

FOR RELEASE: MONDAY, JUNE 15, 1998, 12:00 P.M.

Compared to 1994
VOTERS NOT SO ANGRY, NOT SO INTERESTED

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Kimberly Parker, Research Director
Molly Sonner, Gregory Flemming, Survey Directors
Beth Donovan, Editor
Pew Research Center for The People & The Press
202/293-3126
<http://www.people-press.org>

Compared to 1994

VOTERS NOT SO ANGRY, NOT SO INTERESTED

Americans are more mellow and less engaged by politics than they were four years ago, and that may mean low voter turnout in the fall. The number of people who follow what's going on in government and politics is down sharply from 1994, as is the number who want to see change in Washington this year. Opinion is similar to what it was in 1990, a year that saw very low voter turnout and very high incumbent reelection rates.

These trends bode well for continued Republican control of the House. The new Pew Research Center survey confirms traditional strong support for Republican candidates among those most inclined to vote, while Democrats continue to be favored by those who report a lower likelihood of voting on November 3.

Republican chances are also helped by voter intentions swinging in their direction. In the current poll of 1,012 adults conducted by telephone June 4-8, 1998, registered voters are split evenly (46%-44%) between those who plan to vote Democratic vs. Republican in the congressional elections this fall. The GOP had trailed by a statistically significant margin in each of three previous Pew surveys, lagging by a margin of 52% to 40% as recently as March.

At that time, support for Democratic congressional candidates was boosted by President Clinton's extremely high ratings. While he still achieves a healthy 59% approval score in the current survey, this is lower than his 65% rating in March and 71% in early February. The poll gives no indication as to why Clinton's ratings are softening, other than a natural fading of the backlash-based support he gained earlier in the year. The latest White House controversy may not be the culprit: Only 16% of Americans are following news concerning allegations that U.S. policy on China was influenced by campaign contributions very closely.

The Mood of America

	May 1990	July 1994	June 1998
Less Interest	%	%	%
Follow what's going on in government/public affairs...			
Most of the time	39	46	36
Some of the time	34	33	34
Now and then/Hardly at all	27	21	30
Don't know	*	*	*
	100	100	100
Less Anger			
Time for Washington politicians to step aside ...			
Completely agree	21	34	20
Mostly Agree	40	45	46
Disagree	30	18	31
Don't know	9	3	3
	100	100	100
Fewer Votes†	1990	1994	1998
Average primary turnout in the states ...*	%	%	%
	22	22	18

* Averages are based on reported turnout as a percentage of voting age population in nine states that have both a gubernatorial and a U.S. Senate race this year, and which held primaries before June 8th.

† Primary election turnout figures courtesy of the *Committee for the Study of the American Electorate*.

In fact, the President and his party get strong public support for their positions on issues. The percentage thinking any budget surplus should be used to fix Social Security and Medicare has spiked since January. Moreover, Americans overwhelmingly rank the fight for government regulation of health maintenance organizations as an important issue both to the country and to them personally. On the tobacco debate, the public supports the federal and state governments in their dispute with the industry by a 62%-29% margin.

Political Interest Down from '94

A sharp decline in the number of Americans tuned in to government and public affairs offers new evidence that the November election may not spark much interest. Indeed, just 9% of Americans are following news about candidates and elections in their states very closely. Interest in the elections is lackluster even in states where primary elections were held the very week of the poll — only 10% of respondents in states with a June 2 primary were following news about candidates and elections very closely.

Just 36% of all Americans say they follow politics and government most of the time — a significant drop from 46% in July 1994. And this may be telling: interest in public affairs was particularly high in the summer before the 1994 elections, and turnout that year was higher than the two previous midterm elections. Today, interest in politics is lower than in 1990 (39%), which had the lowest voter turnout in the post-World War II era.

