

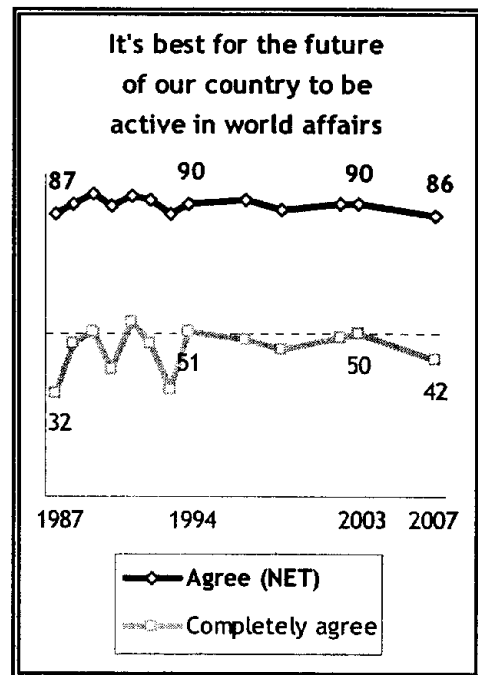
### SECTION 3: FOREIGN POLICY, GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT AND PATRIOTISM

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**

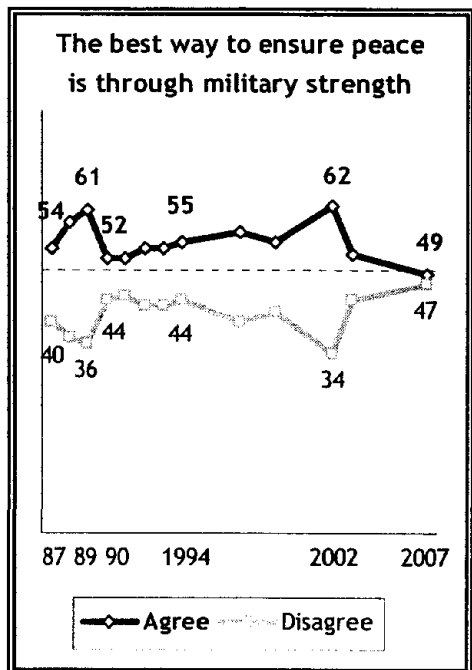
<i>Completely agree:</i>			
<i>It's best for US to be active globally</i>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Change</u>
Total	%	%	
Total	50	42	-8
Men	50	47	-3
Women	49	37	-12
College grad	62	51	-11
Some college	48	44	-4
H.S. grad or less	43	36	-7
Republican	54	44	-10
Democrat	48	39	-9
Independent	50	43	-7
Conservative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

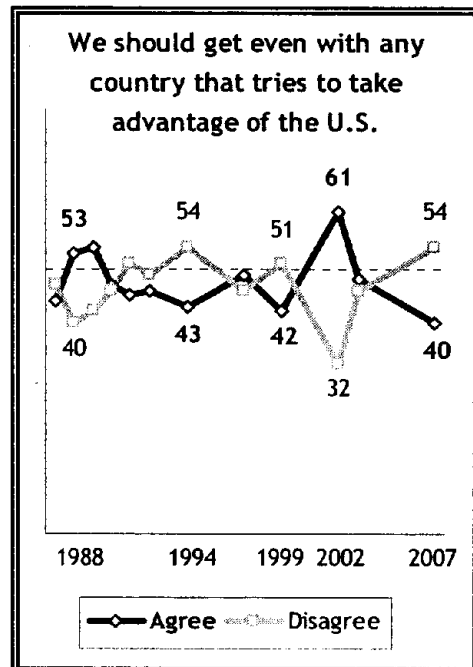
In 2002, with memories of 9/11 still fresh, 61% of Americans agreed with the statement: “It is my belief that we should get even with any country that tries to take advantage of the United States.” That marked a 19-point increase from 1999, and was the highest percentage agreeing with this sentiment 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					
	Completely agree				Change 03-07
	1999	2002	2003	2007	
	%	%	%	%	
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					
	Agree: As Americans we can always find a way to solve our problems				Change 03-07
	1999	2002	2003	2007	
	%	%	%	%	
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
	%	%	%	%
<b>Jan 2007</b>				
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
<b>July 2001</b>				
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	4	4	5	3	3
	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).

