

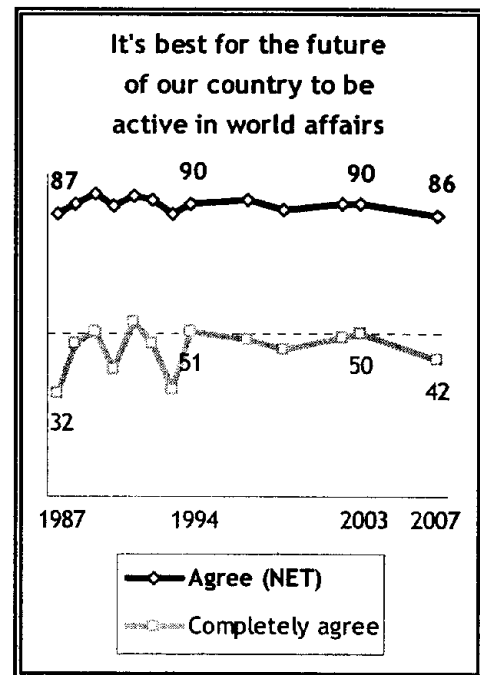
SECTION 3: FOREIGN POLICY, GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT AND PATRIOTISM

The Iraq war continues to have a major impact on the public's fundamental values regarding foreign policy and national security. Support for the principle of "peace through strength," which surged in the aftermath of 9/11 but fell sharply after the Iraq war began in 2003, has again declined. And while an overwhelming number of Americans continue to believe the U.S. should be active in world affairs, the number strongly endorsing U.S. global engagement has fallen compared with four years ago.

Currently, 86% say they agree with the statement: "It's best for the future of our country to be active in world affairs." That is down a bit from 2003 (90%). About four-in-ten (42%) completely agree with this statement, compared with 50% four years ago. The decline has been particularly striking among college graduates; currently 51% of college graduates completely agree that the country is best served by being active in world affairs, down 12 points since 2003.

The falloff in strong support for an active U.S. role in global affairs is consistent with other Pew surveys over the past two years showing a decline in support for internationalism among the public. In "America's Place in the World," conducted in the fall of 2005, 42% said they believed the U.S. should "mind its own business" internationally – the highest percentage expressing that sentiment since the mid-1990s, after the Cold War, and the mid-1970s, following the Vietnam War.

That survey found that the growth in isolationist sentiment was largely concentrated among Democrats. However, the values survey shows that both Democrats and Republicans are less likely to completely agree that the U.S. should take an active role on the world stage than they did four years ago. Similarly, the percentage of conservatives – regardless of party – who strongly favor an active U.S. stance in world affairs has fallen from 53% to 39% since 2003; this is comparable to the decline in strong support among self-described liberals (11 points).



The values survey also shows that the public continues to believe – in overwhelming numbers – that “We should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home.” Currently, 77% say they agree with this statement, about the same as in 2003 (76%), and up somewhat from 2002 (73%). The percentage completely agreeing with this statement also has increased – from 33% in 2002, to 36% a year later, to 38% in the current survey.

However, public sentiment in favor of paying less attention to international problems was much higher in the early and mid-1990s, shortly after the Cold War ended. In June 1992, 88% agreed that the U.S. should focus less on overseas problems – with 48% in complete agreement.

Fewer 'Completely Agree' about Need for Global Engagement

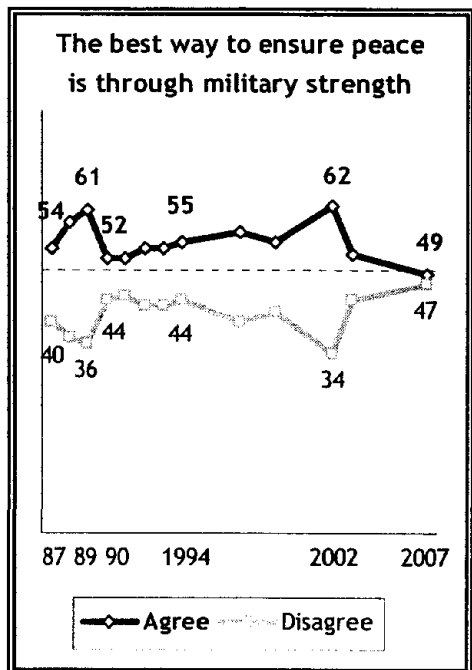
<i>Completely agree:</i>			
<i>It's best for US to be active globally</i>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Change</u>
Total	%	%	
Total	50	42	-8
Men	50	47	-3
Women	49	37	-12
College grad	62	51	-11
Some college	48	44	-4
H.S. grad or less	43	36	-7
Republican	54	44	-10
Democrat	48	39	-9
Independent	50	43	-7
Conservative	53	39	-14
Moderate	45	42	-3
Liberal	58	47	-11

Peace through Strength

In the summer of 2002, less than a year after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, 62% agreed with this statement: “The best way to ensure peace is through military strength.” But a year later, that number had fallen by nine points, to 53%. In the current survey, 49% say they think that maintaining military strength is the best way to ensure peace – the lowest percentage in the 20-year history of Pew values surveys.

While the partisan divide in views about this principle is large, it is not much bigger than four years ago. Notably, the percentage of Republicans subscribing to this principle has fluctuated only modestly in recent years. Currently, 72% of Republicans agree that the best way to ensure peace is through military strength, which is largely unchanged from 2002 and 2003 (72% and 69%, respectively).

By contrast, just 40% of Democrats believe that military strength best ensures peace, which is down a bit from 2003 (44%). In 2002, a solid majority of Democrats (55%) said that peace is best ensured through military strength. Opinion among independents has followed a similar track as the Democrats. Currently, 46% of



independents agree that the best way to ensure peace is through military strength, compared with 51% four years ago and 62% in 2002.

There also has been a substantial shift on this issue among self-described moderates – regardless of party. Currently, 43% of moderates say that military strength is the best way to guarantee peace, down 12 points from 2003 (55%).

Fewer Say 'Get Even'

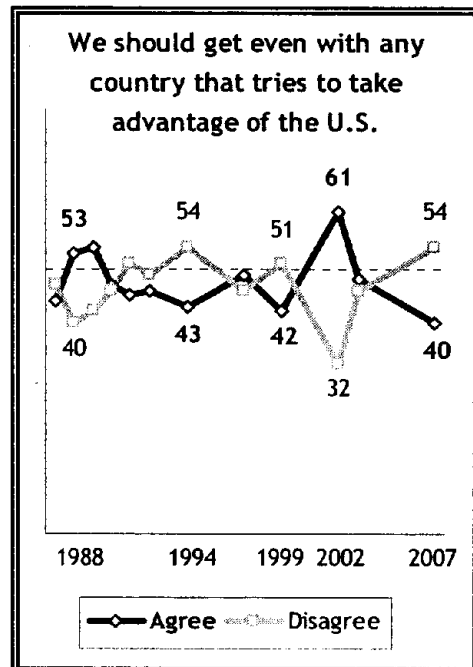
In 2002, with memories of 9/11 still fresh, 61% of Americans agreed with the statement: “It is my belief that we should get even with any country that tries to take advantage of the United States.” That marked a 19-point increase from 1999, and was the highest percentage agreeing with this sentiment in the 20-year history of the values survey.

But this proved to be a temporary rise in the public’s desire to “get even” with countries that have taken advantage of the U.S. Just a year later, 48% supported the idea of getting revenge against adversaries, and in the current survey it has declined to 40% – the lowest number in favor of getting even against other countries in 20 years.

There are relatively modest political differences in opinions about whether the U.S. should take revenge on countries that try to take advantage of it. However, this sentiment is shared more widely among people with a high school education or less than among college graduates (46% vs. 29%). In addition, half of those under age 30 feel the U.S. should take revenge on countries that try to take advantage, but far fewer of those in other age categories agree (38% of those ages 30 and older).

The best way to ensure peace is through military strength

	<i>Agree</i>				
	1997	1999	2002	2003	2007
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	57	55	62	53	49
Republican	65	70	72	69	72
Democrat	56	53	55	44	40
Independent	54	50	62	51	46
Conservative	--	--	71	61	67
Moderate	--	--	61	55	43
Liberal	--	--	49	33	31



Fight for U.S., Even When Wrong?

Opinions about whether one has an obligation to fight for this country, regardless of whether it is right or wrong, have remained stable in recent years. Indeed, there is no evidence that the Iraq war – or 9/11 before it – have had much of an impact on these attitudes.

Overall, 50% agree with the statement: “We should all be willing to fight for our country, whether it is right or wrong”; 45% disagree with this statement. In values surveys since 1994, roughly half of the public has expressed agreement that one has an obligation to fight for his or her country whether it is right or wrong.

We should all be willing to fight for our country...right or wrong			
	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
Total	50	45	5=100
White	53	42	5=100
Black	31	64	5=100
College grad	44	49	7=100
Some college	50	44	6=100
High school/less	53	43	4=100
Republican	63	32	5=100
Democrat	44	52	4=100
Independent	50	46	4=100
Veteran household	60	34	6=100
Non-veteran	48	47	5=100

Republicans and Democrats differ in their views about whether a person has an obligation to fight for the U.S., even when it is wrong: Most Republicans (63%) believe people have such an obligation while most Democrats (52%) disagree. Independents are fairly evenly divided, with half agreeing that people have a duty to fight for the U.S. whether it is right or wrong.

In addition, most veterans (60%) feel that people have an obligation to fight for their country whether it is right or wrong. Non-veterans are evenly split in their opinions on this, with about half (48%) agreeing that people have such an obligation.

Patriotic Sentiment: Still Broad, Not As Intense

There continues to be nearly unanimous agreement with the statement: “I am very patriotic.” In 12 values surveys over the past two decades, roughly nine-in-ten Americans have consistently expressed patriotic sentiments; the current survey is no exception (90% agree).

However, the intensity of patriotic feeling among the public has fluctuated somewhat. In 2003, 56% expressed complete agreement with this statement, up modestly from 1999 (49%). But in the current survey, the percentage strongly expressing patriotic sentiments has fallen back to the levels of the late 1990s (49%).

Fewer Republicans strongly express a sense of patriotism than did so four years ago (61% vs. 71%). By contrast, views of Democrats have been more stable; 45% say they completely agree with the statement “I am very patriotic,” compared with 48% in 2003. As a result, the partisan gap on this value, which reached an all-time high four years ago (23 points), has narrowed somewhat in the current survey (16 points).

I am very patriotic					
	<i>Completely agree</i>				<i>Change</i>
	<i>1999</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2007</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>03-07</i>
Total	49	54	56	49	-7
Republican	64	63	71	61	-10
Democrat	49	50	48	45	-3
Independent	40	50	54	47	-7

Less Confidence in Americans' Capabilities

Americans have long expressed optimism about their ability as a people to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. But the public's collective sense of self-confidence is not as strong as it was a few years ago. Nearly six-in-ten (58%) agree with the statement: “As Americans we can always find a way to solve our problems and get what we want.” Far more people shared this sentiment earlier in the decade (66% in 2003, 74% in 2002).

Only about half of Democrats (53%) now say that Americans can always find a way to solve their problems, the lowest level of Democratic agreement with this statement in the 20 years of the Pew values survey. In 2003, 62% of Democrats expressed confidence in the ability of the American people to overcome problems, and in 2002 fully 71% did so.

Americans' Self-Confidence Declines					
	<i>Agree: As Americans we can always find a way to solve our problems</i>				<i>Change</i>
	<i>1999</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2007</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>03-07</i>
Total	70	74	66	58	-8
Republican	78	79	76	72	-4
Democrat	73	71	62	53	-9
Independent	66	74	66	56	-10

Independents also have become considerably less confident about the ability of the American people to solve their problems: 56% express that view today, down 10 points since 2003 and 18 points since 2002. There has been less change among Republicans – 72% currently agree that Americans can always find a way to solve their problems, compared with 79% five years ago.

Military Viewed Favorably

The public's views of the military have remained relatively stable in recent years. Currently, 84% say they have a favorable opinion of the military, and 47% express a very favorable opinion. That is comparable to surveys since July 2004. Opinions of the military were even more positive in the months after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, reaching 94% in mid-September 2001 and 93% in May 2002, in Newsweek surveys.

In fact, the military's image is about the same as it was in the late 1990s through mid-2001 – with one major difference. While comparable percentages express generally favorable opinions of the military as did so then, far greater numbers express very favorable opinions. In July 2001, for instance, 81% expressed a favorable opinion of the military, but just 29% were very favorable.

Today, nearly half (47%) have a very favorable opinion of the military, with most of the increase since 2001 coming among Republicans and independents. More than six-in-ten Republicans (62%) say they have a very favorable view of the military, up from 34% in July 2001. The percentage of independents who express very favorable opinions of the military has nearly doubled since then (from 25% to 46%).

Democrats' opinions of the military have remained more stable; fewer Democrats say they have a generally favorable opinion of the military than did so in July 2001 (78% now, 84% then). Since then, very favorable opinions of the military among Democrats have increased, but only modestly (36% now vs. 29% then).

