

Washington Post/Kaiser/Harvard Survey Project, American Values: 1998 National Survey of Americans on Values

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This *Washington Post*/Harvard University/Kaiser Family Foundation study is based on random telephone interviews with 2,025 adults conducted between July 29 and August 18, 1998. Surveying was done by Chilton Research. The margin of error is plus or minus 2 percentage points but is larger for split samples and certain subgroups.

The State of our Values

1. Do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

	Right direction	Wrong track	No opinion
8/16/98	38	57	6
8/27/97 ABCWP	39	57	4
8/21/96 ABCWP	28	67	5
4/5/95 ABCWP	23	73	3
7/20/94 ABCWP	26	70	4
6/7/92 ABCWP	14	83	3
8/20/90 ABCWP	35	60	5
7/11/88 ABCWP	40	56	4
9/8/86 ABCWP	50	48	2
5/22/84 ABCWP	47	48	5
10/11/82 ABCWP	35	57	8
2/80 Roper	20	70	10
2/78 Roper	34	53	13
2/77 Roper	41	44	14
10/75 Roper	19	71	9
10/74 ABCWP	15	75	11
10/73 ABCWP	16	74	10

2. Now thinking just about values and moral beliefs, do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

	Right direction	Wrong track	No opinion
8/16/98	21	76	3

3. Do you think that people and groups that hold values similar to yours are gaining influence in American life in general these days, or do you think that they are losing influence?

	Gaining influence	Losing influence	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
8/16/98	35	55	6	4

4. Now I'm going to mention some individuals and groups in society. For each, I want you to tell me whether you think this individual or group generally shares most of your moral and ethical values, some of your moral and ethical values, or hardly any. How about (read items)?

	Most of your values	Some of your values	Hardly any values	Shares none (vol.)	No opin.
a. Bill Clinton	19	40	24	13	3
b. Al Gore	21	44	17	8	10
c. Newt Gingrich	12	38	26	12	12
d. Hillary Clinton	26	39	20	9	6
e. The Democratic Party	21	47	18	8	6
f. The Republican Party	20	47	17	11	6
g. Homosexuals	6	29	33	24	7
h. Blacks or African-Americans	21	62	9	2	6
i. Whites	27	61	5	1	5
j. Immigrants	17	49	19	4	10
k. Members of politically conservative religious groups like the Christian Coalition	25	35	21	12	7
l. People on welfare	7	49	31	8	5
m. Rich people	11	50	25	10	4
n. Poor people	27	55	10	3	5
o. Older Americans	55	37	5	1	1
p. Baby Boomers	25	49	16	6	5
q. Young people under the age of 30	16	52	24	6	2

5. Which of the following do you think will be most important to you in choosing the next president. (Read items)

The candidate's stands on the issues	38
The candidate's political party	4
The candidate's personal morals and ethics,	24
The broad principles and values the candidate campaigns on, OR	15
The candidate's experience	13
All (vol.)	3
None (vol.)	1
No opinion	2

6. Which of these comes closer to your opinion? (Read items)

The president is like the head of any organization: As long as he does a good job running the country, whatever he does in his personal life is not important.	49
The president has a greater responsibility than leaders of other organizations to set an example with his personal life.	48
Neither (vol.)	2
No opinion	1

A Values Map of America

Moral Tolerance

7. Now I am going to read a list of things that some people do. For each, thinking about your own values and morals, I'd like you to tell me whether you think it is: always acceptable; acceptable in some situations but not in others; unacceptable, but should be tolerated by society; or unacceptable and should not be tolerated.

	-----Acceptable-----			----Unacceptable-----			No opin.
	NET	Always	Some sit.	NET	Tolerated	Not	
A. Divorce	76	19	57	23	14	9	1
B. Sex before marriage	55	21	34	43	19	24	2
C. Sex between two adults of the same sex	27	13	14	72	18	53	1
D. Marriages between two persons of the same sex	23	13	10	76	15	61	1
E. Marriages between blacks and whites	76	52	23	23	11	12	1
F. Drinking alcohol	74	16	57	26	9	17	1
G. Smoking marijuana	32	5	26	67	12	55	1
H. Abortion	51	9	42	48	10	38	1
I. A married person having an affair	11	1	10	88	17	72	1
J. Making a racist remark in a private conversation	17	4	13	82	14	68	1
K. Making a sexist remark in a private conversation	32	6	26	67	15	52	2
L. Having a child without being married	57	16	41	41	23	18	1

8. Now I will read you some statements. Will you tell me for each one whether it is something you personally agree with or disagree with? (Read items) (Get answer, then ask:) Do you agree/disagree strongly or somewhat?

A. The world is always changing and we should adjust our morals and values to those changes.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	42	18	25	*	57	18	39	*
1994 NES	40	10	30	10	48	22	26	1
1988 NES	49	16	33	10	41	19	22	1

B. This country would have many fewer problems if there were more emphasis on traditional family values.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	88	70	18	1	10	6	4	*
1994 NES	86	57	29	7	6	4	2	1
1988 NES	81	47	34	12	5	4	1	1

C. We should be more tolerant of people who choose to live according to their own moral standards even if we think they are wrong.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	70	30	40	1	27	15	12	1

D. One of the big problems in this country is that we don't give everyone an equal chance.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	65	40	25	1	33	17	16	1
1994 NES	53	24	29	13	34	23	11	*
1990 NES	48	12	36	NA	50	41	9	2
1988 NES	53	21	32	14	34	25	9	1
1984 NES	48	21	27	10	41	25	16	*

E. If people were treated more equally in this country we would have many fewer problems.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	79	55	24	1	19	11	7	1
1994 NES	64	34	30	14	22	15	7	*
1988 NES	57	31	36	14	18	14	4	1
1984 NES	63	29	34	12	23	17	6	2

Note: In NES wording, "neither" category is explicit, not volunteered.