<i>Percent following government and public affairs "most of the time"</i>	May 1990	July 1994	June 1998
Total	39	46	36
Republicans	46	54	44
Democrats	40	44	37
Independents	33	43	29

The falloff in attention to government and public affairs has been broad based, with the percentage of Americans following politics most of the time dropping among every major demographic group. The decline is also bipartisan, although Republicans remain slightly more attentive than Democrats. Today, 44% of Republicans say they follow what's happening in government most of the time, down from 54% in 1994. The share of Democrats following politics has fallen from 44% to 37%.

At the same time, more direct measures of voter interest in the election are comparable to past years. Five months before the election, there is no decline from previous years in the number of registered voters who say they plan to vote in November.

Cynicism, Not Good Times, Drives Non-Voting

Americans who say they don't plan to vote this year point to cynicism about elections as a reason for not always voting more than they point to a lack of concern about national problems. Among those who do not plan to vote, 51% cite "voting doesn't really change things" as an important reason why they do not always vote. Some 40% of those who are not planning to vote say a lack of interest in politics is an important reason, while 37% cite the absence of major national problems.

These sentiments are echoed by California residents who did not vote in the state primary this month.¹ Fully 41% of those who said they did not vote cite their sense that voting doesn't change things; another 41% say a lack of interest in politics is a reason why they don't always vote. In contrast, just 30% say they sometimes don't vote because "there are fewer major national problems these days."

	<u>Important</u> %	Not <u>Important</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
<i>Reasons for not always voting...</i>			
Voting doesn't change things	41	57	2=100
Not interested in politics	41	57	2=100
Fewer national problems today	30	62	8=100

The Horse Race

The race for control of Congress has tightened considerably over the last two months. In March, a Pew survey had the Democrats leading the Republicans in the generic House ballot measure by a 52%-40% margin. The two parties are now in a statistical dead heat. And when the sample is limited to the most probable voters, House Republicans enjoy a small 48%-44% lead.²

<i>Congressional Voting Preference:</i>	<u>Nonvoters</u> %	--- How likely to vote? * ---		
		<u>Low</u> %	<u>Moderate</u> %	<u>High</u> %
Republican	38	38	44	48
Democrat	45	48	47	44
Neither/DK	<u>17</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Percent of public:</i>	30%	22%	17%	31%

* Classification based on responses to five voter interest questions.

¹ These results are based on 100 self-identified nonvoters who were part of an oversample of California residents in this survey. All other figures in this report are based on the national sample of 1,012.

² The vote preferences among "most probable voters" are based on an assumption of a 35% turnout rate, which would be between the turnout levels seen in the 1990 and 1994 midterm elections.

Democrats have lost considerable support in recent months among white women and people over age 50. White women now favor Republicans over Democrats by a narrow 46%-42% margin. In March, they were more inclined to vote Democratic — 52% vs. 40% Republican. The Democrats’ most loyal supporters remain non-whites and those with lower levels of income and education.

In addition to the generic ballot figures, the GOP can take comfort in waning anti-incumbent sentiment. Today, only 20% of Americans completely agree that it is time for Washington politicians to step aside and make room for new leaders. More than one-third (34%) felt this way in the summer of 1994, just prior to the Republicans' historic takeover of the House and Senate. The current figures mirror those found in the spring of 1990 — months before a status quo election that saw 96% of incumbents reelected to the House of Representatives.

At this point, large national issues are not a driving force behind voter preferences. Overall, a plurality of Americans (37%) say state and local issues will make the biggest difference in how they vote for Congress. Three-in-ten (32%) say a candidate’s character and experience will make the difference; 22% say national issues.

Clinton and Congress

The relationship between presidential approval and congressional voting intentions remains robust. Fully 66% of those who approve of the job Clinton is doing say they will vote Democratic in their House district; 78% of those who disapprove of Clinton say they will vote Republican. While congressional preferences have shifted somewhat since March, this relationship remains stable — suggesting that if Clinton's approval ratings move significantly up or down, congressional preferences may follow accordingly.