U.N. Image Improves Modestly

In October 2005, positive views of the United Nations reached an all-time low. Just 48% had a favorable opinion of the U.N., a decline of nearly 30 percentage points since just before the 9/11 attacks (77% in early September 2001). But since then, favorable opinions of the United Nations have been climbing back – to 51% last May, 53% in July, and 57% currently.

However, the shift in positive views of the U.S. has mostly come among Democrats. Currently, 72% of Democrats have a positive opinion of the United Nations, up 15 points since October 2005. By contrast, positive opinions of the U.N. among Republicans have increased by only five points (from 40% to 45%), and four points among independents (from 50% to 54%).

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Jan 2007				
Favorable	84	94	78	86
<i>Very favorable</i>	47	62	36	46
Unfavorable	11	5	17	9
Can't rate	5	1	5	5
	100	100	100	100
July 2001				
Favorable	81	87	84	75
<i>Very favorable</i>	29	34	29	25
Unfavorable	11	5	10	16
Can't rate	8	8	6	9
	100	100	100	100
<i>Change in 'very' favorable</i>	+18	+28	+7	+21

Policy Opinions: Torture of Suspected Terrorists

Despite revelations of widespread abuses at a U.S.-run prison in Iraq, most Americans do not rule out the use of torture as a way of gaining important information from suspected terrorists. About four-in-ten (43%) feel that torture in such circumstances can be often (12%) or sometimes justified (31%). The number saying the use of torture against suspected terrorists is at least sometimes justified has been fairly stable since 2004, though the percentage saying torture can often be justified has dipped from 18% last October to 12% currently.

Can Torture be Justified Against Suspected Terrorists To Gain Key Information?

	July 2004	March 2005	Oct 2005	Oct 2006	Jan 2007
	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Torture can be justified...</i>					
Often	15	15	15	18	12
Sometimes	28	30	31	28	31
Rarely	21	24	17	19	25
Never	32	27	32	32	29
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100

There have been consistent demographic and political differences in views about whether torture of suspected terrorists is ever justified. For instance, more African Americans than whites say the torture of suspected terrorists is never justified (37% vs. 28%). Older Americans also are more likely to rule out the use of torture than are younger people: 36% of those ages 65 and older say torture of suspected terrorists is never justified, compared with 25% of those ages 18-29.

Nearly half of liberal Democrats (45%) say that torturing terrorist suspects to obtain important information is never justified, by far the highest percentage in any political group. By contrast, only about three-in-ten conservative and moderate Democrats (31%) say the use of torture against terrorist suspects is never justified. Differences are much smaller among Republicans, with 24% of moderate and liberal Republicans, and 18% of conservative Republicans, saying that torture is never justified.

In addition, there also are only small differences among religious groups in views about whether torture against terrorists can be justified. About the same numbers of white evangelical Protestants (28%) and seculars (25%) – two groups that typically have a very different outlook on foreign policy issues – say that the use of torture against suspected terrorists to gain important information is never justified.

Ruling Out Torture of Suspected Terrorists

<i>Torture is never justified:</i>	%
Total	29
White	28
Black	37
Men	28
Women	31
18-29	25
30-49	27
50-64	34
65+	36
Cons Rep	19
Mod/Lib Rep	24
Independent	28
Cons/Mod Dem	31
Liberal Dem	45
White evangelical	28
White mainline	31
Catholic	26
Secular	25

Preemptive War

Most Americans (55%) feel that the use of military force is often or sometimes justified against countries that may seriously threaten the U.S., but have not attacked. In October 2005, roughly the same number (52%) said that force against enemies that could threaten the U.S. was at least sometimes justified.

There was much greater support for preemptive military action in May 2003, when the public still overwhelmingly endorsed the decision to go to war in Iraq. At that time, 74% of Americans felt the war was the right decision, and 67% felt that using military forces against nations that may threaten the U.S., but have not attacked, was justified. In the current survey, just 40% view the war as the right decision, but significantly more (55%) say that the use of military force against potential enemies is often or sometimes justified.

Republicans' views of preemptive military force have remained remarkably stable over the past four years. By contrast, support for preemptive military has fallen sharply among Democrats – especially conservative and moderate Democrats (down 24 points since 2003). The differences on this issue between independents and conservative and moderate Democrats, which were modest in May 2003 (four points), are much bigger today (15 points). And the gap between conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats, already quite large four years ago (35 points), is even larger in the current survey (56 points).

Skeptical of Government Anti-Terror Efforts

The public has become more critical of the government's performance in reducing the threat of terrorism. A narrow majority (54%) says the government is doing very well, or fairly well, in reducing the threat of terrorism, while 44% say it is doing not too well or not at all well. This is by far the most negative assessment of the government's anti-terror efforts since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. As recently as December 2006, positive views of the government's efforts at reducing terrorism outnumbered negative ones by roughly two-to-one (65%-32%).

Since then, the percentage of Democrats who give the government good marks for reducing the threat of terrorism has fallen 18 points (from 54% in December 2006 to 36% today),

Continued Support for Preemptive Military Action

	May 2003	July 2004	Dec 2004	Oct 2005	Jan 2007
<i>Preemptive force can be justified...</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Often	22	20	14	14	16
Sometimes	45	40	46	38	39
Rarely	17	22	21	27	24
Never	13	14	14	15	17
Don't know	3	4	5	6	4
	100	100	100	100	100

Undiminished GOP Support for Preemptive Military Force

	<i>Often/sometimes justified</i>		
	May 2003	Jan 2007	Change
	%	%	
Total	67	55	-12
Conservative Rep	82	85	+3
Mod/Lib Rep	72	75	+3
Independent	66	54	-12
Cons/Mod Dem	62	39	-23
Liberal Dem	47	29	-18

while positive assessments among independents also have declined (from 65% to 53%). Republicans' evaluations are stable, and overwhelmingly positive (82%, unchanged from December).

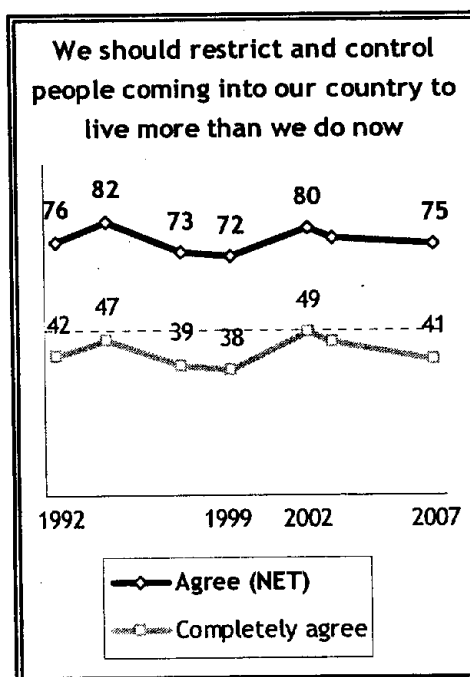
While there is a growing partisan divide in opinions of the government's anti-terror efforts, a substantial majority of Americans (70%) continue to believe that "occasional acts of terrorism in the U.S. will be part of life in the future." This is a rare foreign policy measure on which there are no major demographic or political differences – 73% of Republicans agree that terrorism will be part of life in the future, as do 71% of independents and 68% of Democrats.

Views on Immigration

The intense debate in the past year over immigration policy has had little impact on the public's basic values regarding immigration. Three-quarters of Americans continue to believe that "We should restrict and control people coming into our country to live more than we do now." This is consistent with public views on this issue since 1992.

However, since 2002 there has been a decline in the percentage of Americans who completely agree with this statement. Four-in-ten (41%) completely agree that immigration controls need to be tightened, down from 46% in 2003 and 49% in 2002.

The number of Republicans who completely agree on tighter immigration restrictions has remained fairly stable since 2002; currently 51% say that, compared with 54% in 2003, and 53% in 2002. But strong support for tougher immigration controls has fallen among both Democrats (13 points since 2002) and independents (six points). Consequently, partisan differences in intense feelings on this issue, which were slight in 2002 (four points), have increased in the current survey (15 points).



We should restrict and control people coming into our country to live more than we do now

	Completely agree			Change 02-07
	2002	2003	2007	
	%	%	%	
Total	49	46	41	-8
Republican	53	54	51	-2
Democrat	49	45	36	-13
Independent	46	43	40	-6

Immigrants' Cultural Impact

While there is substantial support for placing greater restrictions on immigration, the public is evenly divided about the cultural effect of newcomers from other countries. Nearly half (48%) think "the growing number of newcomers from other countries threaten traditional American customs and values," while 46% disagree. Notably, both parties are internally divided over this issue, though the Republicans' differences have increased dramatically since 2003.

About two-thirds of Republicans agree that increasing numbers of newcomers to the U.S. threaten American customs, up sharply from 2003 (54%) and 2002 (56%). Meanwhile, there has been a significant decline in the percentage of moderate and liberal Republicans who believe immigrants threaten traditional customs and values – from 59% in 2003 to 43% today.

The growing number of newcomers from other countries threatens traditional American customs and values

	Agree			Change
	2002	2003	2007	02-07
	%	%	%	
Total	50	46	48	+2
Conserv Rep	56	54	68	+12
Mod/Lib Rep	53	59	43	-10
Independents	48	42	48	0
Mod/Cons Dem	58	57	51	-7
Liberal Dem	32	27	22	-10

Democrats also are deeply split over immigrants' cultural impact, though their differences have remained relatively consistent since 2002. About half of moderate and conservative Democrats (51%) believe that the growing number of newcomers endangers American customs, compared with just 22% of liberal Democrats.

Immigration Policy: Support for Path to Citizenship

A majority of Americans (59%) continues to favor a proposal to allow undocumented immigrants who have been in the U.S. for several years to gain legal working status and the possibility of future citizenship. Opinion is more evenly divided over another immigration proposal that has received considerable attention in the past year – a 700-mile fence along the U.S. border with Mexico. Nearly half of the public (48%) opposes building a fence on the Mexican border, while 46% favor this idea.

Opinion on providing a path to citizenship for long-term undocumented immigrants has not changed in the past year; in April 2006, 58% supported this idea. There has been a modest decline in support for a border fence, from 54% in a September 2006 survey by CNN to 46% in the current survey.

Divided Over a Border Fence

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
<i>Provide path to citizenship for undocumented</i>				
Favor	59	50	66	60
Oppose	37	46	31	35
Don't know	4	4	3	5
	100	100	100	100
<i>Build fence on border with Mexico</i>				
Favor	46	65	38	43
Oppose	48	29	56	52
Don't know	6	6	6	5
	100	100	100	100

Two-thirds of Democrats (66%) favor providing a path to citizenship for long-term undocumented immigrants, while about the same number of Republicans (65%) support building a fence along the border. Republicans are almost evenly divided over providing undocumented immigrants with a path to citizenship – 50% support such a proposal, while 46% are opposed – reflecting disagreement between the party’s conservatives, and its moderates and liberals.

Six-in-ten moderate and liberal Republicans favor giving undocumented immigrants the chance to gain legal working status, compared with 45% of conservative Republicans. These differences have widened since last April, when 56% of moderate and liberal Republicans and 52% of GOP conservatives favored undocumented immigrants having the option to become citizens someday.

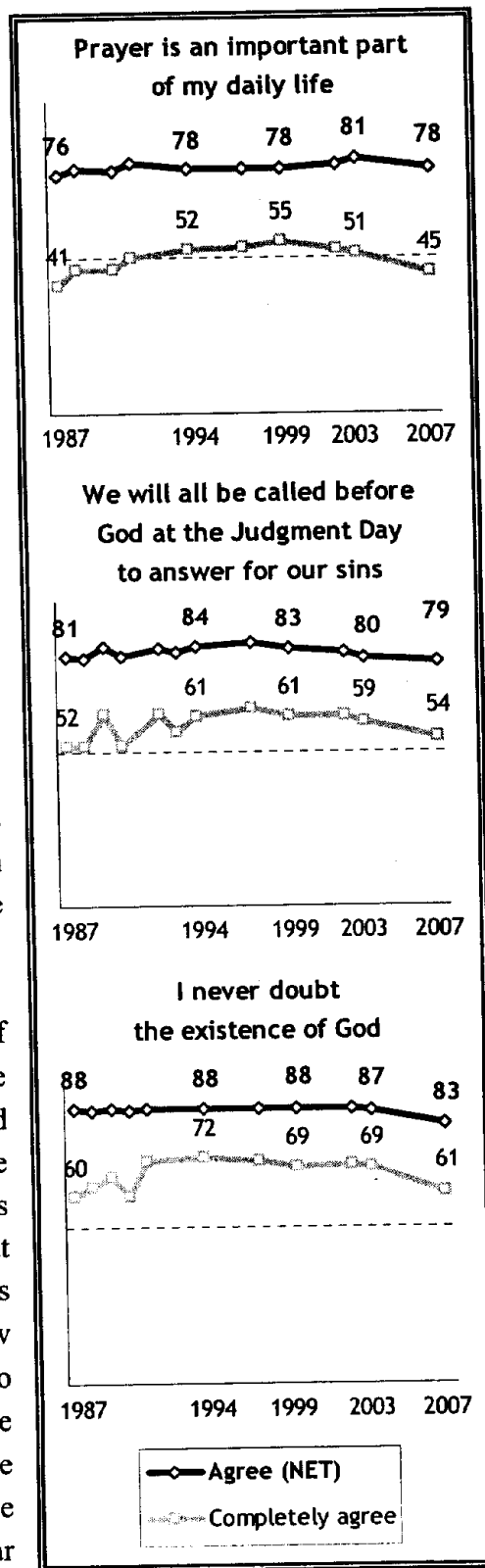
Democratic divisions over the proposed path to citizenship also have grown. Last April, nearly identical percentages of liberal and conservative and moderate Democrats favored this proposal (64% of moderate/conservative Democrats, 65% of liberal Democrats). But support has increased among liberal Democrats (to 76%), but not among conservative and moderate Democrats (62%).