8. (cont.)

F. We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	43	21	23	1	54	25	29	1
11/97 Pew/PSRA	45	17	28	NA	53	32	21	2
7/94 TM/PSRA	48	21	27	NA	50	28	22	2
5/93 TM/PSRA	43	14	29	NA	54	34	20	3
6/92 TM/PSRA	40	16	24	NA	57	30	27	3
11/91 TM/PSRA	38	16	22	NA	59	32	27	3
5/90 TM/Gallup	43	15	28	NA	53	32	21	4
2/89 TM/Gallup	41	17	24	NA	56	34	22	3
5/88 TM/Gallup	45	17	28	NA	52	32	20	3
5/87 TM/Gallup	42	11	31	NA	53	37	16	5

Note: categories used in Pew/PSRA, TM/PSRA, and TM/Gallup: "Completely agree," "Mostly agree," "Mostly disagree," and "Completely disagree."

G. Americans are too tolerant and accepting of behaviors that in the past were considered immoral or wrong

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	69	42	27	1	29	18	11	1

Political Tolerance

9. There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by other people. For instance, consider a person who believes that blacks are genetically inferior to whites. If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community claiming that blacks are inferior, should he or she be allowed to speak, or not?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
8/16/98	63	36	1
1996 GSS	61	37	2
1994 GSS	61	37	2
1993 GSS	61	37	2
1990 GSS	63	35	2
1989 GSS	62	36	2
1988 GSS	61	37	2
1987 GSS	61	38	2
1985 GSS	55	42	2
1984 GSS	58	40	2
1982 GSS	59	38	3
1980 GSS	62	36	3
1977 GSS	59	40	2
1976 GSS	61	37	2

10. And what about a person who wanted to make a speech in your community in favor of gay and lesbian marriages. Should he or she be allowed to speak, or not?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
8/16/98	68	31	1

Moral Traditionalism

11. I'm going to read you a list of statements. Will you tell me for each one whether it is something you personally agree with or disagree with? (Read items) (Get answer, then ask:) Do you agree/disagree strongly or somewhat?

A. The husband should have the final say in all important financial and family decisions.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	18	8	10	1	80	20	61	*

B. A couple that is unhappy should get divorced even if they have young children.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	46	20	25	3	50	25	25	1

C. It may be necessary for mothers to be working because the family needs money, but it would be better if she could stay home and just take care of the house and children.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	79	49	29	2	20	12	7	*
9/7/97*	68	44	24	NA	30	16	14	2

*WashingtonPost/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University Survey of Americans on Gender.

12. Should divorce in this country be easier or harder to obtain than it is now?

	Easier	Harder*	Stay as is (vol.)	No opinion
8/16/98	22	62	11	5
1996 GSS	27	49	18	6
1994 GSS	26	47	22	6
1993 GSS	26	47	20	7
1991 GSS	28	48	19	5
1990 GSS	23	49	23	5

12. (cont.) Should divorce in this country be easier or harder to obtain than it is now?

	Easier	Harder*	Stay as is (vol.)	No opinion
1989 GSS	25	51	18	6
1988 GSS	25	48	22	5
1986 GSS	27	52	18	4
1985 GSS	23	53	19	4
1983 GSS	24	52	19	5
1982 GSS	22	50	21	6
1978 GSS	27	42	27	4
1977 GSS	29	48	18	5
1975 GSS	29	46	20	5
1974 GSS	32	42	21	5
1968 Gallup	18	60	14	7

* GSS and Gallup wording: "more difficult."

Role of Government

13. Which comes closer to the way you feel (Read items)?

Government regulation of big businesses and corporations is necessary to protect the public, OR	53
Government regulation of big businesses and corporations does more harm than good?	40
Neither (vol.)	3
No opinion	4

14. Which of these views comes closer to your own?

The government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all Americans	51
This is not the government's responsibility, each person should take care of themselves.	46
No opinion	3

15. I am going to mention four phrases and ask you which one best describes how you feel about the way the federal government works. Do you feel enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

	-----Enth/Satis-----			-----Dissatis./Angry-----			None/ other	No opin.
	NET	Enthus.	Satisfied	NET	Not angry	Angry		
8/16/98	41	2	39	57	46	11	NA	1
1/19/98 ABCWP	46	2	43	53	45	8	1	*
8/27/97 ABCWP	34	2	33	64	52	11	2	1
3/17/96 ABCWP	29	2	27	70	54	16	NA	*
1/4/95 ABCWP	29	2	27	69	53	16	*	1
10/31/94 ABCWP	26	1	25	73	55	18	1	1

15. (cont.) I am going to mention four phrases and ask you which one best describes how you feel about the way the federal government works. Do you feel enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

	-----Enth/Satis-----			-----Dissatis./Angry-----			None/ other	No opin.
	NET	Enthus.	Satisfied	NET	Not angry	Angry		
10/23/94 ABCWP	28	1	26	71	52	20	*	*
10/9/94 ABCWP	25	2	24	72	53	19	2	*
9/11/94 ABCWP	26	2	25	73	53	20	NA	*
3/27/94 ABCWP	30	1	29	68	48	20	1	1
2/28/93 ABCWP	33	4	29	66	50	16	*	*
7/8/92 ABCWP	23	1	22	76	53	23	*	1
6/7/92 ABCWP	21	1	20	79	58	21	*	1
4/9/92 ABCWP	21	1	20	79	55	24	1	*
3/18/92 ABCWP	22	1	21	77	54	23	1	*
3/11/92 ABCWP	18	1	17	80	60	20	1	1

16. Would you say you favor a smaller federal government with fewer services, or larger government with many services?

	Smaller government with fewer services	Larger government with many services	No opinion
8/16/98	59	35	6
8/5/96 ABCWP	63	32	5
7/8/92 ABCWP	55	38	7

17. Do you personally agree or disagree with the following statement? (Read items) (Get answer, then ask:) Do you agree/disagree strongly or somewhat?