In spite of this strong relationship, most voters (57%) say Bill Clinton will not be a factor in how they vote for Congress. Only one-in-five say their vote for Congress will be a vote *for* Clinton, nearly as many (18%) say theirs will be a vote *against* the President.

Presidential Approval And Congressional Preference		
<i>Cong'l Pref.</i>	<i>Clinton Approval</i>	
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
	%	%
March 1998		
Republican	24	79
Democrat	70	15
DK	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100
June 1998		
Republican	24	78
Democrat	66	13
DK	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100

Voters are more inclined to say party control of Congress will be a factor in how they vote this fall. Fully 45% say this will be a factor in their vote; 51% say it will not. Republicans and Democrats are equally likely to cite partisanship as a factor in their congressional vote (53%); Independents are much less likely to care about this (28%).

The top issues on Americans' minds this election season are education, taxes, Social Security, and crime. When asked what one issue they would most like to hear the candidates in their state or district talk about, one-in-five respondents named education, 12% named taxes, 8% Social Security, and 8% crime. Republicans and Democrats place equal emphasis on education (21% and 22%). However, Republicans are much more interested than Democrats in hearing about taxes (19% vs. 8%). Not surprisingly, voters place much less emphasis on the economy than was the case leading up to the last two presidential elections.

HMOs: A Hot Button Issue

Potential regulation of health maintenance organizations (HMOs) is one issue that a clear majority of the public sees as very important to both the country and themselves personally. When asked to rank a series of issues, 69% say the debate over HMO regulation is very important to the nation, 60% say it is very important personally.

Partisan control of Congress and campaign finance reform place a distant second and third on the American agenda. Half (51%) list the outcome of the 1998 congressional elections and partisan control of Congress as very important for the country; 47% say campaign finance is very important.

The high-profile government investigations in Washington sit at the bottom of the list of public concerns. The Justice Department's investigation into Microsoft and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's probe into the relationship between Monica Lewinsky and President Clinton are considered very important by just one-in-five Americans (21% and 18%, respectively).

	<i>Very Important To</i>	
	<u>Country</u>	<u>Me</u>
	%	%
HMO Regulation	68	60
'98 Cong'l Election Outcome	51	41
Campaign Finance Reform	47	33
Corporate Mergers	42	27
Tobacco Regulation	40	48
Investigation into Microsoft	21	18
Starr Investigation	18	17

Americans under age 30 — who pay less attention to news in general — rank all of the issues as less important to them personally than do Americans ages 50 and older. Generational differences are as large as 15 to 21 percentage points for partisan control of Congress, tobacco regulation, industry mergers, and the debate over HMOs.

Microsoft, Yes; Tobacco, No

In the current struggle between private industry and government regulation, Americans side with business on technology and with government on smoking. And they rate tobacco as much more important.

An overwhelming majority (95%) of the public is aware of the dispute between the government and the tobacco industry regarding the advertising and sale of tobacco products. Of those who have heard about this issue, 62% side with government; only 29% favor industry. Women and the better educated are some of the strongest supporters of the government’s case. Those who consider the effort to regulate tobacco very important support government over industry by a 71%-23% margin.

Taking Sides: Government vs. Industry*			
<i>Who do you side with more in this dispute?</i>			
	<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>
Tobacco	29	Microsoft	47
Government	62	Government	28
Neither (VOL)	6	Neither (VOL)	8
Don’t know	<u>3</u>	Don’t know	<u>3</u>
	100		100

* Based on those who have heard of the dispute.

The tobacco companies maintain strong support only among Americans who smoke. Regular and occasional smokers favor industry over government by a margin of 51% to 40%. Even a majority (56%) of Republicans — traditional opponents of government regulation — side with the government over the tobacco companies.