SECTION 4: RELIGION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Religion and personal belief continue to be important in the lives of most Americans. Large majorities say that they belong to a religious tradition and there is broad agreement with three statements about religious belief and practice. About eight-in-ten Americans say they have no doubt that God exists, that prayer is an important part of their lives, and that “we will all be called before God at the Judgment Day to answer for our sins.”

But the intensity of agreement with these indicators of religiosity has shown a modest decline in recent years, after increasing through much of the 1990s. While overall agreement with the three statements has remained fairly stable, the number of people who completely agree with each statement rose during the 1990s and has declined more recently. For example, the percentage completely agreeing that “prayer is an important part of my life” rose from 41% in 1987 to a high of 55% in 1999. It now stands at 45%, down 10 points from 1999 and six points from 2003. A comparable change is evident in opinions on the other two religious values items.

The survey also finds that the number of Americans who say they are atheist or agnostic, or choose not to identify with a religious tradition has increased modestly over the past two decades. In Pew surveys since the beginning of 2006, 12% have identified themselves as secular or unaffiliated with a religious tradition. That compares with 8% in the Pew values survey in 1987. This change appears to be generational in nature, with new cohorts coming of age with lower levels of commitment to a religious tradition. Among respondents born before the baby boom (that is, prior to 1946), only about 5% are secular or unaffiliated. But the number is more than double that (11%) among the Baby Boomers. The most secular



Americans are those 30 and younger – those born after 1976 and sometimes called “Generation Y” – 19% of whom do not identify with a religious tradition.

Pew surveys taken over the past 20 years show that the size of the secular group has remained constant over time within each age cohort. In other words, the number of seculars within each generational group is about the same in 2007 as it was 10 or 20 years before. Thus it appears that people have not become less secular as they have aged. For example, 14% of members of “Generation X” (born 1965-1976) did not identify with a religious tradition in 1997, about the same as in 2007.

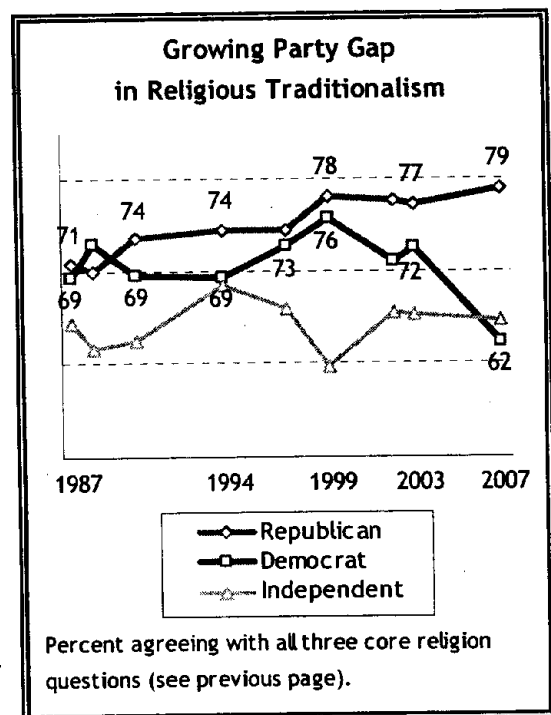
Wider Party Gap in Religious Belief

There also is a growing partisan gap in religious belief. As a group, Republicans are somewhat more religious now than they were 20 years ago, but Democrats are less so. This change is seen especially in the number expressing agreement with traditional religious beliefs.

Regarding the latter, an index of agreement with the three statements about religious belief shows that Republicans express greater religious commitment now than at any time in the past 20 years; 79% now agree with all three statements, compared with 71% in 1987. By contrast, Democrats now show less agreement (62%) than in previous years. Independents have tended to fall below both Republicans and Democrats on this measure of religious commitment, but that is not the case this year; comparable numbers of Democrats and independents (62% vs. 65%, respectively) agree with all three statements.

comparable numbers of Democrats and independents (62% vs. 65%, respectively) agree with all three statements.

Democrats and independents also are less likely than Republicans to identify with a particular religious tradition, and the gap has widened over the past two decades. Currently, 5% of Republicans say they are atheist, agnostic, or decline to state a religious preference, which is the same percentage that did so in 1987. But the number of Democrats in this category is now 11%, up from 7% in 1987;



**More Seculars among
Democrats and Independents***

	1987	1997	2006-07	Change 87-07
	%	%	%	
Total	8	9	12	+4
Republican	6	5	5	-1
Democrat	7	8	11	+4
Independent	9	14	17	+8

*Percent atheist, agnostic, or no religion.

currently 17% of independents are classified as secular, an increase from 9% in 1987.

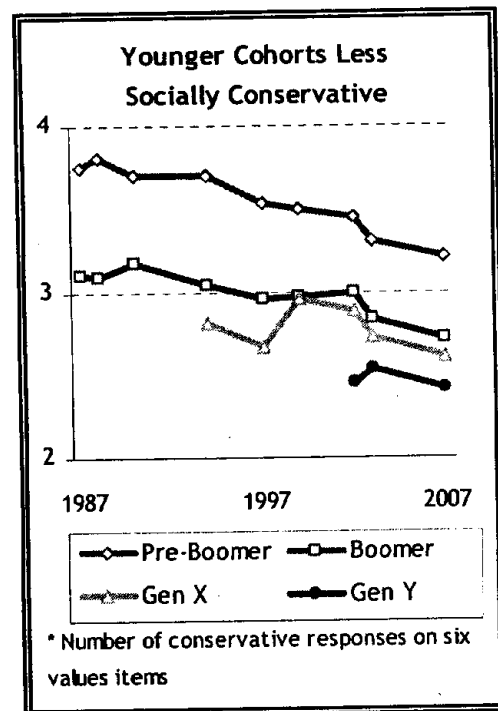
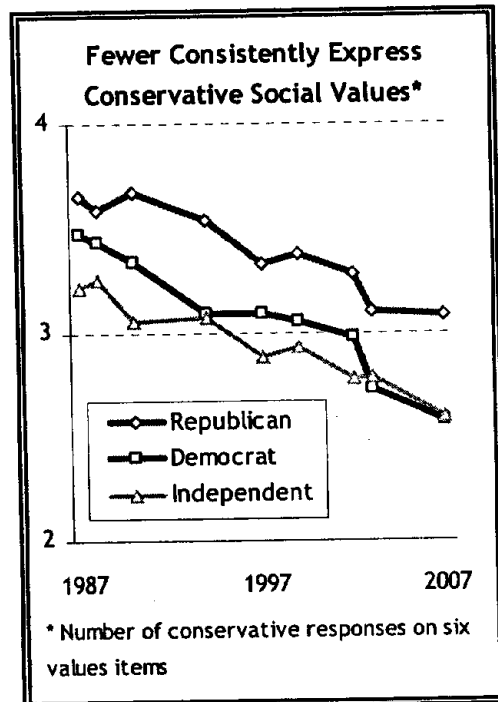
While there are some signs of declining religiosity, other forms of religious activity do not appear to have changed very much in recent years. The number of people who report attending Bible study or prayer group meetings is about the same today as in 1999 (37% now, 34% in 1999). Southerners are especially likely to report this type of religious activity (48%, vs. no more than 34% in any other region of the country).

Social Values: Less Traditional, More Liberal

The survey also finds steady – if slow – declining support for traditional or conservative social values, in such areas as homosexuality and the role of women in society. This movement has been apparent on most of the six different measures of attitudes on social values, but is more evident when looking at the questions collectively (these values measures do not include opinions about abortion).

In 1987, about half of the survey's respondents (49%) gave conservative answers to at least four of the six questions. In 2007, just 30% did so. This trend has occurred in all major social, political, and demographic groups in the population. While Republicans remain significantly more conservative than Democrats or independents on social values, they too have become substantially less conservative over this period.

The decline in social conservatism is being hastened by generational change, as each new age cohort has come into adulthood with less conservative views on the questions than did their predecessors. The biggest generation gap is between the Baby Boomers and those who came before them, and the gap has remained fairly wide even as both cohorts have become somewhat less conservative over the 20-year time span covered by the surveys. Generation X came into adulthood less conservative than either of its predecessor cohorts, but has since tracked the Baby Boomers fairly closely. And



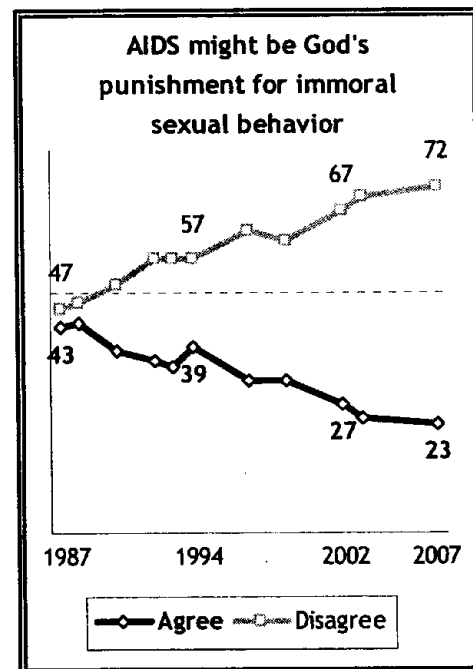
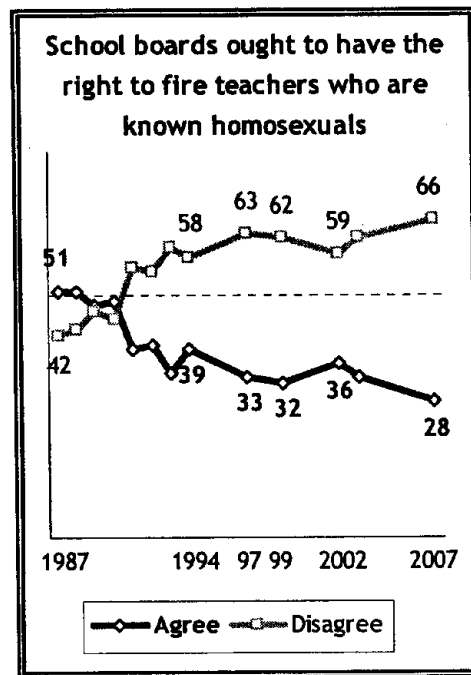
the newest age cohort – Generation Y –expresses agreement with even fewer of the conservative values (an average of around 2.4 in 2007).

The largest individual changes have occurred on questions relating to sexuality. As many Pew surveys over the past several years have shown, the public is increasingly accepting of homosexuality. In the current study, only 28% of respondents agreed that school boards should have the right to fire teachers who are known to be homosexual; 66% disagreed. In 1987 when this question was first asked, a majority of 51% agreed with the statement.

Similarly, there has been a sharp decline through the period in the number of people who agree with the statement that “AIDS might be God’s punishment for immoral sexual behavior.” Just 23% now agree with the statement; 72% disagree. When this question was first asked in 1987, public opinion was divided on the question, with 43% agreeing and 47% disagreeing.

Responses to both of these questions have become less conservative across the board: significant change has occurred in the views of conservatives and liberals, Democrats and Republicans, and religious and non-religious people. For example, in 1987, 73% of white evangelical Protestants agreed that school boards should have the right to fire homosexual teachers. Today, just 42% do so. And in 1987, 60% of white evangelicals believed that AIDS might be a punishment for immoral sexual behavior; today just 38% believe this. Similar changes have been seen in other religious groups as well.

The changes on longitudinal measures about homosexuality reflect a major shift away from highly negative attitudes toward gays and support for punitive actions against gays. In other surveys, Pew has found less dramatic movement on the broader question of whether homosexuality should be accepted or discouraged by society. In the mid-1990s, narrow pluralities said homosexuality should be discouraged by society; more recently, roughly half have said it should



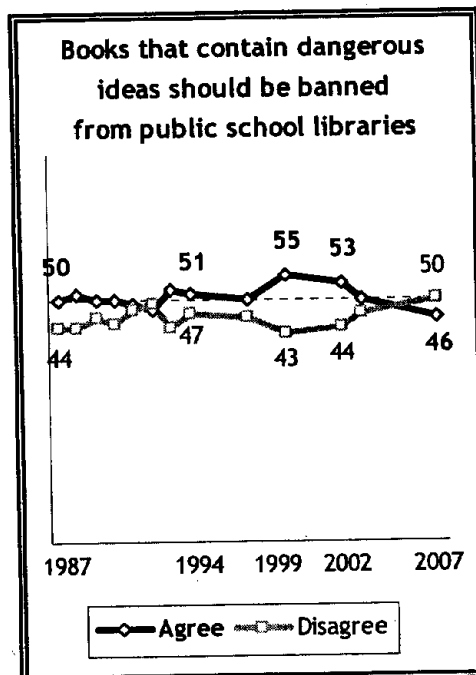
be accepted, compared with somewhat fewer who said it should be discouraged (49% vs. 44% in 2004).

