals also has similar artwork that catches the eye as you stand in front of the urinal. Here the pictures are somewhat more defined. On the right, a full posterior shot with head, that ends just below the buttocks. On the left the picture is of a woman lying on her stomach at an angle.

The ladies room (as reported to me) is quite striking and glamorous. It is decorated in shocking pink and grey, including a pink commode seat. There are full length mirrors, and the walls are covered in a retro foil wall paper.

There is valet parking in the evening.

* * * * *

Tonic
(Aka Quigley's Pharmacy)
2036 G Street NW
Washington D.C.
202-296-0211
Fax 202-293-0063
Tonic to Go 202-296-0999

The Tonic sign on the building is green, round and small. The Quigley's Pharmacy sign is white and large.

There are three floors.

The 1st floor is set up with a bar, with 14 high chairs and 6 high tables, each with 4 chairs. The restaurant has not yet received an alcoholic beverage license, so at this time only food is served at the bar. The kitchen is at the back end of the room.

The 2nd floor main dining room is reached by a pretty steep set of stairs. Fortunately the steps are wide and there are strong rails on each side.

There are a total of 72 seats in the main dining room; 2-2 tops, 8-4 tops, 1-8 top, 5-4 person booths, and 1-8 person booth. At the back end of the room there is a "bridge" that leads to the restrooms and the stairwell to the kitchen. If you look down from the sides of the bridge you can see parts of the 1st floor.

The top floor is called the Lounge. It is not yet open, but is likely to be opened during the school year.

The walls are exposed brick. The furnishings are simple, but comfortable, and the "table cloths" are white paper.

It has the kind of menu that you secretly long for, but know you really should not eat.

10 appetizers - soup to tater tots and Whiz Nachos (yes, that is nachos with cheese whiz).

7 salads- grilled vegetable salad to an Asian tofu salad.

6 sandwiches - grilled vegetable to Philly cheese steak.

6 burgers - with added guacamole to cheezwhiz.

7 - 10 inch pizzas plus a build-your-own combo.

9 Entrees - Pulled pork plate to Blackened Catfish.

An extensive dessert menu, ranging from Honey Raisin Bread Pudding to Old Fashioned Floats.

There is also a weekly specials menu. The week I was there it included an appetizer, Deep Fried Pickles - pickle spears, beer battered and deep fried, served with spicey honey, mustard dipping sauce. Also a mile-high meatloaf sandwich on sourdough bread with mashed potatoes and tomato gravy.

At my first dinner I had the grilled vegetable salad - zucchini, squash, roasted red peppers, grilled onion, mixed greens, oil and vinegar, and Mama's Meatloaf - nice textured meatloaf with tomato gravy, macaroni and cheese, and collard greens. (This is the way the dish comes on the menu.) The mac and cheese is not too cheezy.

At a subsequent lunch, I had a turkey burger with sauteed mushrooms and onions and tater tots.

As you enter the men's room there is a white, squarish ceramic washbasin with a metal framed mirror dead ahead.

To the left are 2 wall-hanging urinals, separated by partial unpainted fresh metal dividers. Just past the second urinal is the commode area, which is enclosed in the same metal walls and door, open at top and bottom.

The floor is covered with small tiles in 3 different colors; in the commode area they are brown, in the urinal section - light green, and in the entry way and under the wash basin - lite tan.

The far wall as you enter is exposed brick; otherwise the walls are covered in tan mid-sized tiles on 3 sides to a height of about 3.5 feet, and then the rest of the walls are painted tan.

Lunch time is generally packed, the evenings seem to be a little lighter, although that may change when the students are back on campus.

I heard about Tonic from Erin who works there as a server. As you would expect the service was excellent.

There are a couple of parking garages within an easy walk to the restaurant.

Breakfast and lunch are served Monday - Friday with brunch served from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Dinner is served every night of the week.

Mike

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