A. When something is run by the government, it is usually inefficient and wasteful.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	64	36	28	1	34	25	9	1
11/97 Pew/PSRA	64	27	37	NA	34	27	7	2
7/94 TM/PSRA	69	33	36	NA	30	25	5	1
5/93 TM/PSRA	69	24	45	NA	29	24	5	2
6/92 TM/PSRA	70	29	41	NA	28	24	4	2
11/91 TM/PSRA	68	32	36	NA	30	23	7	2
5/90 TM/PSRA	67	22	45	NA	29	25	4	4
2/89 TM/Gallup	65	26	39	NA	31	26	5	4
5/88 TM/Gallup	66	24	42	NA	29	26	3	5
5/87 TM/Gallup	63	19	44	NA	31	27	4	6

Note: categories used in Pew/PSRA, TM/PSRA, and TM/Gallup: "Completely agree," "Mostly agree," "Mostly disagree," and "Completely disagree."

17. (cont.)

B. Government controls too much of our daily lives

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	60	35	26	1	39	28	10	*
11/97 Pew/PSRA	64	29	35	NA	35	29	6	1
7/94 TM/PSRA	69	37	32	NA	30	25	5	1
5/93 TM/PSRA	65	26	39	NA	34	30	4	1
6/92 TM/PSRA	64	28	36	NA	34	29	5	2
11/91 TM/PSRA	63	32	31	NA	35	28	7	2
5/90 TM/PSRA	62	22	40	NA	34	29	5	4
2/89 TM/Gallup	57	22	35	NA	43	34	9	3
5/88 TM/Gallup	61	25	36	NA	36	31	5	3
5/87 TM/Gallup	58	18	40	NA	37	32	5	5

Note: categories used in Pew/PSRA, TM/PSRA, and TM/Gallup: "Completely agree," "Mostly agree," "Mostly disagree," and "Completely disagree." Question wording: "The federal government controls too much of our daily lives."

C. There are many goods and services which would not be available to ordinary people without government intervention

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	77	34	43	1	20	13	7	2

18. Do you personally agree or disagree with the following statement? (Read items)
(Get answer, then ask:) Do you agree/disagree strongly or somewhat?

A. People should take responsibility for their own lives and economic well-being and not expect other people to help.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	78	47	31	1	21	14	7	*

B. Most people who don' get ahead should not blame the system, they have only themselves to blame.

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	71	36	36	1	27	19	8	*

18. (cont.)

C. Hard work offers little guarantee of success

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	40	20	20	*	60	21	38	*
11/97 Pew/PSRA	33	13	20	NA	66	34	32	1
7/94 TM/PSRA	39	15	24	NA	60	32	28	1
6/92 TM/PSRA	45	15	30	NA	52	30	22	3
11/91 TM/PSRA	44	20	24	NA	54	29	25	2
5/90 TM/PSRA	36	10	26	NA	63	40	23	1
2/89 TM/Gallup	41	14	27	NA	57	36	21	2
5/88 TM/Gallup	32	11	21	NA	66	40	26	1
5/87 TM/Gallup	29	7	22	NA	68	44	24	3

Note: categories used in Pew/PSRA, TM/PSRA, and TM/Gallup: "Completely agree," "Mostly agree," "Mostly disagree," and "Completely disagree."

D. It is the responsibility of government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and people with low incomes

	-----Agree-----			Neith. (vol.)	-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Strngly	Smwht		NET	Smwht	Strngly	
8/16/98	30	13	16	1	67	27	40	2
1996 GSS	32	12	20	24	41	23	18	3
1994 GSS	27	5	22	19	51	31	20	3
1993 GSS	31	7	24	21	46	30	16	2
1992 GSS	37	9	28	19	40	28	12	4
1990 GSS	34	10	24	27	39	29	10	*
1987 GSS	27	6	21	23	45	33	12	3

Note: In GSS wording, "neither" category is explicit, not volunteered.

19. I am going to read two statements. Please tell me which one is closer to your own view. Most poor people are poor because they don't work hard enough or They are poor because of circumstances beyond their control?

	Don't work hard enough	Circumstances	Both/ Depends (vol.)	No opinion
8/16/98	21	66	10	2

19. (cont.) Variant wording: In your opinion, which is more often to blame if a person is poor—lack of effort on his part, or circumstances beyond his control?

	Lack of effort	Circumstances	Both/ Depends (vol.)	No opinion
1997 Pew/PSRA	39	44	14	3
1995 CBS/NYT	35	42	18	4
1994 CBS/NYT	44	34	18	4
1992 LA Times	27	52	18	3
12/90 NYT	30	48	20	2
5/90 Gallup	35	45	17	3
1988 Gallup	40	37	17	6
1984 Gallup	33	34	31	2
1982 CBS/NYT	37	39	17	7
1968 NORC	41	28	29	3
1967 Gallup	42	19	36	3
1965 Gallup	40	29	28	3
11/64 Gallup	31	31	34	5
3/64 Gallup	34	29	32	6

20. Do you personally agree or disagree with the following statement? (Read items. Get answer, then ask:) Do you agree/disagree strongly or somewhat?