Pornography and Censorship

Opinions about pornography have become slightly more conservative over the past 20 years. Currently 41% agree that “nude magazines and X-rated movies provide harmless entertainment for those who enjoy it”: 53% disagree with the statement. The number saying such material is harmless has fluctuated, declining from 48% in 1987 to 41% in 1990 and then varying no more than four percentage points thereafter. However, a new version of the question that refers to pornography on the internet – asked for the first time this year – finds greater public concern: 70% disagree with the statement that “nude pictures and X-rated videos on the internet provide harmless entertainment for those who enjoy it.”

The pattern is more mixed for other values related to freedom of expression. Since 1999, support for the idea of banning “books with dangerous ideas” from public school libraries has declined from 55% to 46%. It has now fallen to the lowest level of support of the past 20 years. But even in the early 1990s, as few as 48% had supported banning such books.

While there are relatively modest partisan differences in opinions about banning dangerous books, there are divisions within parties, especially among Democrats. Two-thirds of liberal Democrats (67%) disagree that dangerous books should be banned – and 52% completely disagree. By comparison, most conservative and moderate Democrats (56%) agree with the banning of dangerous books (and a relatively large proportion – 37% – completely agrees). Republicans are somewhat less divided, although 52% of conservative Republicans favor a ban on such books compared with 40% of moderate and liberal Republicans.



Changing Views of Women's Roles

In every values survey since 1987, substantial majorities have disagreed with this statement: "Women should return to their traditional roles in society." But the number disagreeing – especially the number completely disagreeing – has increased over the past 20 years. In the current survey, 75% reject the idea that women should return to their "traditional roles," up from 66% in 1987. The percentage completely disagreeing has increased more dramatically – from 29% in 1987 to 51% currently.

As with attitudes about sexuality, opinions about the role of women have shifted among most demographic and political groups in the population. Women are somewhat more intense than men in rejecting this statement (55% completely disagree, vs. 47% for men). But the shift has been comparable among men and women since 1987.

The percentage of Republicans completely disagreeing that women should return to traditional roles rose by 16 points between 1987 and 2007 (from 25% to 41%), though the increase in this opinion among Democrats has been much greater (30 points).

	Completely Disagree			Change 87-07
	1987	1997	2007	
	%	%	%	
Total	29	43	51	+22
Men	26	42	47	+21
Women	33	44	55	+22
Republican	25	36	41	+16
Democrat	30	44	60	+30
Independent	32	48	52	+20
White Evangelical Prot.	20	28	42	+22
White Mainline Prot.	32	49	51	+19
White Catholic	30	44	64	+34
No Religion	40	59	60	+20
<i>Generation (Year of birth)</i>				
Pre-Boomer (< 1946)	22	30	38	+16
Baby Boomers (1946-64)	37	47	52	+15
Gen X (1965-76)	--	53	51	--
Gen Y (1977 & later)	--	--	63	--

Catholics and secular individuals express stronger resistance to the idea of women returning to traditional roles than do Protestants, with white evangelicals being the least liberal on this question. But even evangelicals have undergone significant change, with the number expressing complete disagreement rising 22 points over the past 20 years (from 20% in 1987 to 42% now). White Catholics changed even more, rising 34 points (from 30% completely disagreeing to 64%).

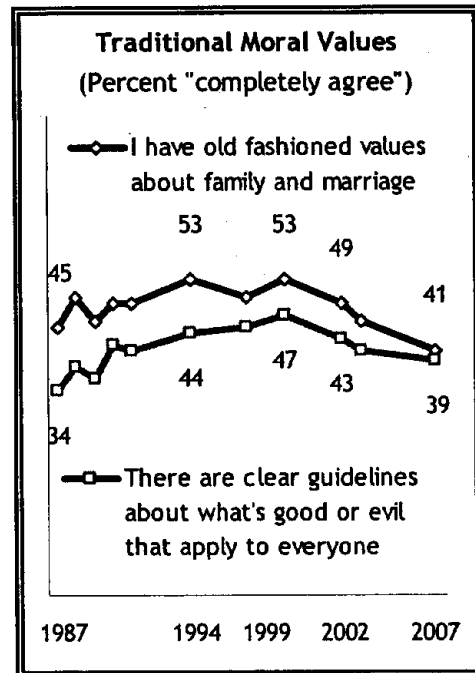
As with many other social values, a great deal of the change on this question is generational in nature. Baby Boomers were significantly more liberal than their predecessors in 1987 on the question of women's roles, and Generation X was more liberal when they entered adulthood than were the Boomers. And the newest age cohort – those born in 1977 or later – is significantly more liberal than either Gen X or the Baby Boomers, with fully 63% completely disagreeing that women should return to traditional roles.

Fewer Have 'Old-Fashioned' Values

Most Americans continue to say that they have “old-fashioned values about family and marriage,” but the percentage endorsing this sentiment has declined in recent years. Currently, 76% say they have old-fashioned values, down from 85% a decade ago and 87% in 1987. Moreover, the percentage completely agreeing with this statement has declined significantly – from a high of 53% in 1999 to 41% in the current survey.

As might be expected, older Americans are more likely than young people to strongly concur that they have old-fashioned values. However, there has been a sizable decline since 1999 in the percentage of Americans age 50 and older who completely agree that they share such values – from 71% in 1999 to 49% in the current survey. By comparison, the decline among young people has been smaller. In 1999, 37% of those who were then below the age of 30 expressed complete agreement, compared with 29% currently.

Views of whether there are clear and immutable guidelines about good and evil have been more stable over time. Currently, 79% agree that “there are clear guidelines about what’s good and evil that apply to everyone regardless of their situation.” That opinion has not changed much in the past 20 years; nonetheless, as is the case with views on old-fashioned values, the percentage completely agreeing with this statement has fallen, from 47% in 1999 to 39% currently.



Opinions on Social Policies

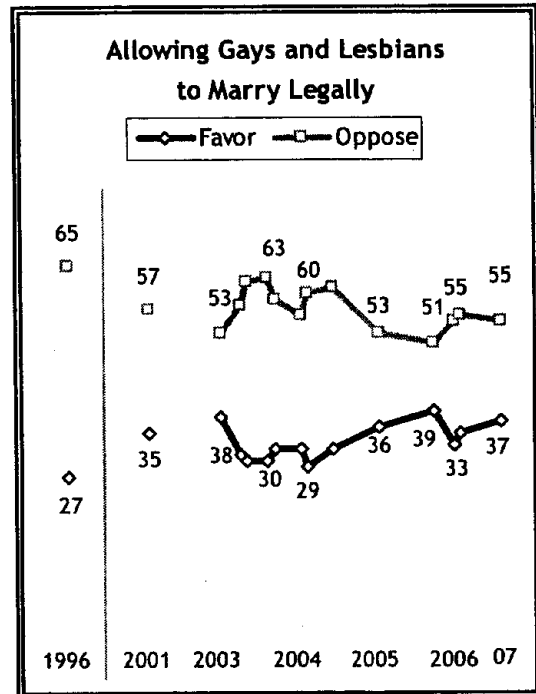
Opinions on three contentious social issues have shown only modest change over the past several years. Majorities of Americans continue to oppose gay marriage and support the death penalty, but there also is a majority opposed to making it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion.

Fewer than four-in-ten (37%) support gay marriage, while 55% are opposed. Support dipped to 29% in an August 2004 poll, after peaking at 38% in July 2003. Since 2004, support has fluctuated between 33% and 39%. Gay marriage is opposed by most groups in the population; exceptions include young people ages 18-29 (56% support), liberal Democrats (72%), and secular individuals (60%). Democrats continue to be divided on the question (49% support, 43% oppose); Republicans overwhelmingly oppose gay marriage (75% vs. 20% support), with 51% strongly opposed.

Opinions about abortion have also have changed relatively little over the past several years. A 56% majority opposes making it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion, while 35% favor this. The level of support for making it harder to get an abortion has varied from 30% to 41% over the past 20 years, but there is little indication of a trend in either direction.

There is a sizable partisan gap on this question as well, with 53% of Republicans favoring making it harder to get an abortion, while just 24% of Democrats agree. There is a very large intra-party gap among Republicans, with fully 63% of conservative Republicans wanting to make abortions harder to get, compared with only 37% of moderate and liberal Republicans; moderate and conservative Democrats (30% favor) differ from liberal Democrats (15% favor) on this question as well, but the gap is not as large as among Republicans. There are no significant gender or age differences on this question.

Support for the death penalty for persons convicted of murder is somewhat lower now than it was in the late 1990s, but opinions have changed little since 2001. Currently, 64% favor the death penalty, while 29% oppose it. Support is higher among men (68%) than women (60%), and is substantially higher among whites (69%) than among African Americans (44%) and



Hispanics (45%). More Republicans than Democrats favor the death penalty, but even among the latter, a small majority does so (56%, vs. 78% for Republicans).

SECTION 5: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES ABOUT RACE

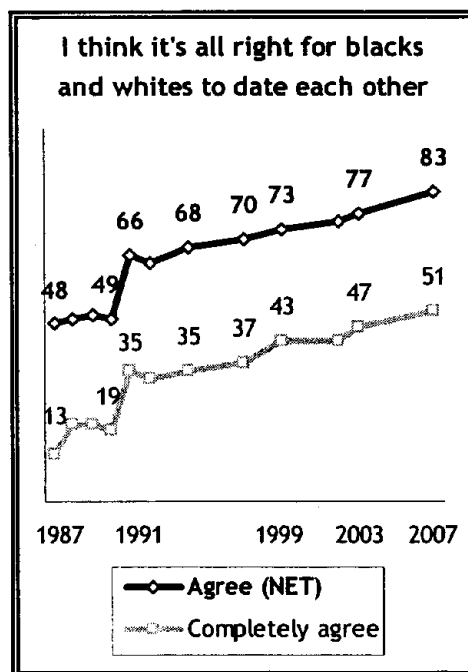
The public's views about race have changed in important ways over the past several years. But these attitudes remain complex, conflicted and largely divided along racial and political lines.

Notably, there has been a dramatic rise in support for affirmative action since the mid-1990s. Currently, 70% say they favor affirmative action programs, up from 58% in 1995. But there continues to be widespread opposition to granting minorities "preferential treatment" to level the playing field, though the number who favor preferences has grown modestly since 2002.

Interracial dating, once a point of contention between the races, troubles only a small and dwindling minority of Americans. More than eight-in-ten (83%) agree with the statement: "I think it's all right for blacks and whites to date each other." In the first Pew values survey in 1987, just 48% agreed with this statement.

Yet the public remains deeply divided in how far to go in rectifying racial discrimination. Not only do most Americans reject racial preferences, but 45% also believe that "we have gone too far in pushing equal rights." Opinions on this issue have fluctuated over time, but this is virtually the same number that agreed with this statement in 1987 (42%).

Most Americans continue to acknowledge that racial discrimination persists in the United States. Only a third says discrimination against blacks is rare while 62% disagree – again, largely unchanged from surveys conducted two decades ago. At the same time, the survey suggests rising public concern about the slow progress being made by African Americans. Roughly four-in-ten (41%) agree with this statement: "In the past few years there hasn't been much real improvement in the position of black people in the country." That is an eight-point increase since 2002, and the highest percentage expressing this sentiment in 13 years.



Affirmative Action, Not Preferences

Seven-in-ten Americans say they favor “affirmative action programs to help blacks, women and other minorities get better jobs and education.” That is a 12-point increase since 1995, with support increasing among most demographic and political groups.

African Americans, who overwhelmingly favored such programs 12 years ago, continue to do so (94% in 1995, 93% today). By comparison, nearly two-thirds of whites (65%) now support affirmative action programs, compared with 53% in 1995.

White college graduates – and whites who attended college but have not graduated – are much more supportive of affirmative action than they were in the mid-1990s. In addition, the number of white independents who favor affirmative action programs has increased by 15 points since 1995. More white independents than white Republicans now support such programs (by 62%-56%); in 1995, identical percentages of the two groups backed these programs (47% each).

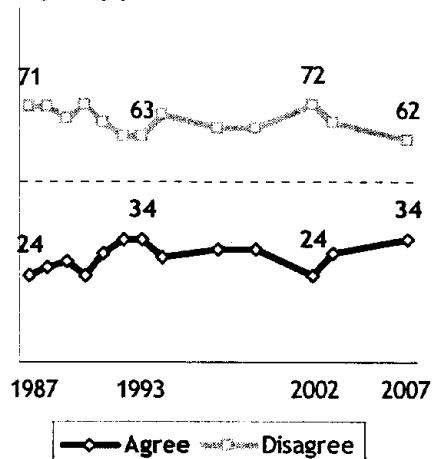
Despite this shift, however, most Americans (62%) disagree with this statement: “We should make every possible effort to improve the position of blacks and other minorities, even if means giving them preferential treatment.” Even half of those who favor affirmative action programs dissent from the idea that minorities should be given preferential treatment.