Almost three-quarters of the public has heard about the dispute between Microsoft and federal and state governments over alleged unfair business practices. Of those, 47% side with Microsoft, compared to only 28% who side with government. The computer giant wins especially strong support from Republicans (56%).

Reforming Social Security

Americans favor both public and private measures for addressing the financial problems in the Social Security system. Support for using a potential budget surplus to stabilize the Social Security and Medicare programs increased from 32% in January to 44% in June. At the beginning of the year, Americans were divided between using a surplus for increased spending on domestic programs and making Social Security and Medicare financially sound. Now, support for spending on these entitlement programs surpasses that for domestic spending by a margin of 44% to 28%. Just 17% opt for national debt reduction; 9% would cut taxes.

In addition, among the 60% of the public that is aware of a specific proposal to reform the Social Security program, there is widespread support for allowing Americans to put a portion of their Social Security taxes into a personal savings account, by a margin of 69% to 20%. College graduates, the affluent and Republicans are the most supportive of this idea (78%, 76% and 73%, respectively); senior citizens are the least enthusiastic (57%).

The Campaign

Record political advertising budgets notwithstanding, Americans still say they learn more about candidates from news reports than from commercials. By a margin of 74% to 18%, television news reports are thought to provide a better idea of where a candidate stands on the issues. And by a margin of 62% to 29%, Americans prefer news reports when it comes to learning about what a candidate is like personally. These percentages are largely unchanged from May 1990.

In California, where enormous sums of money were spent on political advertisements in the recent gubernatorial and Senate primaries, people agree that news reports give them a better sense of candidates than do paid advertisements. Fully 80% say news reports give them a better idea of where candidates stand on issues; 64% say the news gives them a better idea of what a candidate is like personally. Whether through news reports or TV commercials, most Americans (64%) like to have a picture of a candidate in their minds when they go to vote.

Opinions about political advertisements aside, voters acknowledge that ads are effective. Fully 63% say they often don't become aware of political candidates until they see their advertising on television. Americans are more evenly divided over whether they get a sense of what a candidate

Learning About the Candidates: News Reports vs. Paid Ads		
	<u>Natl.</u> %	<u>Calif.</u> %
<i>Learn more about candidates...</i>		
Stands on issues		
News reports	74	80
TV commercials	18	16
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100
Personally		
News reports	62	64
TV commercials	29	32
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100

is like personally through his or her TV commercials: 47% agree, 51% disagree. This represents a significant decrease from May 1990 when a strong majority (58%) agreed that commercials gave them a sense of what a candidate is like.

Women appreciate candidate advertisements slightly more than men — 51% agree that commercials give them a sense of what a candidate is like, compared to 43% of men. In addition, those least likely to vote in the fall elections are the most reliant on candidate ads: 32% completely agree that they often are not aware of a political candidate until they see his or her advertisements on television, compared to 16% of the most likely voters.

Americans say debates are more useful in evaluating candidates than are news reports or radio talk shows. Four-in-ten say debates are very useful for finding out about candidates running for office in their state or district; 33% find news reports very useful; 26% say the same of talk radio.

Again there are differences here between likely and unlikely voters. Those most inclined to vote favor debates over news reports by a significant margin: 42% find debates very useful vs. 28% who say news reports are very useful. Those who are the least likely to vote prefer news reports to debates: 40% find news reports very useful; 34% say the same of debates.

Thus far, the public is relatively satisfied with news coverage of this year's elections. More than half (53%) say news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage to the 1998 congressional elections. Only 15% say there has been too much coverage; 24% say there has been too little. Evaluations of the coverage of state and local elections are similar: 49% say news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage to these contests; 17% say too much; 28% say too little.

News Interest Index

News about nuclear testing in India and Pakistan drew more interest from Americans than any other international story not involving U.S. troops in the last decade. More than one-third of Americans (36%) followed the story very closely this month, another third (34%) followed the news fairly closely. For perspective, the audience following the civil war in Bosnia very closely never topped 23%, and even when American troops were deployed as peacekeepers, interest peaked at 37% in January 1996.