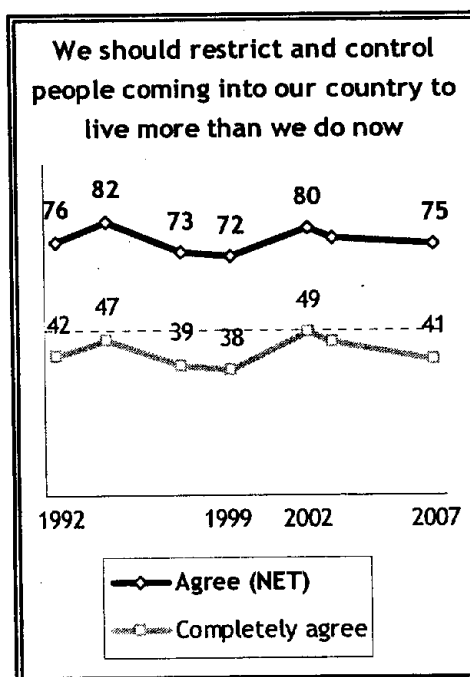
While there is a growing partisan divide in opinions of the government's anti-terror efforts, a substantial majority of Americans (70%) continue to believe that "occasional acts of terrorism in the U.S. will be part of life in the future." This is a rare foreign policy measure on which there are no major 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.

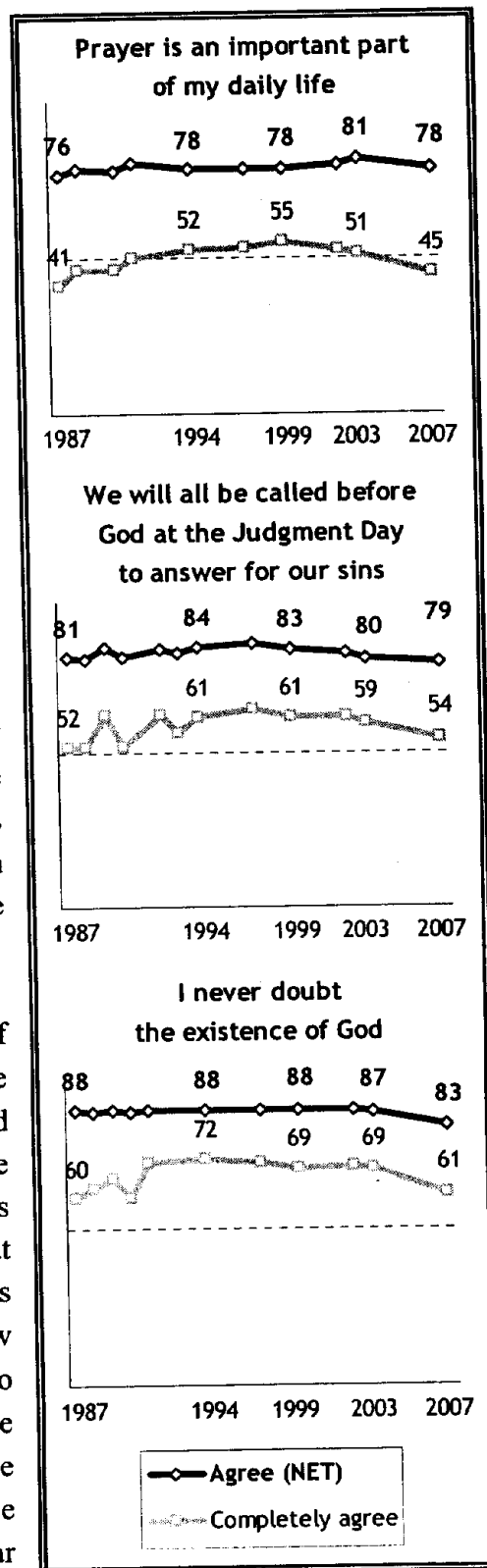
Democratic divisions over the proposed path to citizenship also have grown. Last April, nearly identical percentages of liberal and conservative and moderate Democrats favored this proposal (64% of moderate/conservative Democrats, 65% of liberal Democrats). But support has increased among liberal Democrats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

