

Quite the interesting and though provoking piece by David Brooks in today's Times. In a departure for Brooks, who is given to partisan cuts carefully buried 3/4 of the way through an otherwise thoughtful piece, here he is just thoughtful:

Why isn't Barack Obama doing better? Why, after all that has happened, does he have only a slim two- or three-point lead over John McCain, according to an average of the recent polls? Why is he basically tied with his opponent when his party is so far ahead?

His age probably has something to do with it. So does his race. But the polls and focus groups suggest that people aren't dismissive of Obama or hostile to him. Instead, they're wary and uncertain.

And the root of it is probably this: Obama has been a sojourner. He opened his book "Dreams From My Father" with a quotation from Chronicles: "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers."

There is a sense that because of his unique background and temperament, Obama lives apart. He put one foot in the institutions he rose through on his journey but never fully engaged. As a result, voters have trouble placing him in his context, understanding the roots and values in which he is ineluctably embedded.

[Op-Ed Columnist - Where's the Landslide? - Op-Ed - NYTimes.com](#)

Pawn has read all of those articles he references here, and must admit he is on to something...