Attention to bomb testing halfway around the globe reflects the public's concern about the spread of nuclear weapons. Fully 70% of Americans said stopping nuclear proliferation should be a top foreign policy issue, ranking the matter second only to protecting U.S. jobs in a fall 1997 Pew Research Center survey.³

The story that drew the most interest this month did strike closer to home: the shooting at a high school in Springfield, Oregon. Nearly half of the country (46%) followed news of the tragedy very closely, essentially the same number that followed news about the April shooting at a middle school in Jonesboro, Arkansas (49%).

Interest in the allegations of sexual misconduct against President Clinton remains fairly steady: 28% of the public reports following the story very closely this month; 30% did so in March; 34% in early February. The public showed less interest in allegations that U.S. policy toward China was influenced by campaign contributions. Only 16% of the public followed the China story very closely, similar to the interest in past stories involving charges of campaign finance irregularities.

News of Frank Sinatra's death drew the very close attention of 17% of the public; news about Viagra, a new drug to help overcome impotence, got similar attention from 15% of Americans. The Chrysler-Daimler merger drew the very close interest of 12% of the public.

Comparing the news interests of men and women, the Oregon school shooting sparked the most attention among women (53% followed very closely vs. 39% of men). Nuclear testing was the top story among men (43% vs. 30% of women). Men were more interested than women in allegations of sexual misconduct against Clinton (33% of men followed the story very closely vs. 24% of women), but they were no more interested in news about Viagra (15% of men and 14% of women followed the story very closely).

Republicans paid considerably more attention than did Democrats to allegations about the influence of campaign money on U.S. policy on China (25% followed the story very closely vs. 12% of Democrats), but they showed only slightly more interest than did Democrats in allegations of sexual misconduct by Clinton (34% vs. 30%). Republicans and Democrats are following news about candidates and elections in equal numbers (12% vs. 11%).

³ Pew Research Center, "America's Place in the World, Part II," October 1997.

**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH
NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"**

	Shooting At School In Springfield, OR	Nuclear Bomb Testing	Allegations Of Clinton's Misconduct	Death Of Frank Sinatra	(N)
<i>Total</i>	46	36	28	17	(1012)
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	39	43	33	15	(452)
Female	53	30	24	19	(560)
<i>Race</i>					
White	46	37	28	17	(825)
*Hispanic	58	32	29	32	(58 †)
Black	54	29	36	18	(121)
<i>Age</i>					
Under 30	49	29	24	16	(212)
30-49	42	36	24	12	(413)
50+	50	40	36	24	(370)
<i>Education</i>					
College Grad.	44	43	29	14	(304)
Some College	44	34	28	17	(263)
High School Grad	46	33	25	18	(351)
< H. S. Grad.	53	35	35	18	(90)
<i>Region</i>					
East	49	42	27	24	(193)
Midwest	45	37	29	11	(251)
South	48	34	31	17	(370)
West	43	33	23	18	(198)
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	47	35	34	16	(291)
Democrat	50	33	30	22	(342)
Independent	43	42	24	15	(317)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

† Note small sample size.

* The designation, Hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

CONTINUED...

**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH
NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"**

	Campaign Contributions & China Policy	The New Drug, Viagra	Chrysler & Daimler Merger	Political Turmoil In Indonesia	State & District Elections	(N)
<i>Total</i>	16	15	12	12	9	(1012)
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	20	15	17	12	11	(452)
Female	14	14	7	11	8	(560)
<i>Race</i>						
White	17	14	11	13	9	(825)
*Hispanic	2	2	19	10	9	(58 †)
Black	11	20	12	8	10	(121)
<i>Age</i>						
Under 30	4	9	9	6	3	(212)
30-49	16	13	11	10	8	(413)
50+	24	20	14	16	13	(370)
<i>Education</i>						
College Grad.	18	13	16	10	13	(304)
Some College	22	14	14	13	9	(263)
High School Grad	16	20	6	11	6	(351)
< H. S. Grad.	10	6	12	11	10	(90)
<i>Region</i>						
East	19	17	14	19	6	(193)
Midwest	16	16	12	12	8	(251)
South	16	16	11	7	10	(370)
West	15	9	12	11	12	(198)
<i>Party ID</i>						
Republican	25	9	15	11	12	(291)
Democrat	12	19	12	11	11	(342)
Independent	16	11	8	13	5	(317)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

