



Double Haters May Decide the Presidency

Using cutting-edge AI technology, Siena College Research Institute in collaboration with CloudResearch, conducted in-depth interviews with over 5000 of the battleground state voters likely to decide the 2024 election. Their responses were candid and often emotional, and underlined some key challenges facing both Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

Let's face it, a majority of the vote for President is already in. Nationally, 71% of Americans have a favorable opinion of either Trump or Biden and an unfavorable view of the other. Let's call them the Love-haters. Love-haters plan to vote for the candidate they love and against the one they hate in our national New York Times/Siena surveys at 95% for Biden lovers and 96% for Trump lovers.

Across the battleground – Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin – this dynamic is even more pronounced. In those six states, 76% of voters are love-haters and plan to vote for Biden among his lovers at 96% and for Trump among his lovers at 97%.

Based on our surveys conducted prior to the verdict in the New York trial, if the only voters were the Love-haters, Trump is up by 3 points, 50-47% nationally and by 7 points, 52-45% across the six battleground states. Given the emphasis on each battleground state rather than considering the 6 states simultaneously, we find that among Love-haters, Trump leads Biden by 13 in each of Arizona and Georgia, by 17 in Nevada and by four in Pennsylvania. Michigan and Wisconsin are essentially tied among Love-haters as Trump is up by one in Michigan while Biden is up by one in Wisconsin.

Looking a bit more at these Love-haters, those that love Biden and hate Trump only love Biden at a score of 71% of the possible while Trump Love/haters love Trump at a score of 80% of the possible. And in terms of hate, they are almost equal. Trump Love-haters hate Biden at a score of 94% and Biden Love-haters hate Trump at a rate of 95%.

We see little evidence that Love-haters have any inclination to vote for the candidate that they hate.

Enter the third parties. Among Trump Love-haters, when offered a third-party candidate, Trump loses 9 points of support with most, 5 points going to Kennedy. Stein picks up one point and 3 points move to someone else or won't vote. Biden loses 12 points among his Love-haters, 7 to Kennedy, 1 to Stein, one to the Libertarian and 3 to someone else/won't vote.

Whose left. Well of the remaining 29% nationally or 24% across the battleground the single largest group is the Double-haters, those voters with an unfavorable view of both Joe Biden and of Donald Trump. They comprise 18% of the national sample and 17% across the battleground states.

With Trump up over Biden in the Battleground states among Love-haters and even up more if indeed some Love-haters peel off to vote for either RFK or another third-party candidate, it appears as though Biden would need to carry the Double-haters by a substantial margin.

In order to better understand these pivotal voters, Double-haters, Siena partnered with CloudResearch using its proprietary Engage platform. Through Engage, CloudResearch conducted AI driven online interviews with 800 Double-haters across the six battleground states. In order to open the door on this important and diverse group of voters, we offer not only the numbers from the New York Times/Siena surveys but also comments from Double-haters from CloudResearch's Engage platform.

Across our most recent sequence of battleground polls, the Double-haters favor Biden over Trump by 39-31% with 30% saying they would vote for someone else or not vote. In fact, across the six states among Double-haters Biden has large leads in Arizona (31 points), Pennsylvania (16 points) and Georgia (10 points). While Trump leads in Michigan among Double-haters by 16 points, Biden has smaller advantages in both Wisconsin (6 points) and Nevada (3 points). The percentage of Double-haters that now refuse to say that they would vote for either Trump or Biden ranges from 21% in PA to 40% in Nevada.

The Double-haters may very well decide the winner in many of the battleground states.

Double-haters have a somewhat more negative attitude towards Trump than they do towards Biden. Of Double-haters, 62% have a very unfavorable view of Trump while fewer, 47 have a very unfavorable view of Biden. Translated into a score, if a score of 100 was representative of every Double-hater having an unfavorable view of either candidate, Trump's score is 81 while Biden's is 74. Slightly less 'hated.' In interviews through Engage, Trump was called 'selfish, narcissistic, unstable and corrupt' while Biden was described as 'too old to run the U.S. and incoherent.'

Of Double-haters that say that they will vote for Trump, their Trump hate score is 63 and their Biden hate score is 85. Of Double-haters that say that they will vote for Biden, their Biden hate score is 61 and their Trump hate score is 94. And of Double-haters that do not say that they would vote for either candidate, their hate scores are Trump 85 and Biden 77.

Who are the Double-haters?

First off, they are as a group less certain that they will vote in the November election. While 54% of respondents across the battleground that are NOT Double-haters are almost certain that they will vote, only 37% of Double-haters are almost certain. An additional 32% of non-Double-haters are very likely while fewer, 25% of Double-haters are very likely. Double-haters are nearly 3 times as likely as non-Double-haters to say that they are somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely to vote.

Double-haters are younger as a whole than are non-Double-haters. They are twice as likely to be between 18-29 years of age and 1.5 times more likely to be between 30 and 44.

They are slightly less likely to be college educated and somewhat more likely to be Latino.

Over half self-describe as being politically independent but still claim to identify more so as Democrats than as Republicans 19-13%. Across the non-Double-haters, party identification is roughly one third each.

Not surprisingly, Double-haters at the rate of 82% are either not very or not at all (58%) satisfied with the candidate choice this cycle. Among others that rate of dissatisfaction is only 31%.

Double-haters say that they voted for Biden over Trump by 20 points in 2020, 39-19% with 33% not having voted and 5% voting for another candidate but today, 84% disapprove of the job that Biden is doing as President.

