

THE WHACK-A-MOLES LEAVE WOMEN UNAROUSED

Wide Gender Divide on Drone Strikes

% Approve of U.S. drone strikes

	Male	Female	Gap
	%	%	
Germany	54	24	-30
Britain	57	30	-27
Czech Rep.	44	17	-27
U.S.	74	51	-23
Japan	32	11	-21
France	46	28	-18
Spain	29	14	-15
Italy	39	25	-14
Brazil	26	12	-14
Poland	44	32	-12

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q59b.

Pew Research has started polling whether people around the world approve of America's use of drones

against terror leaders.

Do you approve or disapprove of the United States conducting missile strikes from pilotless aircraft called drones to target extremists in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia?

The quick answer is, no one aside from Americans themselves (who love them) likes our use of drones. Only in the UK and Poland does the result come close to 50/50. Mind you, none of the countries where we're using drones were asked in this questionnaire (Pew promises numbers from Pakistan soon). India, which is in the neighborhood and fights some of the same terrorist groups being hit, split 32 approving, 21 disapproving, and the rest not answering.

But I'm even more interested in the gender split. As shown above, the gender gap in drone approval levels is in the same neighborhood as Mitt Romney's gender gap.

This is something I've been thinking of when I encounter men who defend our use of drones with almost visceral enthusiasm. Sure, Americans like explosions and displays of sheer power in all forms. But I can't help but think about how drones have been sold as the ultimate porn thrill: sitting in a dark room in Nevada, watching over minute creatures whose humanity has been stripped, caressing a joy-stick to wield the ultimate power over life and death. La petite mort.

Never mind that a lot of the targeters are actually women, never mind that we keep whacking these moles without winning any war.

They make Americans feel powerful, and I guess that's worth 34 net approval points.

Update: It turns out Americans aren't all that fond of drones themselves, for uses where they might be surveilled.