

## Absurd, false rumors have spread far, wide

ATHENS, Ohio — Ninety-four percent of adult Americans have heard at least one of the ridiculous and false rumors chasing John McCain and Barack Obama on the campaign trail, according to a Scripps poll.

Have you heard that John McCain was brainwashed while a prisoner of war in Vietnam? Or that he's become senile, or fathered a black baby?

And how about that Barack Obama secretly is a Muslim? Or he is the anti-Christ from the Book of Revelation? Or that he refuses to say the Pledge of Allegiance?

About 19 of every 20 adult Americans have heard at least one of these six obviously false rumors about the major presidential candidates, according to a first-of-its kind national survey of 1,015 adults conducted by Scripps Howard News Service and Ohio University.

The pervasiveness of ugly rumors this year is remarkable.

Only 6 percent of the adults in the poll said they hadn't heard any of the six rumors included in the study.

— From wire reports