† Note small sample size.

*The designation, Hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

TABLES

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

March 1998 vs. June 1998

	--- March 1998 ---			--- June 1998 ---			Change in Approval
	Approve %	Disapprove %	DK %	Approve %	Disapprove %	DK %	
Total	65	26	9=100	59	32	9=100	-6
Sex							
Male	65	28	7	58	34	8	-7
Female	65	25	10	60	29	11	-5
Race							
White	62	29	9	57	35	8	-6
Non-white	83	9	8	74	11	15	-9
Black	87	7	6	72	12	16	-15
Race and Sex							
White Men	62	31	7	54	38	8	-8
White Women	62	28	10	58	33	9	-4
Age							
Under 30	62	27	11	57	29	14	-5
30-49	66	26	8	58	34	8	-8
50-64	69	27	4	58	35	7	-11
65+	67	23	10	65	26	9	-2
Education							
College Grad.	67	29	4	56	35	9	-11
Some College	62	27	11	59	34	7	-3
High School Grad.	67	25	8	61	30	9	-6
<H.S. Grad	65	22	13	57	28	15	-8
Family Income							
\$75,000+	61	36	3	48	46	6	-13
\$50,000-\$74,999	69	23	8	62	34	4	-7
\$30,000-\$49,999	63	30	7	57	36	7	-6
\$20,000-\$29,999	63	24	13	65	26	9	+2
<\$20,000	70	20	10	59	26	15	-11

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

CONTINUED ...

	--- March 1998 ---			--- June 1998 ---			Change in <u>Approval</u>
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	65	26	9=100	59	32	9=100	-6
Region							
East	76	17	7	70	23	7	-6
Midwest	65	26	9	55	35	10	-10
South	62	28	10	53	37	10	-9
West	60	32	8	63	27	10	+3
Community Size							
Large City	69	20	11	66	24	10	-3
Suburb	67	28	5	62	30	8	-5
Small City/Town	65	26	9	54	36	10	-11
Rural Area	62	29	9	56	34	10	-6
Party ID							
Republican	36	55	10	34	60	6	-2
Democrat	90	6	4	83	10	7	-7
Independent	65	26	9	57	32	11	-8
1996 Presidential Vote							
Clinton	91	5	4	86	8	6	-5
Dole	27	66	7	23	72	5	-4
1996 Congressional Vote							
Republican	35	57	8	36	57	7	+1
Democrat	89	6	5	84	11	5	-5

CONGRESSIONAL TRIAL HEAT *

March 1998 vs. June 1998

Based on Registered Voters

	--- March 1998 ---			--- June 1998 ---			Change in Dem Support
	Republican	Democrat	Undecided	Republican	Democrat	Undecided	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	40	52	8=100	44	46	10=100	-6
Sex							
Male	45	47	8	46	45	9	-2
Female	37	56	7	42	47	11	-9
Race							
White	44	48	8	48	41	11	-7
Non-white	15	79	6	19	73	8	-6
Black	12	83	5	13	78	9	-5
Race and Sex							
White Men	49	43	8	50	40	10	-3
White Women	40	52	8	46	42	12	-10
Age							
Under 30	40	47	13	41	45	14	-2
30-49	42	53	5	44	47	9	-6
50-64	41	52	7	46	43	11	-9
65+	38	55	7	44	46	10	-9
Education							
College Grad.	49	43	8	53	37	10	-6
Some College	45	44	11	50	41	9	-3
High School Grad	36	57	7	40	48	12	-9
<H.S. Grad	27	71	2	29	63	8	-8
Family Income							
\$75,000+	55	40	5	55	37	8	-3
\$50,000-\$74,999	46	49	5	55	36	9	-13
\$30,000-\$49,999	48	45	7	50	39	11	-6
\$20,000-\$29,999	27	63	10	35	57	8	-6
<\$20,000	25	66	9	34	57	9	-9