The number supporting preferences has increased since 2002, from 24% to 34%. Even so, the percentage favoring preferences is no higher than it was in the early 1990s (34% in 1993).

More White Support for Affirmative Action

Favor affirmative action programs	1995 %	2007 %	Change
Total	58	70	+12
Black	94	93	-1
White	53	65	+12
<i>Among whites:</i>			
Men	46	59	+13
Women	59	71	+12
Republican	47	56	+9
Democrat	66	77	+11
Independent	47	62	+15
College grad	43	58	+15
Some college	43	63	+20
High school or less	62	70	+8

We should make every effort to improve the position of blacks and minorities, even if it means giving preferential treatment

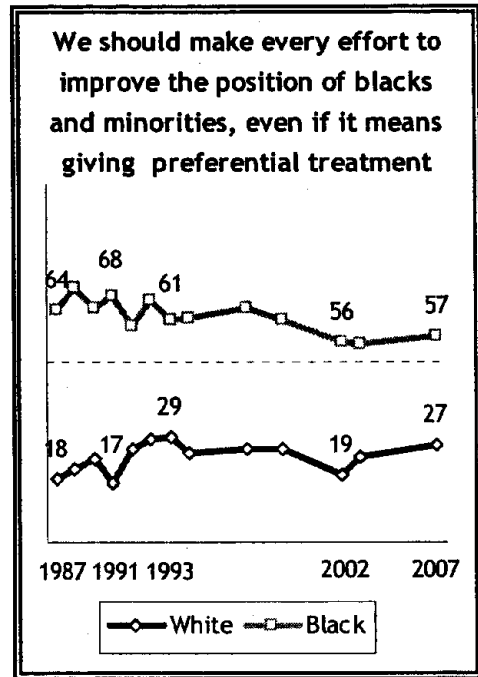


The differences between blacks and whites in opinions of preferential treatment for minorities, while somewhat narrower than in the past, remain substantial. Currently, 57% of African Americans say the country should make every effort to improve the position of minorities, compared with 27% of whites. The 30-point gap between races is largely unchanged from 2003, but is somewhat smaller than in the 1980s and 90s.

And as is the case with many attitudes toward race and racial discrimination, there are substantial generational and political differences over using preferences to improve the position of blacks and other minorities. A majority of people ages 18-29 endorse preferences (54%), compared with no more than three-in-

ten in other age groups. Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to support using preferences to improve the lot of minorities; even so, fewer than half of Democrats (42%) endorse preferences, compared with just 17% of Republicans.

The public also remains split on the broader question of whether the nation has gone too far in pressing for equal rights. Nearly half of whites (48%) believe that the nation has “gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country”; far fewer African Americans (27%) share this view. And Republicans (60%) are far more likely than Democrats (35%) to say the country has gone too far in pushing for equal rights.



Interracial Dating: How Generations Have Changed

Among the racial attitudes tested in Pew polls, none has changed more dramatically than opinion about interracial dating. In 1987, the public was divided virtually down the middle on the issue, with 48% approving of blacks and whites dating and 46% disapproving. Today, more than eight-in-ten Americans (83%) agree that “it’s all right for blacks and whites to date.”

Age is an important factor in attitudes toward interracial dating. In this case, Pew surveys since 1987 have documented two complementary trends: Each new generation is more tolerant than the one that precedes it. At the same time, members of each generation have become increasingly more tolerant as it ages. Together, these trends help explain the increase in expressions of tolerance toward interracial dating in recent decades.

<i>Generation</i>	1987/ 1988	2002/ 2003	2007	<i>Change 03-07</i>
	%	%	%	
Born pre-1946	36	58	65	+7
Boomer (1946-64)	59	77	84	+7
Gen X (1965-76)	64	85	87	+2
Gen Y (1977-)	--	91	94	+3
Total	48	76	83	+7

Nearly two-thirds of all Americans born before 1946 (65%) say it is acceptable for whites to date blacks. In contrast, this tolerant view of interracial dating is shared by more than eight-in-ten Baby Boomers (84%) and members of Generation X (87%), who were born between 1965 and 1976. Among younger people there is even broader acceptance of interracial dating: 94% of those born since 1977 say it is all right for blacks and whites to date.

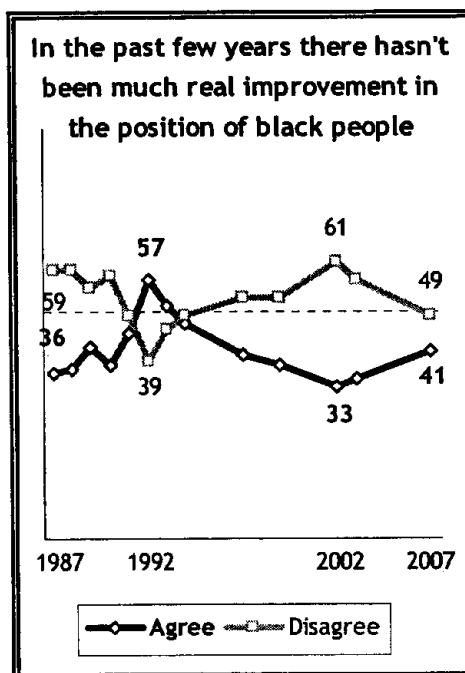
The fact that younger Americans are more racially tolerant than their parents or grandparents is neither new nor revealing. But one surprise emerges: While acceptance of whites and blacks dating has grown among all generations since 2003, the biggest changes have occurred among older and middle-aged Americans; seven points among those born before 1946, and seven points among Baby Boomers. The shift among younger generations has been smaller – in large part because the overwhelming majority of all Americans born after 1964 already viewed interracial dating as acceptable.

There also have been striking changes since the late 1980s in how people of different races view black-white dating. In 1987-88, fewer than half of whites (44%) said that interracial dating was acceptable; that number has nearly doubled (to 81%) in the current survey. Two decades ago, about three-quarters of blacks (74%) felt interracial dating was acceptable. Today, nearly all African Americans (97%) believe that interracial dating is acceptable.

How Much Black Progress?

Perceptions of black progress have fluctuated considerably over the past two decades. In 1987, 36% of Americans agreed that: "In the past few years there hasn't been much real improvement in the position of black people in this country." This sentiment increased sharply during the early 1990s – in 1992, 57% said there had not been much recent improvement in blacks' position.

The belief that blacks are not succeeding receded considerably in the latter part of the decade. And by 2002, only a third said blacks had not improved their position in recent years. But in the current values surveys, perceptions that blacks are not progressing have again increased, to 41%.



The perception that African Americans have not made much improvement has grown modestly among both blacks and whites. Two-thirds of African Americans (67%) say there has not been much improvement in blacks' fortunes in recent years – and 37% completely agree with this statement. Five years ago, 61% said blacks were not improving much and 28% completely agreed. An increasing number of whites also believe the position of blacks has not shown much improvement (35% now vs. 28% in 2002), though there remains a large racial gap in these attitudes.

Black-White Intensity Gap

On some of the public's attitudes about race – for example, the sense that racial discrimination still persists – the differences between blacks and whites are relatively modest. Most whites (60%) and blacks (70%) reject the idea that "discrimination against blacks is rare today."

Nonetheless, there is sizable racial gap in the strength of these opinions. About four-in-ten African Americans (41%) say they completely disagree that discrimination against blacks is rare, compared with just 16% of whites.

A similar pattern is evident in opinions about whether society "should do what is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal

More Blacks Completely Agree With Need for Equal Opportunity			
<i>Discrimination against blacks is rare</i>	White %	Black %	Diff
Total disagree	60	70	+10
Completely disagree	16	41	+25
<i>Do what is necessary to ensure equal opportunity for all</i>			
Total agree	90	94	+4
Completely agree	46	60	+14

opportunity to succeed." Overwhelming numbers of both blacks (94%) and whites (90%) agree with this statement. But 60% of African Americans completely agree that society should take all necessary steps to provide equal opportunity for all, compared with 46% of whites.

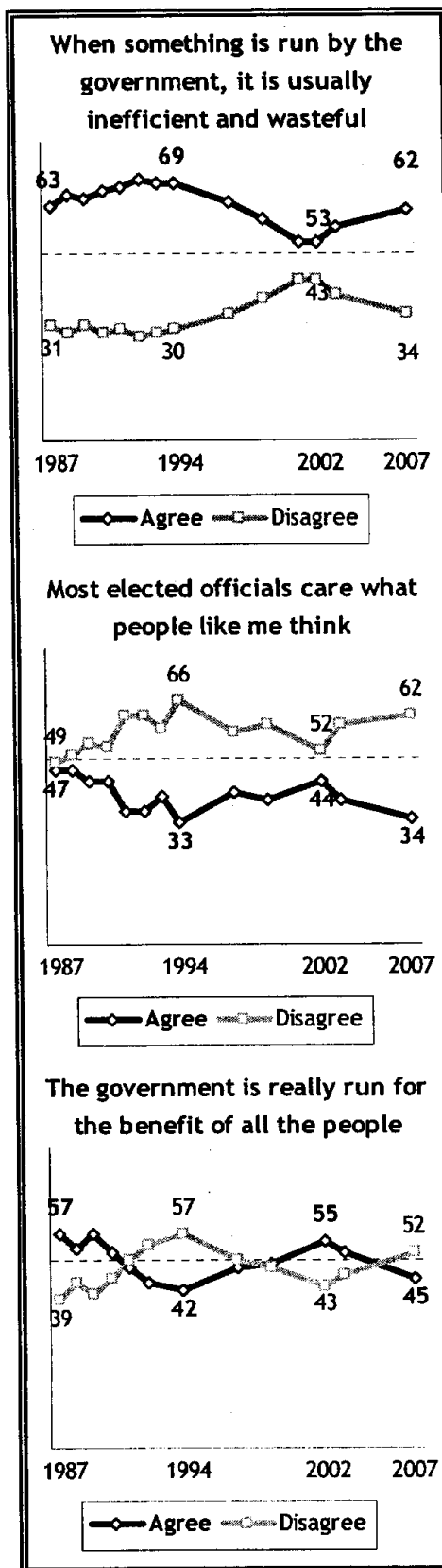
SECTION 6: GOVERNMENT, TRUST AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

While public satisfaction with government and elected officials has ebbed and flowed over the past two decades, the current trend is one of growing frustration and criticism. A good deal of this dissatisfaction comes from Democrats, whose views largely reflect their judgments of the current administration. By comparison, in the mid-1990s Republicans were considerably more critical of government and politicians than were Democrats.

However, while partisanship is a factor, the current negative trends exist across party lines – frustration with government and elected officials is growing among Democrats, Republicans and independents alike. On some measures, this shift represents the public returning to previous levels of skepticism following a brief period of goodwill toward government in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. On other measures, however, the extent of public criticism is at or near record highs, not seen since 1994 when public frustration was particularly widespread.

By a 62% to 34% margin, most Americans agree that “when something is run by the government, it is usually inefficient and wasteful”; this is the highest level of cynicism in a decade. By an identical margin, a majority of Americans do not believe that “most elected officials care what people like me think.” In both cases, this represents a substantially higher level of skepticism about government than in 2002 or 2003. The 34% who believe elected officials care about the views of average Americans is on par with a 20-year low of 33% in 1994.

A broader evaluation of views about whether the government is really run for the benefit of all the people perhaps best exemplifies the changes in public perceptions over the past few decades. In 1987, the public mood was



favorable – 57% believed that the government benefited the public interest, while just 39% disagreed. Over the next seven years, public views deteriorated dramatically, and a 57% majority said the government did not act in the public interest. Opinions improved during the late 1990s, and in 2002 – less than a year after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks – public views of government were nearly as favorable as they had been back in 1987. The last five years have seen another severe downturn in public views. Currently a 52% majority says government is not run for the benefit of all the people, while 45% say it is.