## SECTION 4: RELIGION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

**R**eligion 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.

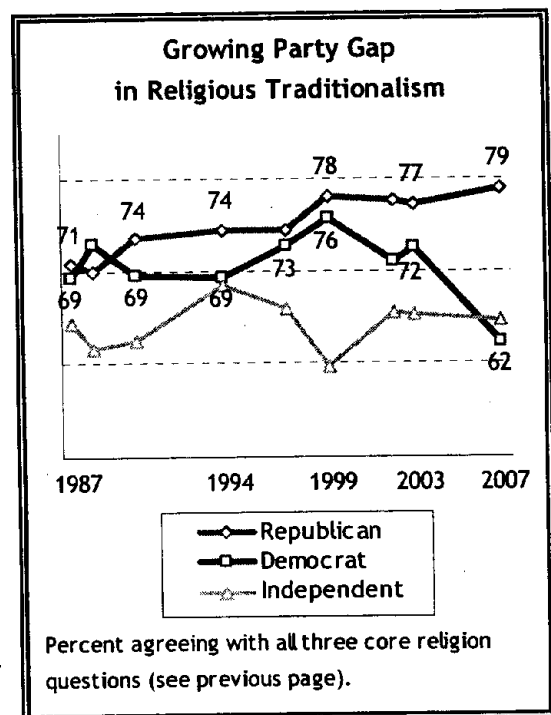
### Wider Party Gap in Religious Belief

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.

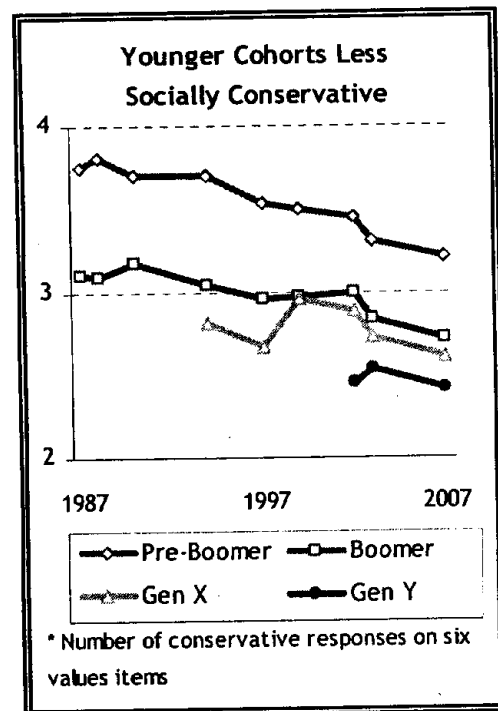
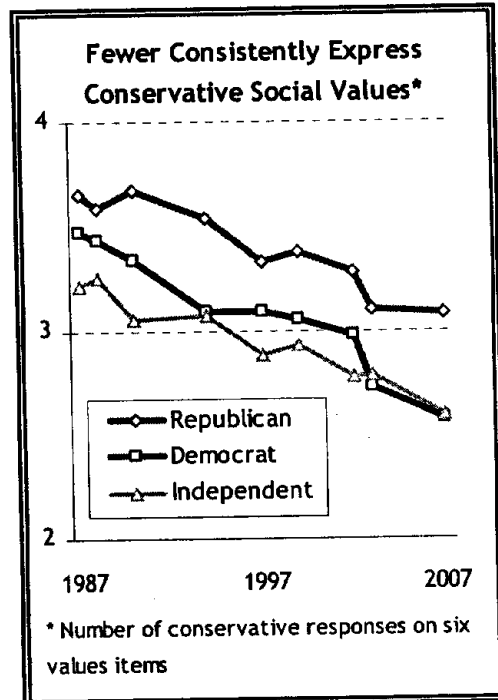
While there are some signs of declining religiosity, other forms of religious activity do not appear to have changed very much in recent years. The number of people who report attending Bible study or prayer group meetings is about the same today as in 1999 (37% now, 34% in 1999). Southerners are especially 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