A. A person should always be concerned about the well-being of others.

	-----Agree-----			Neith.	-----Disagree-----			No
	NET	Strngly	Smwht	(vol.)	NET	Smwht	Strngly	opin.
8/16/98	93	67	26	*	6	4	2	*

B. It is best not to get too involved in taking care of other people's needs

	-----Agree-----			Neith.	-----Disagree-----			No
	NET	Strngly	Smwht	(vol.)	NET	Smwht	Strngly	opin.
8/16/98	43	12	31	2	55	30	25	1

C. It is important to me personally to help others who are less fortunate.

	-----Agree-----			Neith.	-----Disagree-----			No
	NET	Strngly	Smwht	(vol.)	NET	Smwht	Strngly	opin.
8/16/98	92	60	32	1	6	5	2	1

Religion and Politics

21. Religion has had an increasing impact on the political views of many Americans. Which of the following two statements comes closer to your view: [PROBE ONCE: "If you had to choose..."]

"Organized religious groups of all kinds should stay out of politics"	45
"It is important for organized religious groups to stand up for their beliefs in politics."	52
Neither (vol.)	1
No opinion	1

22. Which comes closer to your view: [PROBE ONCE: "If you had to choose..."]

"The government should take special steps to protect America's religious heritage"	48
"There should be a high degree of separation between church and state."	47
Neither (vol.)	3
No opinion	2

23. Which comes closer to your view: [PROBE ONCE: "If you had to choose..."]

"The influence of religion on American politics threatens to divide us as a country"	35
"Religious people must take political action in order to protect their rights."	56
Neither (vol.)	6
No opinion	4

24. Would you rather see religious and spiritual values have greater influence in politics and public life than they do now, less influence, or about the same influence as they do now?

	Greater	Less	Same	No opinion
8/16/98	38	22	38	2

25. How important is religion in your everyday life: The most important thing in your life; extremely important, but not the most important thing, very important, somewhat important, or not important at all?

The most important thing in your life	19
Extremely important, but not the most important thing	20
Very important	29
Somewhat important	23
Not important at all	8
No opinion	*

26. Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible (Read items):

The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word.

The Bible is the inspired word of God, but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word.

The Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history and moral precepts recorded by man.

	Actual	Inspired	Fables	No opinion
8/16/98	36	48	14	1
1996 GSS	30	50	17	3
1994 GSS	31	51	15	3
1993 GSS	33	49	15	3
1991 GSS	35	48	15	3
1989 GSS	31	50	16	3
1988 GSS	34	47	16	3
1987 GSS	37	46	15	2
1985 GSS	36	49	13	2
1984 GSS	38	47	14	2

Note: GSS trend "No opinion" category also includes "Other (vol.)"

27. Aside from weddings and funerals how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

	More than once a week	Once a week	Once or twice a month	A few times a year	Seldom	Never	No opin.
8/16/98	17	25	17	19	15	6	*

28. About how often do you pray? Would you say several times a day, once a day, several times a week, once a week, less than once a week, or never.

	Several times a day	Once a day	Several times a week	Once a week	Less than once a week	Never	No opin.
8/16/98	36	22	16	8	11	7	0
1996 GSS	26	32	14	8	18	3	*
1994 GSS	23	33	12	9	23	1	*
1993 GSS	27	30	14	8	21	2	0
1990 GSS	23	29	14	9	25	*	0
1989 GSS	23	30	15	7	25	0	0
1988 GSS	23	31	16	8	22	*	0
1987 GSS	25	31	14	9	20	1	0
1985 GSS	27	31	13	7	21	1	0
1984 GSS	28	29	14	7	20	1	*
1983 GSS	25	30	13	8	21	4	*

IV Issues

29. On another subject, do you think people on welfare who are willing to work but can't find a job should be cut off welfare after 5 years or do you think they should continue to receive benefits?

	Should be cut off	Should continue receiving benefits	No opinion
8/16/98	55	41	4

30. Do you support or oppose: Affirmative action programs that give preference to blacks and other minorities?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
8/16/98	31	65	4

31. Do you favor or oppose legalized casino gambling in your state?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
8/16/98	47	48	5

32. Should sexually explicit material on the Internet be regulated or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/16/98	78	20	2

33. If someone is terminally ill, is in great pain and wants to kill themselves, should it be legal for a doctor to help them commit suicide, or not?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
8/16/98	52	44	4

34. Do you feel that illegal or undocumented immigrants should or should not be eligible to (Read each item)?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
a. Receive emergency health care services	73	26	1
b. Send their children to public schools	50	48	2

35. Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
8/16/98	69	27	4
1996 Gallup	79	18	3
1994 Gallup	80	16	4
1991 Gallup	76	18	6
1989 Gallup	78	16	6
1988 Gallup	79	16	5
1986 Gallup	70	22	8
1985 Gallup	75	17	8
1981 Gallup	66	25	9
1978 Gallup	62	27	11
1976 Gallup	66	26	7
1972 Gallup	57	32	11
1971 Gallup	49	40	11
1969 Gallup	51	40	9
1967 Gallup	54	38	8
1966 Gallup	42	47	11
1965 Gallup	45	43	12
1960 Gallup	53	36	11
1957 Gallup	47	34	18
1956 Gallup	53	34	13
1953 Gallup	64	25	11
1936 Gallup	61	39	NA

36. Do you favor or oppose providing parents with tax money in the form of school vouchers to help pay for their children to attend private or religious schools?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
8/16/98	49	49	3

37. (Of those who favor school vouchers) Would you still favor school vouchers if it meant there would be less money for public schools in your area?