Question: If the elections for U.S. Congress were being held TODAY, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in your district?
As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

* Includes Leaners

CONTINUED...

	--- March 1998 ---			--- June 1998 ---			Change in Dem Support
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<i>Total</i>	40	52	8=100	44	46	10	-6
<i>Region</i>							
East	38	53	9	41	49	10	-4
Midwest	39	55	6	47	42	11	-13
South	43	50	7	45	46	9	-4
West	39	51	10	40	47	13	-4
<i>Community Size</i>							
Large City	35	57	8	32	57	11	0
Suburb	48	46	6	49	41	10	-5
Small City/Town	42	51	7	43	46	11	-5
Rural Area	38	53	9	52	40	8	-13
<i>Party ID</i>							
Republican	89	7	4	95	3	2	-4
Democrat	4	94	2	4	93	3	-1
Independent	43	43	14	40	37	23	-6
<i>1996 Presidential Vote</i>							
Clinton	13	82	5	17	75	8	-7
Dole	93	5	2	89	5	6	0
<i>1996 Congressional Vote</i>							
Republican	86	12	2	84	10	6	-2
Democrat	4	92	4	8	86	6	-6

ATTENTION TO GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

July 1994 vs. June 1998

	--- Follow "Most of the Time" ---		
	<u>July 1994</u>	<u>June 1998</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Total	46	36	-10
Sex			
Male	53	40	-13
Female	40	32	-8
Race			
White	47	37	-10
Non-white	38	28	-10
Black	40	31	-9
Age			
Under 30	30	20	-10
30-49	45	34	-11
50-64	57	47	-10
65+	58	49	-9
Education			
College Grad.	62	50	-12
Some College	47	39	-8
High School Grad	42	31	-11
<H.S. Grad	35	24	-11
Family Income			
\$75,000+	60	57	-3
\$50,000-\$74,999	57	39	-18
\$30,000-\$49,999	47	39	-8
\$20,000-\$29,999	43	28	-15
<\$20,000	38	26	-12
Region			
East	43	32	-11
Midwest	45	36	-9
South	47	39	-8
West	48	33	-15

Question: Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then or hardly at all?

CONTINUED...

	--- Follow "Most of the Time" ---		
	<u>July 1994</u>	<u>June 1998</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	46	36	-10
<i>Community Size</i>			
Large City	50	37	-13
Suburb	50	37	-13
Small City/Town	43	37	-6
Rural Area	43	32	-11
<i>Party ID</i>			
Republican	54	44	-10
Democrat	44	37	-7
Independent	43	29	-14
<i>Registered Voter</i>			
Yes	51	42	-9
No	31	20	-11

TIME FOR WASHINGTON POLITICIANS TO STEP ASIDE

July 1994 vs. June 1998

	--- Completely Agree ---		
	<u>July 1994</u>	<u>June 1998</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Total	34	20	-14
Sex			
Male	34	19	-15
Female	35	21	-14
Race			
White	34	20	-14
Non-white	37	22	-15
Black	35	27	-8
Age			
Under 30	38	14	-24
30-49	32	22	-10
50-64	32	17	-15
65+	36	25	-11
Education			
College Grad.	26	11	-15
Some College	39	18	-18
High School Grad.	36	21	-15
<H.S. Grad	35	31	-4
Family Income			
\$75,000+	30	21	-9
\$50,000-\$74,999	30	8	-22
\$30,000-\$49,999	35	17	-18
\$20,000-\$29,999	35	26	-9
<\$20,000	36	24	-12
Region			
East	30	19	-11
Midwest	33	18	-15
South	37	24	-13
West	35	17	-18

Question: Now, I'm going to read you a series of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. For each statement, please tell me if you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it. The first one is... (It is time for Washington politicians to step aside and make room for new leaders.)