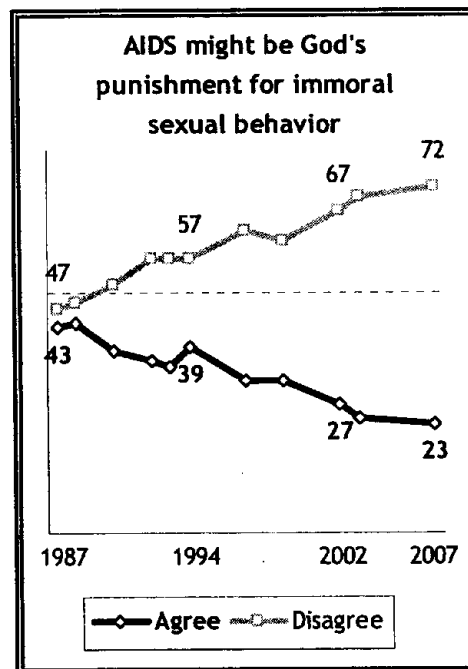
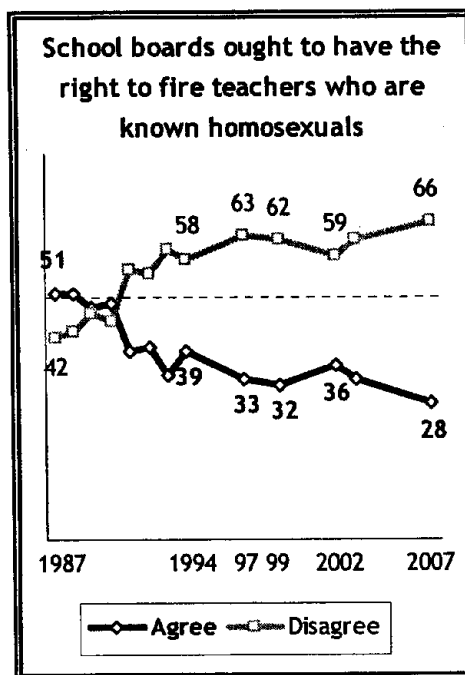
the newest age cohort – Generation Y –expresses agreement with even fewer of the conservative values (an average of around 2.4 in 2007).

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



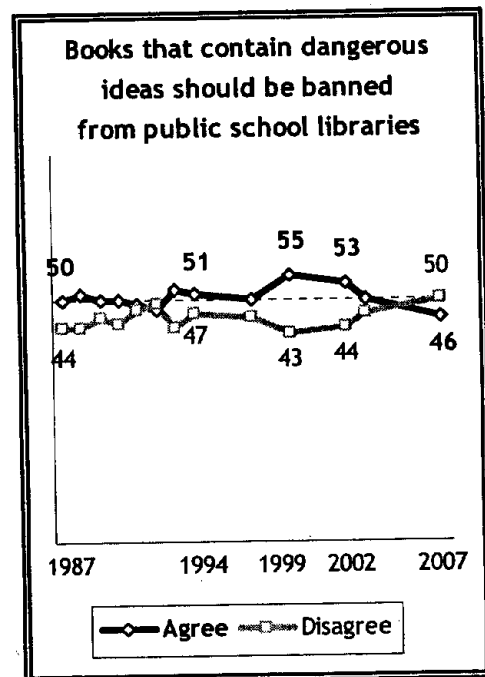
be accepted, compared with somewhat fewer who said it should be discouraged (49% vs. 44% in 2004).

### 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%).

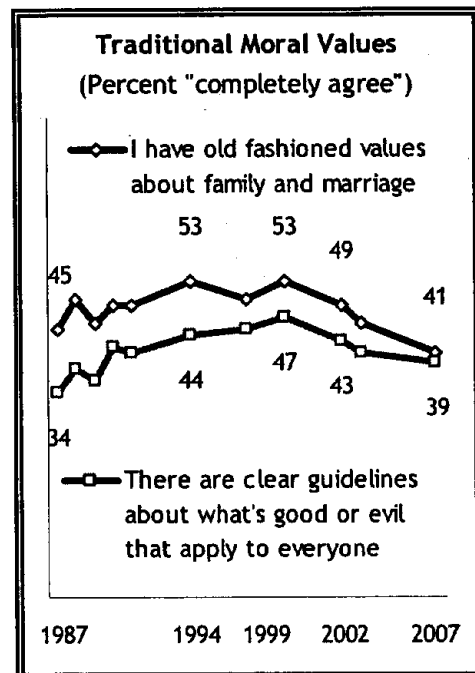
As with many other social values, a great deal of the change on this question is generational in nature. Baby Boomers were significantly more liberal than their predecessors in 1987 on the question of women's roles, and Generation X was more liberal when they entered adulthood than were the Boomers. 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