	Yes, still favor	No	No opinion
8/16/98	55	43	2

38. (Of those who oppose school vouchers) Would you still oppose school vouchers if you were told that without vouchers low-income children would have less chance to attend better schools?

	Yes, still oppose	No	No opinion
8/16/98	52	45	4

39. Considering everything, would you or your family be better off or worse off if parents could get tax-funded vouchers, or wouldn't it make a difference.

	Better off	Worse off	Wouldn't make a difference	No opinion
8/16/98	20	4	71	5

40. Do you favor or oppose allowing public schools to start each day with a prayer?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
8/16/98	71	27	2

41. Do you think government should play a role in stopping teenagers from smoking, or do you think this is not an appropriate role for government?

	Should play a role	Not an appropriate role	No opinion
8/16/98	51	48	1

42. Which position comes closer to your own view about government regulation of HMOs and managed-care health plans? (Read items)

The government needs to protect consumers from being treated unfairly and not getting the care they should from HMOs and managed-care plans.	65
Additional government regulation is a bad idea and would raise the cost of health insurance too much for everyone.	28
Neither (vol.)	3
No opinion	4

43. There is a proposal that would allow people to invest some of their Social Security payroll contributions in the stock market. This change means that when people retire, their benefits could either be higher or lower than expected, depending on the stock market's performance. Would you favor or oppose this proposal to allow people to invest some of their Social Security payroll contributions in the stock market?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
8/16/98	58	38	3

44. On another subject, as you may know, Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr has been investigating charges that President Clinton had an affair with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky, lied about it under oath and encouraged her to lie about it under oath. Clinton has denied these charges. Just your best guess, do you think Clinton did or did not have an affair with Lewinsky?

	Did have affair	Did not have affair	No opinion
8/16/98	70	17	13
7/12/98 WP	61	23	17

45. Do you think the question of whether or not Clinton had an affair is a very important issue, a fairly important issue, not too important, or not an important issue at all?

	-----Important-----			-----Not important-----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
8/16/98	37	20	17	62	18	44	1

46. Do you think the question of whether or not Clinton lied under oath or encouraged Lewinsky to lie under oath is a very important issue, a fairly important issue, not too important, or not an important issue at all?

	-----Important-----			-----Not important-----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
8/16/98	74	56	18	24	10	15	1

This *Washington Post*/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University survey is based on random telephone interviews with 1,200 adults conducted between August 10 and August 27, 1998. Surveying was done by Chilton Research. The margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for the total sample but is larger for split samples and certain subgroups.

1. Do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten seriously off on the wrong track?

	Right direction	Wrong Track	No opinion
8/27/98	41	53	6

2. Some people say they are worried about the state of Americans' values and morals these days. What specific problem with the country's values and morals concerns you yourself most?

Government (NET)	19
President Clinton (subNET)	14
Dishonest/lies to public	3
No moral leadership/Poor example	6
Too much thought/attention given to President's private life	2
President (Lewinsky issue)	4
President (unspecified)	1
General government (subNET)	6
Dishonest government/Politicians/ poor political leadership	3
Political infighting/more interest in themselves	1
Separation of church & state issues religious right affecting government	2
Too much government involvement	1
Family (NET)	16
Lack of parental guidance/absentee parents/ too permissive/not role models	7
Divorce/single parent households	3
No family values/morals	6
Inability to discipline children	2
Attitudes (NET)	33
Lack of respect for people/property/authority	5
Only interested in self/money	3
Lack of morals/values/honesty in general/ right and wrong	10

2. (cont.) Some people say they are worried about the state of Americans' values and morals these days. What specific problem with the country's values and morals concerns you yourself most?

Attitudes (cont.)	
Sexual promiscuity/attitudes/teen pregnancy/adultery	8
Lack of religious commitment	5
General dishonesty	1
Poor attitudes/morals of young people/kids	3
People not taking responsibility	2
Media (NET)	6
Violence/sex in media/music	5
Dishonesty/unethical media/press issues	1
Crime/Violence (NET)	12
Guns	1
Drugs/Alcohol	5
Violence (other than juvenile)	7
Juvenile (NET)	8
Kids using/selling drugs	1
Juvenile violence/crimes/guns	6
Gangs	1
Misc. (NET)	20
The economy/inflation	1
Abortion	1
Welfare issues	1
Income/Money issues	1
Education Issues	3
Racism Issues	2
Healthcare Issues	1
Social Security Issues	1
Homosexuality	1
Unemployment	1
Environment	*
Criminal justice system	1
Terrorism	1
Job security/employment	1
Other	6
None	5
Don't Know/No opinion	10

3. On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the honesty and standards of behavior of people in this country today?

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	No opinion
8/27/98	32	63	5
1992 Gallup/CNN/USA Today	20	78	2
1991 Gallup	24	73	3
1987 Roper/US News & World Report	23	71	6
1986 Gallup	33	63	4
1973 Gallup	22	72	6
1966 Gallup	26	66	7
1965 Gallup	27	66	6
1963 Gallup	34	59	8

4. Thinking of the time from the 1920s to the 1990s—is there a decade in which you think American values and morals were particularly good? (IF YES) Which decade?