On two key issues, the economy and abortion, Double-haters are conflicted. Overwhelmingly, 93% say that the economy is doing no better than only fair or poor – the rest of respondents are at 76% - and by 55-29% they trust Trump more than Biden on the economy. It was common for respondents to tell Engage that, “the economy was much better when Trump was president.” We also heard some reservations about another Trump term, “I feel slightly that Trump would stop some of these rising costs by corporations and greed. I'm not 100% sure though, as he is a business owner and likes to line his pockets too in order to live his rich life. I'm sure he doesn't care much about us little people..”

Double-haters support abortion being legal at a rate of 71%, higher than the balance of the population's 63% and prefer Biden's leadership on abortion over Trump by 36 points, 58-22%.

And interestingly, Double-haters strongly favor the Democrats running for U.S. over the republicans by 40 in AZ, 23 points in both NV and PA and by 7 points in WI while the rest of voters in three of those four states are evenly divided. In WI, the Democrat leads by 9 among non-Double-haters.

Given that Love-haters are so firmly in their respective camps resulting in numbers that would, if only Love-haters voted, point to Trump having a clear pathway to victory, Double-haters appear to be Biden's only path to victory. Currently they lean towards Biden overall and in some states quite strongly.

But they are in a dilemma. By definition, they have an unfavorable view of both candidates. They appear to lean Democratic based on their previous vote history, party identification and choices for senate. But they are unhappy with Biden's performance.

On the one hand they think the economy is in shambles and prefer Trump's leadership while on the other hand they strongly support abortion rights and trust Biden to protect those rights.

Using the Engage platform to draw out deeper insights into Double-haters, the analysts at CloudResearch find that the Double-haters who say that they will vote for Trump will largely do so because they prefer Republican policies. They believe that while Trump himself is not the ideal candidate, they feel as though his policies align more with their conservative values.

Some of these Double-haters simply distrust Biden more than they dislike Trump. In her interview with Engage one 53-year-old female from PA said that, "Trump may be messed up but he knows how to handle our country. Other countries were afraid of him and Americans were prosperous. Now we have a babbling old buffoon who doesn't even know what he is saying and inflation is so high."

Even when it comes to abortion, an issue on which Double-haters as a whole align more with Biden, the many Double-haters voting for Trump display a much more pro-life stance. "Donald Trump has a fundamentally more moral stance on abortion than Joe Biden," according to one 30-year-old male from GA, "Trump believes abortion after a certain period should be illegal. I believe in this as well."

CloudResearch finds that while Double-haters that plan to vote for Trump justify their vote on policy, those that plan to vote for Biden tend to because he is lesser of two evils. In fact, one 38-year-old female from PA said, "I think Trump would handle the economy better than Biden...but I would support Biden only because he is the best choice I have out of the current candidates." A 35-year-old Black woman from Pennsylvania agreed that "The current administration is handling the economy poorly."

Despite their negative views of Biden, many Biden-voting Double-haters simply cannot bear the alternative: "I am more concerned about seeing that Donald Trump is NOT elected than I am with anything else." said one 52-year-old female from AZ, "I'm not a fan of Biden, but anyone is better than Trump and I don't want to split the vote by casting a ballot for an independent who will take votes away from Biden."

But some Double-haters do now say that they will vote for a third-party candidate. Nationally the New York Times/Siena survey reveals that among Double-haters when

offered third party candidates along with the two leading contenders, 29% of Double-haters choose either Biden or Trump while 40% name a third-party candidate.

In their Engage interviews, Double-haters leaning toward third party candidates consistently express both contempt and despair toward the major parties, and that both the Republicans and Democrats have been “failing our country year after year.” They say that they have “zero trust in Joe Biden or Donald Trump...I can’t believe this country has fallen so far that we are stuck with these two candidates.”

Others express excitement with third party candidates, especially with Robert F. Kennedy. One 56-year-old female from NV says, “I love everything RFK Jr. stands for. He is honest and he is for the people. I feel like he would make positive changes in many areas including the economy, affordable housing and the environment.”

And some are voting for a third-party candidate in an effort to improve democracy, with one 59-year-old female from WI arguing that “for sure the only solution for this country is to break the dominant two-party system...”

When we collapse the vote choice in our New York Times/Siena surveys into Biden, Trump or ‘don’t know’ among Double-haters, we find Biden leads but nearly one-third can’t give an answer. Of those, many now say that they will vote for a third-party candidate, but some just can’t provide an answer right now. They don’t like either candidate. They tend to be very unhappy with the economy. Many in the interviews with CloudResearch’s Engage say they do not approve of Biden’s handling of the war in Gaza but where will they land? One 19-year-old female from WI said, “Trump is incredibly selfish and has done nothing but harm. Biden promises change but never acts on his promises. I don’t agree with Trump on anything and I’m very disappointed in how Biden has responded to the Israel-Palestine situation.”

That voter may ultimately decide who will next occupy the White House.

About CloudResearch

CloudResearch is an online platform that connects researchers with more than 100 million research participants worldwide. CloudResearch provides tools to carry out complex online projects and polls for the academic, public, and private sectors. Engage is CloudResearch's latest research innovation, using AI to combine the power of traditional and conversational surveys at scale www.cloudresearch.com.

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About the Siena College Research Institute

Founded in 1980, the Siena College Research Institute conducts regional, statewide and national surveys on business, economic, political, voter, social, academic and historical issues. Recognized as one of the premier polling centers in the nation, the Siena College Research Institute has achieved an exceptional A+ rating from FiveThirtyEight and in both 2022 and 2023, was honored as the number one polling institute in the United States by the same outlet for its unparalleled accuracy and commitment to excellence.

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