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It's been four years since President Obama was sworn into the oval office. You learn a lot about a person in four years.

During those four years, the United States, not to mention the world, has watched the president battle Congress on health care, tackle serious and grim situations like the B.P. oil spill, and take down bad guys like Osama Bin Laden. The general public has watched him take his family on vacation, seen his affectionate interactions with Michelle, and seen his daughters quickly grow up before their eyes. Four years has been plenty of time for the American people to know everything there is about Obama. Well, everything except whether he's a Christian or a Muslim.

No matter what he does or says there are still some people out there that believe Obama is Muslim. [According](#) to a poll conducted by The Pew Research Center, 49 percent of Americans do believe the president follows Christianity, while 17 percent are convinced he is Muslim. Only 26 percent of those who participated in the survey said they are comfortable with Obama's alleged Muslim faith, compared to a whopping 65 percent who say they are uncomfortable.

In contrast, his opponent Mitt Romney fared much better in the [same poll](#) . Despite concerns of a Mormon Romney running the White House if elected in November, 61 percent said they don't have a problem voting for him. Only 22 percent said they were uncomfortable with Romney's religious faith.

A writer for the *Washington Post* says that ultimately the religious battle comes down to swaying independents, which neither candidate is doing too well. The

Washington Post

article

[reports](#)

that 18 percent of independents have a problem with Romney's religion; 16 percent of independents take issue with Obama's.

Shortly before the 2008 election the majority of voters, 55 percent, were confident that Obama was Christian. Only 12 percent at the time thought otherwise. So what happened between 2008 and 2012 that made people change their minds? A [recent article](#) in the *Los Angeles Times* gives two possible explanations: reason one is people who dislike the president will cling to any and every conspiracy theory out there regarding Obama (Hint: these are the same individuals who refuse to believe Obama is a natural born citizen of the United States).

Reason two is it's a tactic that will help hurt Obama's chances for re-election in November. Writer James Rainey [refers to](#) it as the doubtless urge of "some respondents to stick it in the pollsters' ear -- to commit a small act of defiance by giving an answer the voter knows is untrue." To put it simply, the more Republicans, tea-party members, and anyone else who opposes Obama choose to play on America's Muslim phobia by painting Obama as an evil worshiper of the Quran, the more likely the President will lose his reelection bid.

Obama will have to wait until Nov. 6 to find out if his opponents' strategy paid off. Until then, he will have to deal with polls like these that insist on making his religious denomination a voting issue.