	-----Yes-----								No	
	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	No opin.	
8/27/98	4	5	13	28	9	7	6	3	18	6

5. Do you think that young people today have as strong a sense of right and wrong as they did, say, fifty years ago?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/27/98	20	78	2
1965 Gallup/Catholic Digest	41	46	13
1952 Ben Gaffin & Associates	57	34	9

6. Which statement comes closer to your own views:
 Americans are united and in agreement about the most important values, or
 Americans are greatly divided when it comes to the most important values?

	United/in agreement	Greatly divided	No opinion
8/27/98	31	66	3

7. Which of the following worries you more about the future:?

That the country will become too tolerant of behaviors that are bad for society, OR
 That the country will become too intolerant of behaviors that don't do any real harm to society.

	Tolerant	Intolerant	No opinion
8/27/98	66	28	6

8. Now here are some values that everyone agrees are important. But sometimes we have to choose one value over another. If you absolutely had to choose between each of the following two values, which is more important to you, personally. How about (one):

9. Would you say that (VALUE CHOSEN) is much more important, somewhat more important, or only a little more important than (VALUE NOT CHOSEN)?

(Responses to 8 and 9 combined)

a. (One) Being tough on criminals or (two) protecting the rights of those accused of crime?

	Being tough on criminals	Protecting rights of accused	Both equally important(vol.)	No opinion	
8/27/98	76	17	5	2	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Being tough		66	25	9	1
8/27/98 Protect rights		40	37	22	1

b. Guaranteeing law and order in society or guaranteeing individual freedom?

	Guaranteeing Law and order	Guaranteeing individual freedom	Both equally important (vol.)	No opinion	
8/27/98	56	34	8	2	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Law and order		50	34	14	1
8/27/98 Individual freedom		42	31	26	2

c. Working for the rights of women or preserving traditional family values?

	Protecting Rights of women	Preserving family values	Both equally important(vol.)	No opinion	
8/27/98	31	60	7	2	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Rights of women		37	46	17	1
8/27/98 Family values		55	29	15	1

8 and 9 (cont.)

d. Defending the community's standards of right and wrong or protecting the rights of individuals to live by their own moral standards?

	Defending standards of right and wrong	Protecting rights of individuals	Both equally important(vol.)	No opin.	
8/27/98	55	39	3	3	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Defending standards		50	37	12	1
8/27/98 Protect rights		38	38	22	2

e. Protecting the environment or increasing jobs and economic growth?

	Protecting environment	Increasing jobs and economic growth	Both equally important(vol.)	No opinion	
8/27/98	52	37	10	2	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Protect environment		55	33	11	*
8/27/98 Inc. Jobs/econ grwth		37	38	23	2

f. Encouraging a belief in God or encouraging a modern scientific outlook?

	Belief in God	Encouraging a modern outlook	Both equally important(vol.)	No opinion	
8/27/98	78	15	5	3	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Belief in God		82	13	5	1
8/27/98 Modern outlook		25	33	40	2

8 and 9 (cont.)

g. Narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor or increasing economic growth?

	Narrowing gap between rich/poor	Increasing econ. growth	Both equally important(vol.)	No opin.	
8/27/98	37	56	4	3	
		Much more	Somewhat more	Only a little more	No opinion
8/27/98 Narrowing gap	47	41	11	1	
8/27/98 Inc. econ. growth	40	45	15	1	

10. (Each item asked of half sample) Which political party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you trust to do a better job on (READ EACH ITEM)?

a. Making sure that individual rights are protected

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	42	31	4	15	8

b. Making sure that all people receive equal treatment under the law

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	47	25	6	14	8

c. Showing compassion toward the disadvantaged

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	52	21	3	15	9

d. Protecting freedom of speech

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	41	31	6	15	8

e. Reflecting your religious beliefs

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	32	35	4	17	10

f. Encouraging high moral standards and values

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	26	41	4	20	8

g. Promoting self-reliance

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	33	40	2	14	11

10 (cont.)

h. Making sure government is not too large or too small

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	33	36	4	17	10

i. Reducing poverty in this country

	Democrats	Republicans	Both(vol.)	Neither(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	48	25	2	15	9

11. Would you say you favor a smaller government with fewer services, or larger government with many services? (GET ANSWER THEN ASK: Do you strongly or somewhat favor a larger/smaller government?)

	Smaller	Larger	No opin.
8/27/98	59	33	8
1996 ABCWP	63	32	5
1993 ABCWP	67	30	2
1992 ABCWP	55	38	7
1988 ABCWP	49	45	6
1984 ABCWP	49	43	7

	----Smaller government----			---- Larger government---			No opin.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
8/27/98	59	33	26	33	20	13	8

Related question: In general, government grows larger as it provides more services. If you had to choose, would you rather have smaller government providing less services or a bigger government providing more services?

	Smaller	Bigger	Depends(vol)	No opin.
1996 CBSNYT	61	30	4	5
1991 CBSNYT	42	43	7	8
1989 CBSNYT	41	48	4	7
1988 CBSNYT	43	44	5	8
1980 CBSNYT	54	32	NA	14
1978 CBSNYT	53	36	NA	11
1976 CBSNYT	40	44	NA	16

12. How much of the time do you trust the government in Washington to do the right thing? Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

	Just about always	Most	Only some	None(vol.)	No opin.
8/27/98	6	28	59	7	1
1/18/98 ABCWP	4	27	66	3	*
1996 NES	3	30	66	1	0
1994 NES	2	19	74	3	1
1992 NES	3	26	68	2	1
1990 NES	3	25	69	2	1
1988 NES	4	36	56	2	1
1986 NES	3	35	57	2	2
1984 NES	4	40	53	1	2
1982 NES	2	31	62	3	3
1980 NES	2	23	69	4	2
1978 NES	2	27	64	4	3
1976 NES	3	30	62	1	3
1974 NES	2	34	61	1	2
1972 NES	5	48	44	1	2
1970 NES	6	47	44	0	2
1968 NES	7	54	36	0	2
1966 NES	17	48	28	2	4
1964 NES	14	62	22	0	1
1958 NES	16	57	23	0	4

13. I'm going to read a couple of statements, and ask whether, in general, you agree or disagree. How about (READ ITEM)

a. The government has gone too far in regulating business and interfering with the free enterprise system.