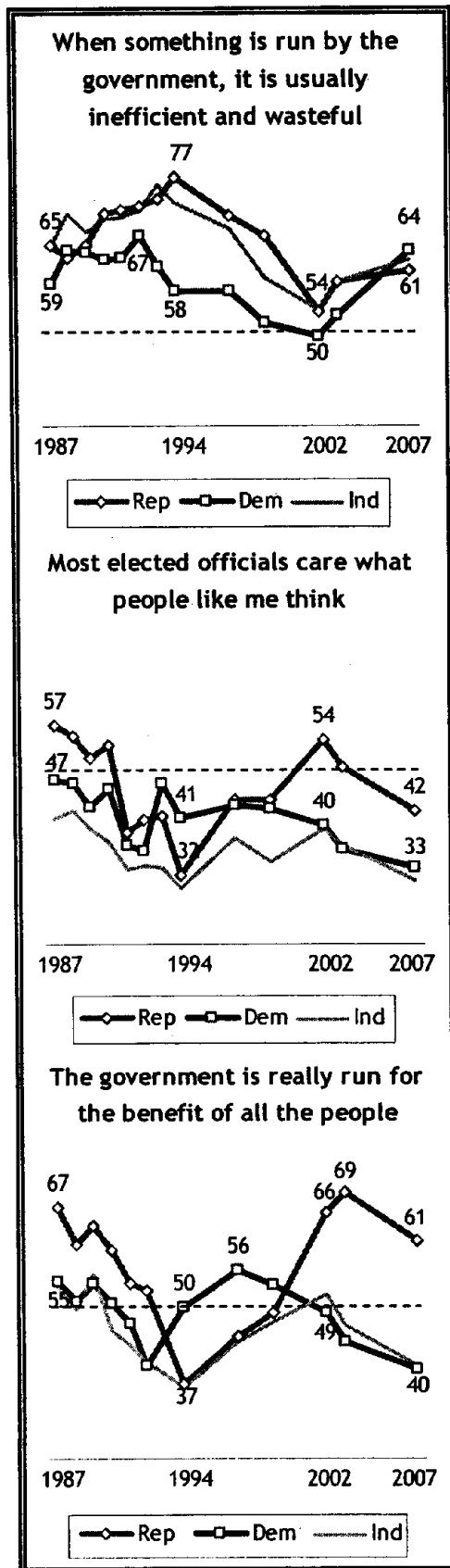
Partisanship and Views of Government

To a large extent, public evaluations of government and elected officials are shaped by reactions to the party in power. During the administrations of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, Republicans were more likely than Democrats to say that most elected officials care about people like them. This reversed in the early years of the Clinton administration, and then reversed again after George W. Bush took office in 2001.

A similar pattern exists with respect to views on whether the government is really run for the benefit of all the people. Late in the Reagan administration, 67% of Republicans expressed confidence in government in this regard, compared with 55% of Democrats. But by 1994, Republican confidence had fallen 30 points (to 37%), while Democratic attitudes did not change significantly. In 2002, two-thirds of Republicans were again of the belief that government is run for the benefit of all, while Democrats remained largely unchanged.

But since then, Democratic views of government have grown more negative. Just 40% of Democrats now see the government as being run for the benefit of all, down nine points since 2002.

The current Democratic dissatisfaction with



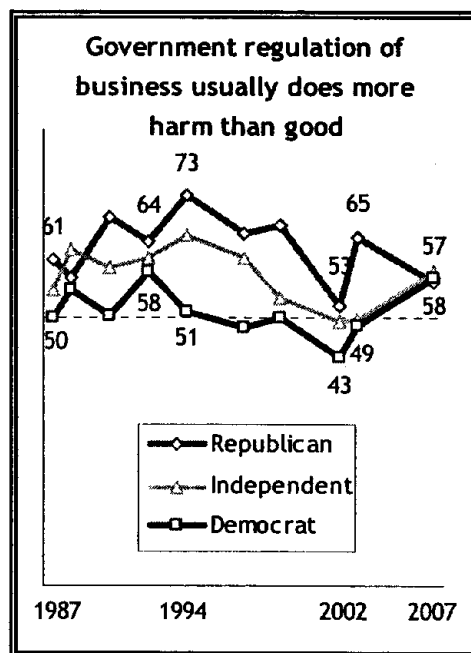
government is perhaps most clearly seen in the question about government waste and inefficiency. Typically, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to describe the government as wasteful and inefficient. But currently, 64% of Democrats are of this opinion, compared with 61% of Republicans.

While perhaps more extreme among Democrats, the recent negative trend in views of government and elected officials crosses party lines. Republicans, Democrats and independents are all more likely today than five years ago to see the government as wasteful, and less likely to say that elected officials care about what regular people think.

Government Regulation of Business

In 2002, in the wake of the Enron case and other corporate scandals, 48% agreed that “government regulation of business does more harm than good,” while 43% disagreed. This marked the closest balance of opinion on the merits of government regulation in the 20-year values trend. But in the current survey, 57% say that government regulation does more harm than good, up four points since 2003 and nine points since 2002.

Notably, majorities of Democrats (58%) and independents (59%) now believe that government regulation does more harm than good, up from 49% among Democrats and 50% among independents in 2003. At the same time, there has been a decline in the percentage of Republicans taking a negative view of government regulation – from 65% in 2003 to 57% in the current survey.



While the partisan gap in views of government regulation of business has disappeared, there are significant differences among Democrats. Among Democrats who describe themselves as professional or business class only 46% agree that government regulation of business does more harm than good. Working class Democrats have a much different view – fully 59% of them believe government regulation of business is harmful. There is no difference between professional and working class Republicans on this issue.

Opinions About Voting

Following George W. Bush's razor-thin victory over Al Gore in the 2000 presidential election, Democrats became significantly more skeptical about their ability to influence government decisions. The percentage of Democrats agreeing that "people like me don't have any say about what the government does" rose from 42% in 1999 to 51% in 2002. The Democratic victories in the 2006 midterm may have tempered this skepticism somewhat. Currently, 47% of Democrats say they have no say about the government's decisions. Republicans, meanwhile, are somewhat more skeptical about their influence on government today than in 2002. Then, 35% said they felt they had no say about what government does, compared with 40% today.

People like me don't have any say about what the government does

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	52	54	47	46	48
Republicans	44	56	44	35	40
Democrats	55	46	42	51	47
Independents	56	59	52	51	54
<i>R-D gap</i>	-11	+10	+2	-16	-7

Roughly seven-in-ten Americans (71%) agree with this statement: "Voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things." This number has not changed much in recent years, although in 1994 somewhat fewer (66%) said they felt voting gave them some say about the government's actions. However, the partisan gap in views of voting has widened, as Democrats have grown more skeptical of whether voting gives people a voice.

Voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
Total	78	66	73	73	71
Republicans	85	68	81	81	82
Democrats	79	70	76	71	70
Independents	71	64	71	68	68
<i>R-D gap</i>	+6	-2	+5	+10	+12

Independents continue to feel the most skeptical about their political influence. In virtually every survey conducted since 1987, independents were slightly less likely than both Democrats and Republicans to say voting gives people like them a voice.

An Obligation to Vote

The vast majority of Americans continue to see voting as a duty, and most say they feel guilty when they do not get a chance to vote. Nine-in-ten agree that it is their “duty as a citizen to always vote”; this includes 96% of Republicans, 91% of Democrats and 88% of independents. More than two-thirds of Democrats (71%) and Republicans (68%) also say that they personally feel guilty when they do not get a chance to vote. Independents, by comparison, are somewhat less likely to feel guilt about not voting (60%)

<i>Duty as a citizen to always vote</i>	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
Agree	90	96	91	88
<i>Completely agree</i>	64	72	70	58
Disagree	8	3	7	10
Don't know	2	1	2	2
	100	100	100	100

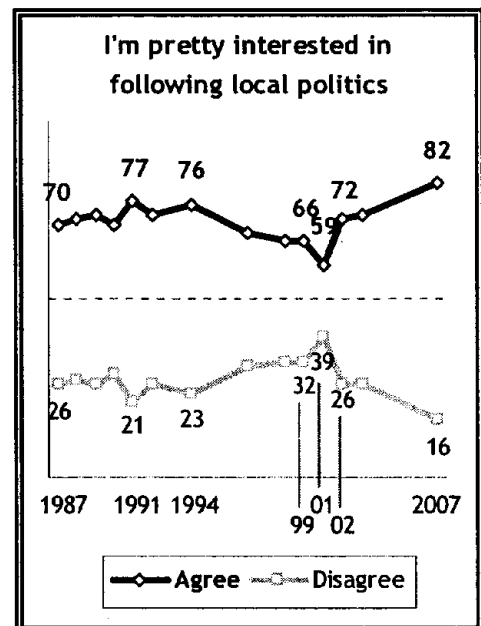
<i>I feel guilty when I don't get a chance to vote</i>	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
Agree	64	68	71	60
<i>Completely agree</i>	34	39	41	29
Disagree	28	23	22	32
Don't know	8	9	7	8
	100	100	100	100

More Interest in Local Politics

Even as Iraq and political events in Washington dominate national news coverage, a growing proportion of Americans report they are interested in what is happening in local politics. More than eight-in-ten (82%) agree they are “pretty interested” in following local politics, up nine points from 2003 and the highest level of agreement since Pew first began asking this question in 1987.

Interest in local politics has risen and fallen over the past two decades. It rose gradually through the mid-1990s, and then edged downward to 66% in 1999. Levels of attention dropped to a record low of 59% after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks – a period when the country’s focus abruptly shifted to national and international affairs – but since then has rebounded sharply.

Interest in local politics has grown substantially since 1999 among all demographic groups, with the largest rises occurring among young people and whites. The increase among younger Americans is particularly striking: Currently three-quarters of those ages 18-29 (77%) say they are interested in local politics, up 28 percentage points (from 49%) in little more than seven years. However, their interest levels still lags behind that of older Americans. Nearly nine-in-ten of those 65 or older (86%) say they are interested in local politics, up nine points since 1999. Interest also increased by 19 points to 84% among whites and by 8 points to 81% among blacks.



While interest in local politics is on the rise, the public still pays significantly more attention to national affairs: Roughly nine-in-ten Americans (89%) say they are interested in keeping up with what is going on in the country. This is comparable with interest four years ago and higher than in 1999, when 82% reported paying similarly high levels of attention to national affairs. Moreover, a growing proportion of Americans say they feel a personal connection to the major national issues being debated in Washington. Just 27% agree that “most issues discussed in Washington don’t affect me personally”; 71% disagree with this statement, up 11 points since 1999.

I'm pretty interested in following local politics			
	<u>1999</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Total	66	82	+16
18-29	49	77	+28
30-49	68	81	+13
50-64	71	87	+16
65+	77	86	+9
White	65	84	+19
Black	73	81	+8
Men	66	84	+18
Women	66	81	+15

Less Confidence in Public's Political Wisdom

While confidence in government has increased modestly in recent years, the public is increasingly suspicious of itself: Fewer than six-in-ten (57%) say they have a good deal of confidence in the wisdom of the American people when it comes to making political decisions. This represents a seven-point decline over the past decade and a much steeper decline since the 1960s (20 points since 1964).

Fewer Express Confidence in the Public's Political Wisdom			
<i>Confidence in people's political decisions</i>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2007</u>
	%	%	%
Very great deal	14	11	13
Good deal	63	53	44
Not very much	19	32	34
None at all	1	3	8
Don't know	3	1	1
	100	100	100

1964 data from Gallup.

In 1997, Democrats had expressed more confidence than either Republicans or independents in the political wisdom of the American people. Today they have less confidence: 56% of Democrats say they have “a very great deal” or a “good deal” of confidence in the judgment of the people, down 13 percentage points from 1997. At the same time, 60% of Republicans and 59% of independents express high levels of confidence in the American people’s political judgments, which are comparable to levels of a decade ago.

Democrats Lose Confidence in the Public's Wisdom			
	<i>Percent great/good deal deal of confidence</i>		
	<u>1997</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Total	64	57	-7
Republican	61	60	-1
Democrat	69	56	-13
Independent	61	59	-2

Generation Gap in Cynicism

Young people continue to hold a more favorable view of government than do other Americans, while expressing the highest levels of disinterest in voting and other forms of political participation.

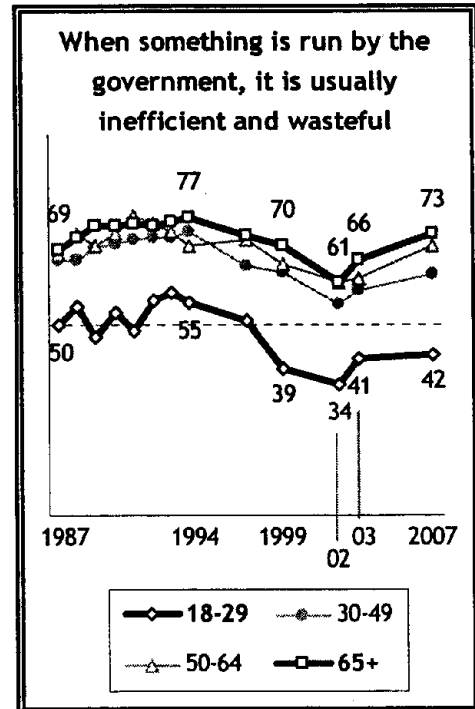
Overall, about six-in-ten Americans (62%) agree that government is wasteful and inefficient, a view shared by majorities of every age group except young people. Just 42% of those under age 30 see government as predictably inefficient, compared with 73% of those ages 65 and older. The generation gap in views of whether the government is wasteful has grown from 25 points four years ago to 31 points today, as seniors have become increasingly cynical while young people's views have not appreciably changed.

Similarly, half of those under age 30 (50%) say the government is run for the benefit of all the people, compared with 43% of those ages 65 and older. But on this measure the cynicism gap may be closing: Since 2003, the proportion of young people expressing the favorable view has dropped six points while the attitudes of older Americans have not changed.

At the same time, young people are the only age group where fewer than half (46%) say they completely agree with the statement, "I feel it's my duty as a citizen to always vote," a view shared by substantial majorities of those ages 30-49 years old (62%), people ages 50 to 64 (71%) and those ages 65 and older (79%).

