



Presidential Debates

Research:

- [*"Debating Democracy: The History and Effects of U.S. Presidential Debates"*](#) (pdf)
- [*"Who Framed Sarah Palin: Viewer Reactions to the 2008 Vice Presidential Debate"*](#) (pdf)
- [*"Let the People Speak: The Public's Agenda and Presidential Town Hall Debates"*](#) (pdf)

Data:

PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE SERIES & AVERAGE VIEWING AUDIENCE

Debate Year	# of Pres Debates	# of VP Debates	Avg. Viewers (in millions)
1960	4	0	63
1976	3	1	60
1980	1	0	81
1984	2	1	63
1988	2	1	60
1992	3	1	63
1996	2	1	36
2000	3	1	38
2004	3	1	51
2008	3	1	61

SOURCE: Nielsen Media Research (see www.debates.org)

Media:

- Veteran journalist Sander Vanocur, a questioner in the very first 1960 Kennedy – Nixon debate, recounts this historic debate broadcast. A panel of academics and journalists involved with debates and debate research discuss the impact of these events in a 2000 C-SPAN broadcast:
 - <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/ThroughD>