	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
8/27/98	59	35	6
1981 CBS/New York Times	65	26	9
1980 CBS/New York Times	65	27	8
1978 CBS/New York Times	58	31	11
1964 Gallup/Potomac	43	40	18

b. The federal government has a responsibility to try to do away with poverty in this country.

	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
8/27/98	70	28	2
1964 Gallup/Potomac	73	20	7

14. Would you like the government to do more, do less, or do about the same as they have been on helping minority groups?

	More	Less	About the same	No opinion
8/27/98	37	22	37	3
1982 Trendex/GE	43	17	38	2
1968 Trendex/GE	50	16	30	4

15. In your opinion, which of the following do you think will be the biggest threat to the country in the future--big business, big labor, or big government?

	Big business	Big labor	Big government	No opinion
8/27/98	25	11	59	6
1995 Gallup	25	9	64	3
1985 Gallup	22	19	50	9
1983 Gallup	19	18	51	12
1981 Gallup	22	22	46	10
1979 Gallup	28	17	43	12
1978 Gallup	19	19	47	15
1977 Gallup	23	26	38	13
1969 Gallup	19	28	33	20
1968 Gallup	12	26	46	16
1966 Gallup	14	21	48	16
1965 Gallup	17	29	35	18

16. On another subject, please tell me whether you definitely agree, probably agree, probably disagree, or definitely disagree with the following statement.
The best mark of a person's religiousness is the degree of his or her concern for others.

	-----Agree-----			-----Disagree-----			No opin.
	NET	Definitely	Probably	NET	Probably	Definitely	
8/27/98	81	49	32	17	8	9	2
1967 NORC	87	48	39	13	9	4	0

17. Some people think it is all right for the public schools to start each day with a prayer. Others feel that religion does not belong in the public schools but should be taken care of by the family and the church. Have you been interested enough in this to favor one side or the other? (IF INTERESTED) Which do you think: Should schools be allowed to start each day with a prayer, or religion does not belong in the schools?

	-----Yes-----				Not	No
	NET	Allow	Doesn't belong	Depends(vol.)	interested	opin.
8/27/98	81	56	20	4	18	1
1984 NES	83	54	22	7	18	0
1980 NES	85	60	21	4	14	1
1968 NES	86	73	13	*	13	*
1966 NES	88	75	13	*	12	*
1964 NES	90	75	15	*	10	*

Note: *1964-1968 Yes/it depends (vol) and don't know/no response not differentiated.

18. As you may know, some states are offering people a new kind of marriage contract called a covenant marriage. This requires that people getting married go through premarital counseling, and also makes it more difficult for them to get divorced even if they later decide they want to. Would you favor or oppose having covenant marriages in your state?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
8/27/98	50	45	5

19. Would you yourself ever consider or ever have considered a covenant marriage if it was available?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/27/98	42	54	5

20. Do you approve or disapprove of medical techniques which allow women to have children beyond their normal childbearing age?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
8/27/98	40	51	9

21. Thinking about your own values and morals, would you say that homosexuality is: always acceptable, acceptable for some people but not for others, unacceptable but should be tolerated by society, or unacceptable and should not be tolerated?

	-----Acceptable-----			-----Unacceptable-----			No opin.
	NET	Always	For some	NET	Tolerated	Not tolerated	
8/27/98	39	15	24	57	29	28	4

22. (Of those who said unacceptable) What is the main reason you personally think homosexuality is unacceptable?

Bible forbids it/homosexuality is a sin/ Church condemns it/all other religious objections	52
Not natural/Against laws of nature (without mentioning Bible/God/religion)	22
Can not reproduce	1
Find homosexuality disgusting/obscene	5
Object to lifestyle	8
AIDS, any mentions	1
Homosexuals mentally unstable/homosexuality an illness	*
Other (specify)	6
No opinion	5

23. In your opinion, what is the main cause of homosexuality? Are people born homosexual, do people become homosexual because of their experiences while growing up, or do people choose to be homosexual on their own?

	Born	Experiences	Choose on their own	No opin.
8/27/98	32	20	33	16

24. Do you think homosexuality is a physical or mental illness, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/27/98	32	59	9

25. Do you think a person's homosexual orientation can be changed in most cases, in some cases, in just a few cases, or never?

	Most	Some	In just a few	Never	No opinion
8/27/98	18	27	24	22	9

26. Do you think gays and lesbians should or should not attend programs to try to change their sexuality?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
8/27/98	43	39	18

27. Which view comes closer to your own (READ LIST):

Government should promote policies and programs discouraging homosexuality,
 Government should promote policies and programs that treat homosexuality as an
 acceptable
 lifestyle, OR
 Government should not get involved in this issue

	Discourage homosexuality	Acceptable homosexuality	Not get involved	No opinion
8/27/98	14	11	74	2

28. Does it bother you to be around people who are gay or lesbian? [IF YES] Is that a lot or a little?

	-----Yes-----				
	NET	A lot	A little	No	No opinion
8/27/98	22	10	12	74	4

29. Do you think homosexual relations between consenting adults should be legal or illegal?

	Legal	Illegal	No opinion
8/27/98	55	34	11
1996 Gallup	41	47	9
1992 Gallup	49	44	8
1991 Gallup	36	54	10
1989 Gallup	47	36	17
1988 Gallup	35	56	9
1987 Gallup	33	55	11
1986 Gallup	32	57	11
1985 Gallup	44	47	9
1982 Gallup	45	39	16
1977 Gallup	43	43	14

Note: Gallup wording: "Should be legal or should not be legal."