These indifferent attitudes among young people toward voting appear to be backed up by action – or, more accurately, by inaction: Younger Americans are easily the least likely of any age group to say they are registered to vote (57% vs. 89% among those 65 and older) and to report that they "always" vote in elections (25% vs. 68%).

But this apparent indifference to voting may not be based on cynicism or estrangement from the process, the survey suggests. When asked if they agree or disagree that "voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things," virtually identical proportions of young people (72%) and older Americans (69%) say that it does.



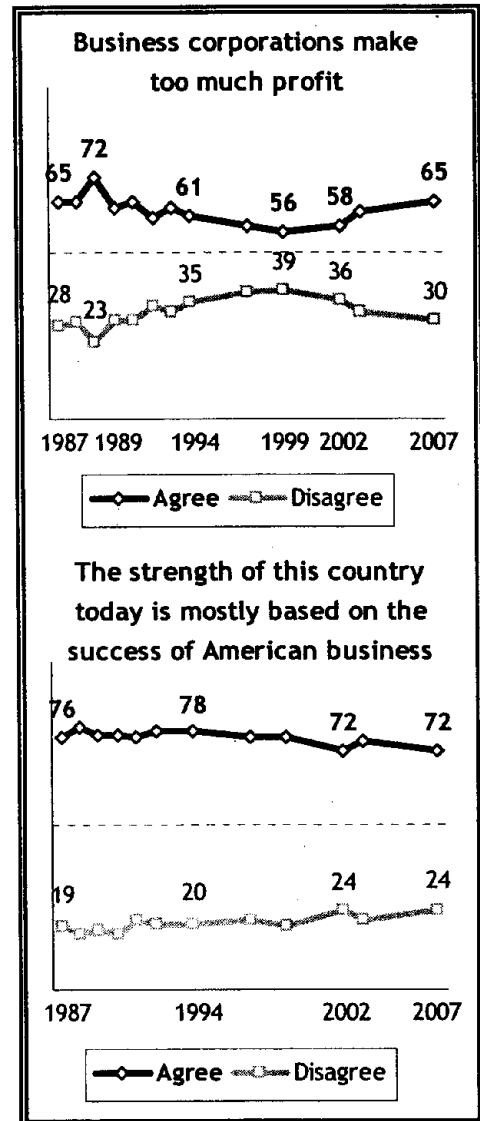
SECTION 7: BUSINESS, LABOR AND CORPORATE FAVORABILITY

The public has long had mixed views of American business. Most people believe the nation's corporations are too powerful and fail to strike a fair balance between profits and the public interest. In addition, nearly two-thirds (65%) say corporate profits are too high, up from 59% in 2003.

Yet by a wide margin, the public continues to link the strength of the country with the success of business. More than seven-in-ten (72%) agree that "the strength of this country today is mostly based on the success of American business" – an opinion that has changed very little over the past 20 years.

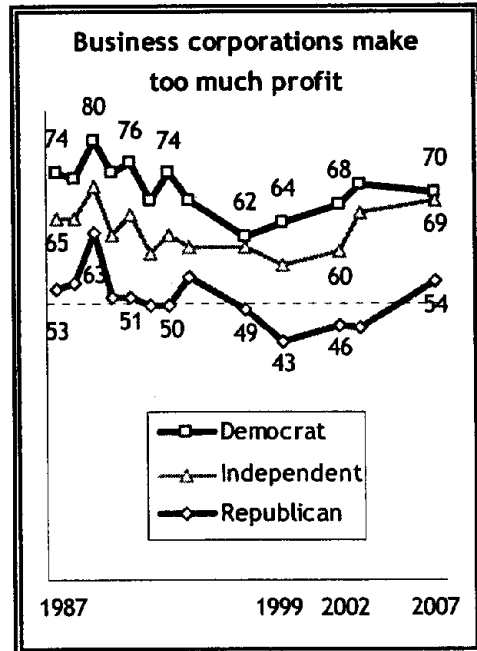
The public also expresses highly favorable views of many leading corporations. Johnson & Johnson and Google have the most positive images of 23 firms tested, based on those able to give the companies a rating. However, nearly all of the companies are viewed favorably – Exxon/Mobil and Halliburton are the only corporations whose favorable ratings are below 60% (Exxon/Mobil at 53%, Halliburton 45%).

Nonetheless, the idea that, in general, corporations make excessive profits is now more widely shared – and more strongly expressed – than a few years ago. While 65% agree that corporations make too much profit, 30% completely agree with this statement. This is the highest percentage expressing complete agreement with this statement in 20 years, though the increase from 2003 is not statistically significant (29%).



There are sizable political differences in views of business, including whether or not corporations make too much profit. Seven-in-ten Democrats express this view and 68% of independents agree, up from 60% in 2002. Yet an increasing number of Republicans also say corporations make too much profit.

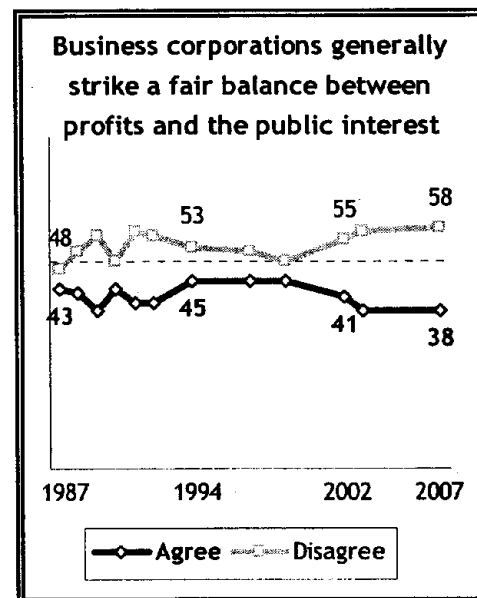
A majority of Republicans (54%) now believe that corporate profits are too high, up from 46% four years ago. There are significant divisions over this issue among Republicans between those who consider themselves professionals and those who consider themselves working class. Among Republican professionals, 43% say that business corporations make too much profit, compared with 63% of Republicans who call themselves working class.



Too Profitable, Too Powerful

Consistent with the public's view about corporate profits, 58% of Americans disagree with the following statement: "Business corporations generally strike a fair balance between making profits and serving the public interest." Just 38% feel that corporations strike a fair balance between profits and the public interest. These views have not changed much in recent years although in the mid- and late 1990s somewhat more Americans felt that businesses did strike the right balance between profits and public service (45% in 1999).

Republicans are evenly divided on this issue (50% say business corporations strike the right balance, 47% disagree), while Democrats and independents are much more critical of business in this regard. Roughly six-in-ten Democrats (62%) and independents (61%) reject the idea that corporations strike a fair balance between profits and the public interest.



Even more people believe that major corporations are too powerful. Roughly three-quarters of the public (76%) believe there is too much power concentrated in the hands of a few big companies, a number which has varied very little over the past 20 years. People with annual

household incomes of \$75,000 or more are somewhat less concerned about the power of big business; even so, 68% say there is too much power concentrated in the hands of a few big companies. Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to express this viewpoint (84% vs. 63%, respectively).

What's Good for Business...

In spite of public skepticism about corporate profits, there remains a broad consensus about the intrinsic value of business. Nearly three-quarters of the public (72%) agrees that the strength of this country today is mostly based on the success of American business. This feeling is shared across major demographic groups and even across the political spectrum: 79% of Republicans, 73% of Democrats, and 70% of independents say business contributes to the strength of the nation.

Nonetheless, the intensity of support for business in this regard has diminished somewhat in recent years. This year, 19% completely agree that the strength of this country today is mostly based on the success of American business, down from 26% in 2003. Opinions have shifted most substantially among older Americans. In 2003, a quarter of those ages 65 and older completely agreed that American strength was due mostly to business success; today that number has fallen to 12%.

	The strength of this country today is mostly based on the success of American business					
	Agree			Completely agree		
	2003 %	2007 %	change	2003 %	2007 %	change
Total	75	72	-3	26	19	-8
Republican	85	79	-6	32	17	-15
Democrat	70	73	+3	23	17	-6
Independent	74	70	-4	27	21	-6
18-29	77	82	+5	28	25	-3
30-49	78	70	-8	27	20	-7
50-64	71	72	+1	24	17	-7
65+	71	67	-4	25	12	-13

Views of Labor

While labor unions struggle to maintain their central role in the American workplace, support for unions remains robust. More than two-thirds of the public (68%) say that “labor unions are necessary to protect the working person.” Somewhat more people agreed with this statement in 2003 (74%), but the trend on this measure has remained fairly stable over the past 20 years.

Support for labor unions varies according race, level of income and education, and partisanship. Blacks are much more likely than whites to say labor unions are necessary to protect the working person – 85% vs. 65%, respectively. Those who have not attended college are more supportive of labor unions than college graduates. The differences across income groups are even sharper. Among those with annual household incomes in excess of \$75,000, 57% say labor unions are necessary. This compares with 79% of those in the lowest income categories.

Labor unions are necessary to protect the working person			
	Agree	Disagree	DK
	%	%	%
Total	68	28	4=100
White	65	30	5=100
Black	85	15	0=100
College grad	63	34	3=100
Some college	65	32	3=100
High school or less	72	23	5=100
\$75,000+	57	39	4=100
\$50,000-74,999	68	30	2=100
\$30,000-49,999	69	27	4=100
\$20,000-29,999	79	17	4=100
<\$20,000	79	17	4=100
Republican	53	40	7=100
Democrat	80	18	2=100
Independent	67	29	4=100

Partisanship is also closely linked to attitudes about labor unions: Democrats are the most supportive of unions, Republicans are the least supportive, and independents lie squarely in the middle.

Opinions of Leading Corporations

Overall ratings for business corporations have rebounded since October 2005 when the percentage rating them favorably fell to a 20-year low. Today, 57% of the public has a favorable opinion of business corporations. This is unchanged from December 2005 but up significantly from October of that year when only 45% of the public expressed a favorable opinion. Ratings for business corporations have rebounded across most major demographic groups. As has traditionally been the case, younger people and those with more education have the most favorable opinions of business corporations. In addition, Republicans are much more likely than Democrats to hold a favorable view of business (70% vs. 53%, respectively).

Individual ratings for many of the country's top corporations are up modestly from 2005. Of the 15 companies retested at the beginning of 2007, none saw its rating decline, and several showed considerable improvement. Fully 95% of those able to rate Johnson & Johnson have a favorable view of the corporation, with 94% saying the same about Google. Ratings for both of these companies are up marginally from late 2005 when 91% of the public viewed each favorably.

Overall, technology companies get extremely high ratings from the public. Google, Dell, Microsoft and Apple all are in the top tier of companies, with each receiving a favorability rating of at least 90%. Non-tech companies in the top tier include, aside from Johnson & Johnson, Southwest Airlines (93% favorable, up from 83% in 2005) and Home Depot (90% favorable). Southwest has a higher favorability rating than United Airlines, which is viewed positively by 86% of the public.

Favorability of Corporations

	Favor- able %	Unfav- orable %	Can't rate %
Johnson & Johnson	95	5=100	11
Google	94	6=100	22
Southwest Airlines	93	7=100	24
Microsoft	91	9=100	14
Home Depot	90	10=100	6
Dell Computer	90	10=100	15
Apple Computer	90	10=100	21
Target	89	11=100	9
Ben & Jerry's	89	11=100	34
Toyota	88	12=100	11
Coca Cola	87	13=100	6
United Airlines	86	14=100	19
Boeing	86	14=100	30
General Motors	82	18=100	9
American Express	81	19=100	19
Starbucks	79	21=100	19
Citibank	78	22=100	29
Pfizer	77	23=100	39
McDonald's	75	25=100	5
Coors	74	26=100	29
Walmart	71	29=100	4
Exxon/Mobil	53	47=100	18
Halliburton	45	55=100	43

Percent favorable/unfavorable based on those able to give a rating. Percent unable to rate in right column.

Other corporations receiving high ratings from the public include Ben & Jerry's (89% favorable), Target (89%), Toyota (88%), Coca Cola (87%), and Boeing (86%). Target has a more positive image with the public than does rival retail giant Walmart; 71% have a favorable impression of Walmart, which is virtually unchanged from late 2005. Walmart also is the most recognizable of the corporations tested; just 4% are unable to rate Walmart.

In spite of continued bad news in the U.S. automobile industry, General Motors' rating rebounded slightly this year. Roughly eight-in-ten of those able to rate GM (82%) give the company a favorable rating, up from 73% in 2005. Financial services companies American Express and Citibank also are viewed favorably by about 80% of the American public (82% and 78%, respectively). Pfizer, a leading pharmaceutical company, is viewed favorably by 77% of those who could rate it. These ratings are up significantly from 61% in 2005. Still, Pfizer is not well known by a sizable proportion of the public. Fully 39% could not rate Pfizer.

At the bottom of the favorability list are Exxon/Mobil and Halliburton. A narrow majority (53%) of those able to rate Exxon/Mobil give it a favorable rating; 47% have an unfavorable view. Halliburton is the least well-known of all the companies on the list and the least admired – 43% are unable to rate Halliburton, and among those who could, only 45% view the global energy company favorably.