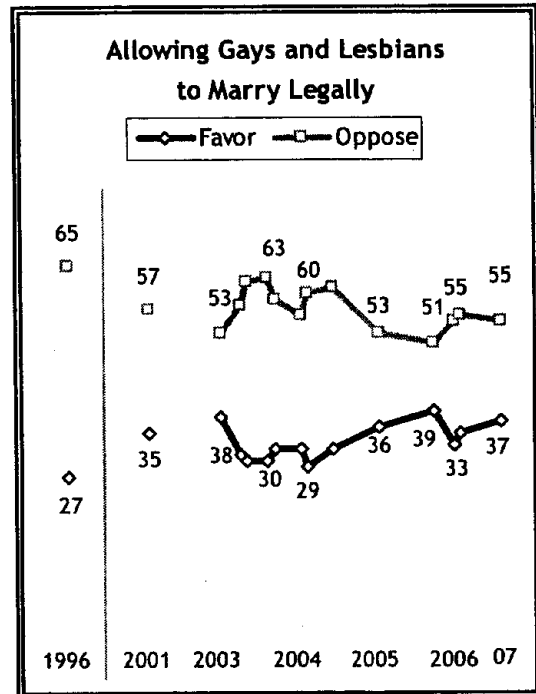
Opinions on three contentious social issues have shown only modest change over the past several years. Majorities of Americans continue to oppose gay marriage and support the death penalty, but there also is a majority opposed to making it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion.

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

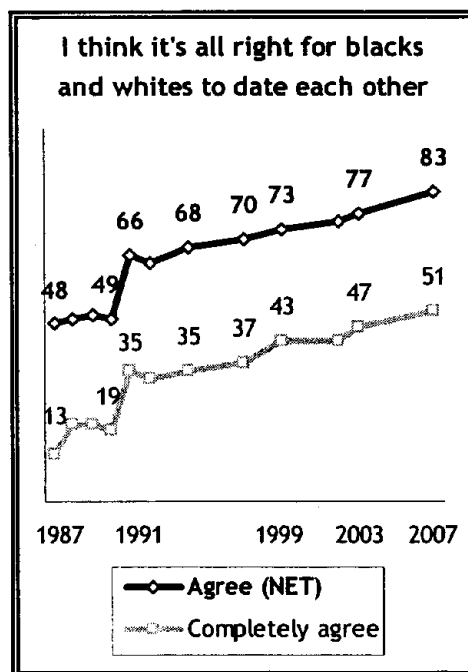
The public's views about race have changed in important ways over the past several years. But these attitudes remain complex, conflicted and largely divided along racial and political lines.

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).

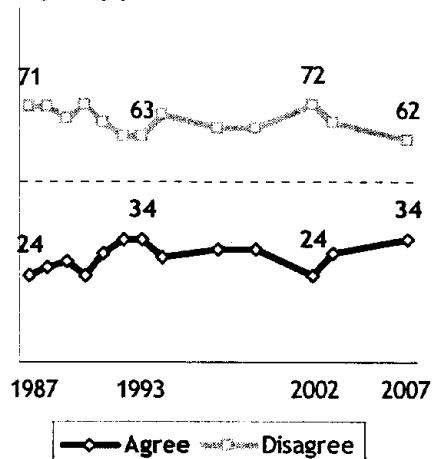
Despite this shift, however, most Americans (62%) disagree with this statement: “We should make every possible effort to improve the position of blacks and other minorities, even if means giving them preferential treatment.” Even half of those who favor affirmative action programs dissent from the idea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