30. (Of those who think relations should be legal) Should homosexual relations be legal even though they go against the teachings of many major religions and may weaken traditional family values?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
8/27/98	82	18	0

31. (Of those who think relations should be illegal)Should homosexual relations be illegal even if this means that consenting adults who engage in these activities in their own homes could be prosecuted for a crime?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
8/27/98	33	56	10

32. In general, do you think homosexuals should or should not have equal rights in terms of job opportunities?

	Should	Should not	Depends(vol)	No opinion
8/27/98	87	9	NA	3
1996 Gallup	84	12	2	2
1993 Gallup/CNN/USA Today	81	13	3	3
1992 Gallup	74	18	5	3
1989 Gallup	71	18	NA	11
1982 Gallup	59	28	NA	13
1977 Gallup	56	33	NA	11

33. Do you yourself have a friend, family member, or acquaintance who is gay or lesbian, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/27/98	59	40	1

34. On another subject, which of these federal tax systems do you prefer: (READ ITEMS):

The current graduated income tax, where people with higher incomes pay a higher tax rate, or instead

A flat income tax, where everyone would pay the same rate no matter what their income

OR A national sales tax based on purchases of goods and services rather than on income?

	Current graduated tax	Flat tax	National sales tax	None (vol.)	No opinion
8/27/98	38	28	29	1	4

35. Which of these statements comes closer to your own opinion? (READ ITEMS):

We should put limits on the amount of money people can give to political candidates, so that everyone would have a more equal chance to compete for office, People should be free to contribute as much money as they want to any political candidate they choose.

	Put limits	Should be free	Neither(vol.)	No opinion
8/27/98	67	30	1	2

36. Which of the following descriptions comes closer to your view of what Social Security should look like in the future?(READ ITEMS)

A program in which people receive payments based on how much they paid into the program and how much that money has earned.

A program to assure that elderly people have a minimum income during retirement regardless of what they paid into the program.

	Based on pay	Assure minimum	Neither(vol.)	No opinion
8/27/98	51	44	2	3

37. Which of the following comes closer to your view (READ ITEMS)?

Individuals should be allowed to invest and manage some of their Social Security payroll taxes themselves because it is better to have more individual freedom in choosing retirement investments

The government should continue to be in charge of Social Security to make sure that everyone will have some retirement savings available to them when they retire.

	Allowed to invest	Government in charge	No opinion
8/27/98	43	53	4

**The Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University Survey Project
1995-1998**

The *Washington Post*/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University Survey Project is a three-way partnership and an experiment in combining survey research and reporting to better inform the public. The *Post*, Kaiser, and Harvard jointly design and analyze surveys examining public knowledge, perceptions, and misperceptions on major issues. The *Post* then reports the results as well as facts to dispel myths and misperceptions. Our hope is that this project contributes to a better understanding of public knowledge on major issues facing the country as well as more effective efforts by the media to educate, inform, and engage citizens in national debates.

The first report released by the Kaiser Family Foundation, *The Four Americas: Government and Social Policy Through the Eye's of America's Multi-racial and Multi-ethnic Society*, expands on The *Washington Post's* coverage of the first survey which focused on the perspectives of different racial and ethnic groups with regard to social policy and the role of government in America. The findings show the different perceptions that America's racial and ethnic groups have of the social and economic standing of the other groups. It also shows how white Americans' misperceptions regarding the social and economic realities facing African Americans relate directly to their views and opinions on public policies and aid to minorities.

The second survey, released by The *Washington Post* on Sunday, January 28, 1996, examines public understanding, perceptions and attitudes about the role of government. It sheds light on why Americans are so distrustful and cynical about the federal government and its ability to act effectively. In addition, a closer look at trust of other institutions as well as fellow Americans is undertaken.

The third survey, released by The *Washington Post* on Sunday, October 13, 1996, examines public understanding, assessments and attitudes about the economy and economic policy. In conjunction with the survey of Americans, a companion survey of 250 economists was also completed. The companion survey shows the differences in perceptions and attitudes of economists compared to the general public.

The fourth survey undertaking, presented by The *Washington Post* in a five part series, beginning Sunday, March 22, 1998, examines Americans' opinions, perceptions and attitudes regarding gender and interactions between the sexes. A series of five related surveys paint an up-to-date picture of gender issues in work place and on the home front, including sexual harassment, the division of household tasks, parenting roles, and the joys and challenges of marriage today.

This fifth set of surveys examines social and moral values and their role in Americans' outlook on politics and policy. Findings from these surveys appeared in the *Washington Post* in a series of articles between September 11 and December 27, 1998. The goal of the surveys—and their presentation in a series of reflections on values in the public domain—is to shed light on the influence of values on discourse about social and health policy, party politics, and broader questions about the future of our nation.

Additional copies of the national topline and *Post* article reprints from the values surveys, as well as the other surveys in the series, can be obtained by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation publications request line at 1-800-656-4KFF (values:#1441; race: #1105; government: #1110; economy: #1199; gender: #1383).