These two companies also are the most polarizing from a partisan standpoint. Republicans have a much more positive view of Halliburton than do Democrats. Among those able to rate Halliburton, 67% of Republicans give it a favorable rating, compared with only 32% of Democrats.

Similarly, while 68% of Republicans who are able to rate Exxon/Mobil give it a favorable rating, only 45% of Democrats do so. There are few significant differences across parties for the other corporations that were evaluated.

Professionals vs. Working Class

In this regard, there are significant differences in views of corporations within parties among those who describe their household as professional or business class; those who call themselves working class; and those who say their family or household is struggling. This analysis is based on the opinions of Republicans and those who lean Republican, and Democrats and Democratic leaners.

For instance, while Republicans, Democrats and independents have fairly similar views on Walmart, there are significant differences among those who consider themselves professional, working class or struggling. Walmart gets a 58% favorable rating from professional or business class Americans. Among those who consider themselves working class, 72% give Walmart a favorable rating, and among those who are part of a struggling household, 89% rate it favorably. The differences among classes within party groups are even sharper, particularly within the Democratic Party.

**Partisan Views on Corporations:
Professionals vs. Working Class***

<i>Favorable opinion of:</i>	<i>REPUBLICAN</i>		<i>DEMOCRAT</i>	
	<i>Profes- sional</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>Profes- sional</i>	<i>Working class</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Halliburton	62	65	18	43
Walmart	73	75	45	66
Exxon/Mobil	62	61	30	48
McDonald's	81	82	55	73
Pfizer	83	82	66	76
Citibank	78	80	71	81
GM	86	84	72	82
Coors	82	69	63	78
Am Ex	88	76	86	84
Target	92	80	88	90
Starbucks	83	73	84	80
Coke	86	95	79	84

* Based on Republicans and Republican leaners, and Democrats and Democratic leaners, able to rate each company.

Only 45% of Democrats who consider themselves professional or business class have a favorable opinion of Walmart. This compares with 66% of working class Democrats and 85% of struggling Democrats. Republicans are more united in their views – 73% of professional Republicans and 75% of working class Republicans give Walmart a favorable rating. (Relatively few Republicans – just 6% – describe themselves as struggling).

Democrats are similarly split over Halliburton. Professional Democrats are much more critical of the company than are working-class Democrats – 18% of professionals vs. 43% of working class rate Halliburton favorably. The views of Republicans are consistent regardless of class. Opinions of several other companies follow a similar pattern. Looking at Exxon/Mobil, Pfizer, General Motors, Citibank, McDonalds, and Coors, professional or business class Democrats express less positive opinions than do their working class counterparts.

Opinions about other corporations are more consistent. However, there are a few instances in which Republican partisans are somewhat divided along class lines. Professional or business class Republicans express a more favorable opinion of Coors than do their working class counterparts (82% vs. 69% favorable). That also is the case in Republicans' opinions of American Express, Target and Starbucks.

SECTION 8: OTHER ISSUES: CIVIL LIBERTIES, ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE

Americans are concerned about how much information the government and business corporations collect about people like them – and express more concern when it is corporations, rather than the government, doing the data collection. Roughly three-quarters (74%) say they are concerned that “business corporations are collecting too much personal information about people like them.” A smaller majority (58%) expresses the same concern about the government collecting information about people like them. Opinions on both measures have changed little in recent years.

More Democrats than Republicans express concerns that both the government and business are gathering too much personal information on them. Eight-in-ten Democrats say they are concerned that business corporations are collecting too much personal information, and 66% say the same about the government’s data collection. Independents’ concerns about business and government data collection are nearly identical to those expressed by Democrats. A solid majority of Republicans (58%) say they are concerned that business corporations are gathering too much personal information, but just 40% express the same worry about government.

Privacy Concerns: Business vs. Government		
<i>Concerned about personal information collected by...</i>		
	<u>Business</u>	<u>Government</u>
	%	%
Total	74	58
Republican	58	40
Democrat	80	66
Independent	78	65
White	72	55
Black	83	76

Race also is a factor in attitudes about privacy. More African Americans than whites say they are concerned that both corporations and the government are collecting too much personal information. Education and income also make a difference: the more education people have, the less they worry. Higher income also is associated with less concern about government data collection, while lower income is associated with higher concern. Income and education did not affect opinions about businesses collecting data.

Rights for Terrorist Sympathizers?

Most Americans oppose allowing the police to conduct warrantless searches of those who might be sympathetic to terrorists, but the percentage opposed to this practice has declined slightly since 2003. Nearly four-in-ten (37%) believe that “the police should be allowed to search the houses of people who might be sympathetic to terrorists without a court order”; 61% disagree with the statement. Four years ago, 33% agreed with the statement, and 65% disagreed.

Despite the modest overall shift in opinions on this issue, Republican support for warrantless searches of those who may be sympathetic to terrorists has grown substantially. Nearly half of conservative Republicans (47%) now believe such searches should be allowed, up from 34% in 2003. The change among moderate and liberal Republicans has been even more striking. More than twice as many favor warrantless searches of possible terrorist sympathizers’ houses than did so four years ago (49% vs. 23%).

By contrast, Democrats are less supportive of allowing the police to conduct warrantless searches of the houses of people who may sympathize with terrorists than they were four years ago. Among conservative and moderate Democrats, 37% believe such warrantless searches should be permitted, compared with 40% in 2003. And just 19% of liberal Democrats believe such searches are acceptable, down from 28% in 2003.

There also continue to be educational differences in attitudes toward warrantless searches of possible terrorist sympathizers. More than four-in-ten (43%) of those with a high school education or less believe such searches are acceptable, compared with 37% of those who have attended but not completed college, and 25% of college graduates. People who have attended college but do not have degrees are much more supportive of such searches than they were in 2003 (37% now, 24% then).

The public is more evenly divided over whether freedom of speech should extend to groups sympathetic to terrorists. Currently, 45% agree that “freedom of speech should not extend to groups that are sympathetic to terrorists”; 50% disagree – meaning that they think freedom of speech should extend to such groups. Opinion on this issue has not changed since 2003.

Democrats are ideologically divided over whether or not to extend freedom of speech to groups sympathetic to terrorists. A majority of conservative and moderate Democrats (52%)

	Agree		Change 03-07
	2003 %	2007 %	
Total	33	37	+4
College graduate	21	25	+4
Some college	24	37	+13
High school or less	41	43	+2
Conserv Repub	34	47	+13
Mod/Lib Repub	23	49	+26
Independent	29	34	+5
Mod/Cons Dem	40	37	-3
Liberal Dem	28	19	-9

agree that freedom of speech should not extend to groups who are sympathetic to terrorists, compared with just 29% of liberal Democrats.

On this issue, conservative and moderate Democrats express similar views as Republicans. About half of Republicans (53%) believe freedom of speech should not extend to groups who are sympathetic to terrorists, and there are only modest differences between the party's conservatives and its moderates and liberals. Roughly four-in-ten independents (42%) believe that freedom of speech should not extend to terrorist sympathizers.

Civil Liberties and the War on Terror

A majority of Americans (54%) say it will not be necessary for the average person to give up some civil liberties in order to curb terrorism in this country, while 40% believe such sacrifices will be necessary. Opinions on this issue have not changed much over the past three years. However, in the months following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the prevailing view was that people would need to give up some civil liberties to curb terrorism.

	<u>Yes</u> %	<u>No</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
January 2007	40	54	6=100
September 2006	43	50	7=100
July 2005	40	53	7=100
July 2004	38	56	6=100
August 2003	44	50	6=100
June 2002	49	45	6=100
January 2002	55	39	6=100
Mid-Sept. 2001	55	35	10=100

There continue to be partisan differences in views of whether average people will need to give up some liberties to curb terrorism. Most Republicans (51%) say such sacrifices will be necessary, but just 35% of Democrats and 37% of independents share this belief.

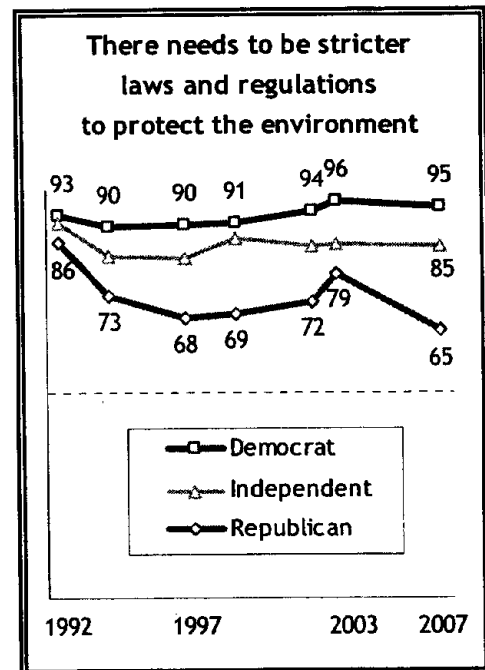
Stable Views on the Environment

There is broad agreement among the American public with regard to the value of environmental protection. A large majority (83%) supports stricter laws and regulations to protect the environment, and 69% agree that “we should put more emphasis on fuel conservation than on developing new oil supplies.”

More people express reservations about environmental protection when potential costs are mentioned. Six-in-ten agree that “people should be willing to pay higher prices in order to protect the environment,” while 38% disagree. The percentage agreeing with the statement has declined a bit since 2003 (65%).

In general, however, the public’s view of environmental issues has not changed drastically in recent years. For instance, the percentage of Americans who believe that the nation needs stricter laws on the environment slipped from 90% in 1992 to 82% two years later, but since then has remained fairly stable.

In the current survey, however, there has been a sharp increase in partisan differences over whether the nation needs stricter environmental laws. Currently, 95% of Democrats and 85% of independents say that stricter environmental laws are needed, but just 65% of Republicans agree. The views of Democrats and independents have not changed significantly since the previous values survey in 2003. But fewer Republicans support tougher environmental laws and regulations than did so then (79% vs. 65%). And the partisan divide on this issue, which was 17 points in the last survey, has ballooned to 30 points. In 1992, the first time this question was asked, partisan differences were much narrower (seven points).



Intra-Party Differences

There also are sizable differences within parties over environmental values. Republicans are divided over the need for stricter environmental laws. Nearly eight-in-ten moderate and liberal Republicans (78%) agree that such laws are needed, but just 58% of conservative Republicans agree. Democrats are unified on the need for tougher environmental laws and regulations.

There are ideological differences in both parties on whether people should be willing to pay higher prices to protect the environment. Three-quarters of liberal Democrats believe that people should be willing to pay higher prices for environmental protection; a smaller majority of conservative and moderate Democrats agree (58%). Republicans also differ over this issue – 55% of moderate and liberal Republicans, but just 42% of conservative Republicans, say that people should be willing to pay higher prices to protect the environment.

Percent agree:	--REPUBLICAN--			--DEMOCRAT--	
	Cons- erv. %	Mod/ Lib %	INDEP- ENDENT %	Cons/ Mod %	Lib- eral %
Need stricter environmental laws and regulations	58	78	85	94	95
Best to emphasize fuel conservation over new oil supplies	58	65	69	73	83
Should be willing to pay higher prices to protect environment	42	55	66	58	75

Science & Technology

Roughly a third of Americans (34%) agree that they are “worried that science is going too far and hurting society rather than helping it.” More than six-in-ten disagree with the statement. In 2003, a somewhat higher percentage (42%) took a skeptical view of the impact of science on society.

	Agree %	Disagree %	DK %
Total	34	62	4=100
White	31	65	4=100
Black	61	35	4=100
College grad	15	83	2=100
Some college	28	65	7=100
High school or less	48	49	3=100
Republican	28	67	5=100
Democrat	36	61	3=100
Independent	35	61	4=100

Race and education are by far the most important factors in opinions about whether science is helping or hurting society. By more than two-to-one (65%-31%), whites disagree with the idea that science hurts society. But most African Americans (61%) believe that science does have a negative impact on society.

There also are major educational differences in views of whether science hurts society. Nearly half of those with a high school education or less (48%) say that science hurts society, compared with just 15% of college graduates.

Most Americans (68%) also continue to reject the idea that “technology is making life too complicated for me.” Less than a third (31%) agrees with this statement, although that number has risen slightly since 2003 (27%). Education also influences opinions on technology, but age is a factor here as well. More than four-in-ten (43%) of those ages 65 and older say that technology has made life too complicated, compared with just 18% of those under age 30.

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 2,007 adults, 18 years of age or older, from December 12, 2006 through January 9, 2007. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. For results based on Form 1 (N=982) and Form 2 (N=1,025) the sampling error is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Survey Methodology in Detail

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed). The design of the sample ensures this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone numbers in the U.S. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing one or more residential listings.

The sample was released for interviewing in replicates. Using replicates to control the release of sample to the field ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. The use of replicates also ensures that the regional distribution of numbers called is appropriate. Again, this works to increase the representativeness of the sample.

As many as 10 attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making a contact with a potential respondent. All interview breakoffs and refusals were re-contacted at least once in order to attempt to convert them to completed interviews. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the "youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home." If there is no eligible man at home, interviewers asked to speak with "the youngest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home." This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

Non-response in telephone interview surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis.

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 2006). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone.

The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters.

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