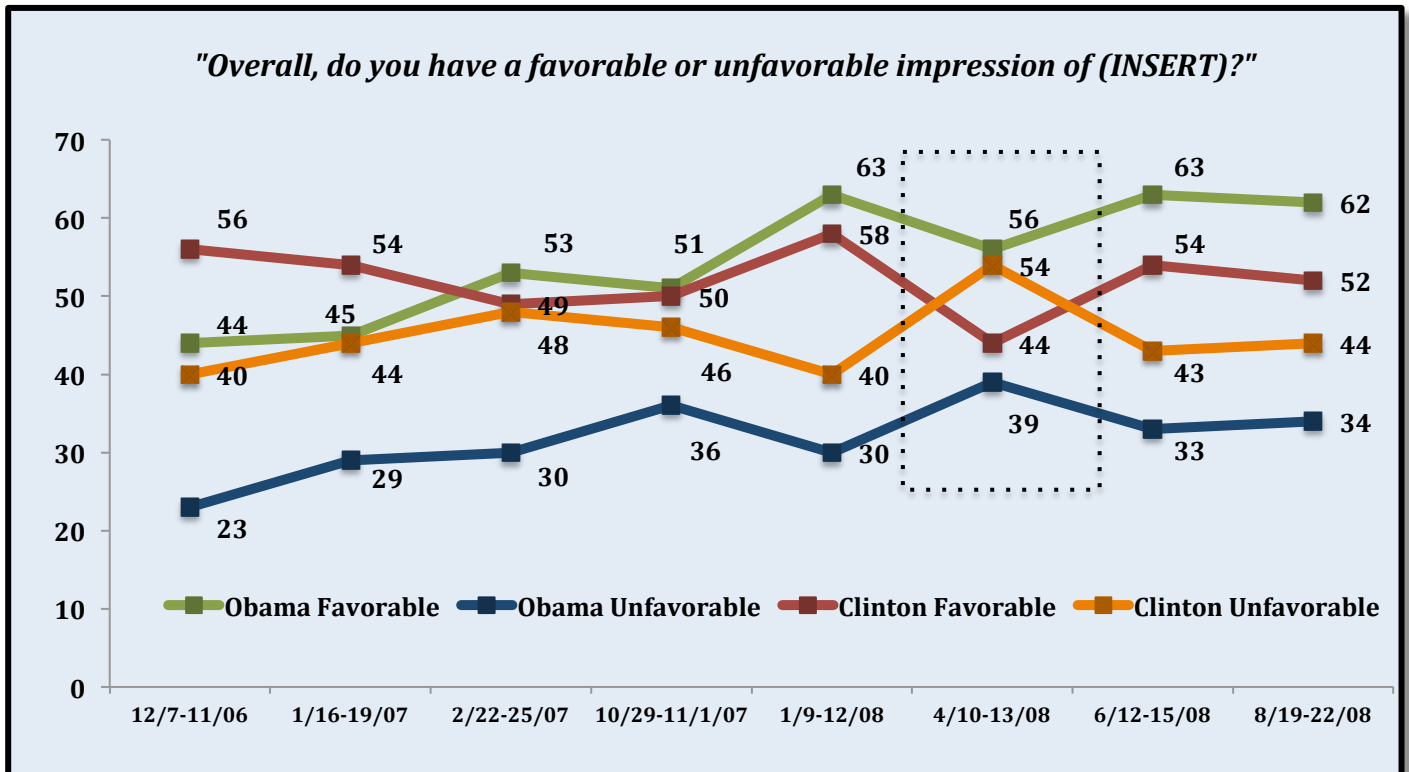


Polling News & Notes

Overlooked Recent Polling and Insights • February 2, 2012

Swings in Candidate Favorability: Recent [headlines](#) suggest the presidential primary is taking its toll on the standings of former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney and former Speaker Newt Gingrich with voters. According to the latest ABC News/*Washington Post* [poll](#), Mr. Romney's favorability rating at the end of January is 31% and Mr. Gingrich's is 29%, down from 38% and 35% in November 2011, respectively.

While this downward swoop is not ideal, it is not uncommon. For example, in the 2008 Democratic primary contest both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton saw their favorability ratings fall as the race intensified. Between the first ABC News/*Washington Post* survey in January 2008 and their second in early April, Mr. Obama's favorability rating dropped seven points to 56% and his unfavorable rating increased by nine points to 39%. Ms. Clinton's favorability dropped 14 points to 44% and her unfavorable rating increased 14 points to 54%. Both Democratic candidates' ratings rebounded in June 2008 after the Democratic primaries concluded.



Source: ABC News/*Washington Post* Historic polls.

It may be premature to sound the alarm now, as some of their biggest contests are yet to come. That's not to say permanent damage cannot be done: it is just too early to tell (and panic).