

Aussies root for Barack but ...

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By [Greg Ansley](#)

CANBERRA – Australians are rooting for Senator Barack Obama in the US presidential election but many do not think he will make much difference to their country or their feelings towards "rude, ignorant and greedy" Americans.

The nation's view of America as the US seems set on electing its first back president has been revealed in a survey released by the US Studies Centre and the University of Sydney.

It shows a country more tolerant and less conservative than American voters, and more firmly of the opinion that Democrat Obama would make a better president than Republican rival Senator John McCain.

Whether or not he will be better for Australia is another question.

The survey, conducted by Simon Jackman, professor of politics at California's Stanford University, was compiled from 800 telephone interviews and 3000 internet responses.

It said that almost half of the phone respondents selected Obama as the better US president for Australia compared with 11 per cent for McCain, but that 39 per cent believed he would make no difference to their country.

It found Australians have little time for outgoing President George W. Bush. Only 16 per cent of phone respondents approved of Bush, well below support recorded for the president in recent US polls.

The survey found "tremendous pessimism" about the US, with almost 80 per cent saying that America was on the wrong track – in striking contrast to the more than 60 per cent who believed Australia was heading on the right path.

Influenced by the global financial crisis, almost 70 per cent felt anger towards or ashamed of the US for the things that America had done.

A large 35 per cent thought the US should remain in Iraq for as long as it takes to stabilise the country, and only one in four believed Washington should quit immediately.

But while three-quarters of respondents continued to support the US alliance, most believe that it makes no difference to the risk of an attack on Australia.

Only 20 per cent thought the alliance reduced the risk.

Asked about US stereotypes, 56 per cent said Americans were rude, and two-thirds believed them to be ignorant, violent and greedy.

But half agreed they were honest, two-thirds believed they were hard-working, and only 35 per cent found Americans immoral.

Your Views

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