CONTINUED ...

	--- Completely Agree ---		
	<u>July 1994</u>	<u>June 1998</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
<i>Total</i>	34	20	-14
<i>Community Size</i>			
Large City	39	18	-21
Suburb	33	19	-14
Small City/Town	32	21	-11
Rural Area	34	19	-15
<i>Party ID</i>			
Republican	39	18	-21
Democrat	28	21	-7
Independent	35	18	-17
<i>Religious Affiliation</i>			
Total White Protestant	36	17	-19
White Prot. Evangelical	38	20	-18
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	33	14	-19
White Catholic	29	19	-10

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,012 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period June 4-8, 1998. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. For results based on either Form 1 (N=516) or Form 2 (N=496), the sampling error is plus or minus 5 percentage points.

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

In addition to the national sample of 1,012 adults, the survey included an oversample of California residents. The California sub-sample consisted of 238 respondents. For the analysis based only on these respondents, California-based demographic weighting parameters were used.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

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

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

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

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

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

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 1996). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone.

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

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JUNE 1998 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
— FINAL TOPLINE —
June 4-8, 1998
N=1,012

Hello, I am _____ calling for Princeton Survey Research Associates in Princeton, New Jersey. We are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and TV stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home. [IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?]

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? [IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
June, 1998	59	32	9=100
May, 1998	62	28	10=100
April, 1998	62	28	10=100
March, 1998	65	26	9=100
Early February, 1998	71	26	3=100
January, 1998	61	30	9=100
November, 1997	58	31	11=100
September, 1997	58	29	13=100
August, 1997	59	32	9=100
June, 1997	54	34	12=100
May, 1997	57	34	9=100
April, 1997	55	34	11=100
February, 1997	60	32	8=100
Early February, 1997	57	30	13=100
January, 1997	59	31	10=100
November, 1996	57	34	9=100
July, 1996	54	38	8=100
June, 1996	54	38	8=100
April, 1996	53	39	8=100
March, 1996	55	38	7=100
February, 1996	51	39	10=100
January, 1996	50	43	7=100
October, 1995	48	42	10=100
September, 1995	45	42	13=100
August, 1995	44	44	12=100
June, 1995	50	40	10=100
April, 1995	47	43	10=100
March, 1995	44	44	12=100
February, 1995	44	44	12=100
December, 1994	41	47	12=100
November, 1994	48	40	12=100
October, 1994	41	47	12=100
Early October, 1994	38	47	15=100
September, 1994	41	52	7=100
July, 1994	45	46	9=100
June, 1994	42	44	14=100
May, 1994	46	42	12=100
March, 1994	45	42	13=100

Q.1 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
January, 1994	51	35	14=100
Early January, 1994	48	35	17=100
December, 1993	48	36	16=100
October, 1993	44	42	14=100
September, 1993	49	35	16=100
Early September, 1993	43	43	14=100
August, 1993	39	46	15=100
May, 1993	39	43	18=100
Early May, 1993	45	37	18=100
April, 1993	49	29	22=100
February, 1993	56	25	19=100

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
June, 1998	42	38	20=100
May, 1998	40	41	19=100
April, 1998	41	40	19=100
March, 1998	43	39	18=100
January, 1998	43	41	16=100
November, 1997	41	43	16=100
August, 1997	42	44	14=100
June, 1997	33	50	17=100
May, 1997	40	44	16=100
April, 1997	40	44	16=100
February, 1997	44	42	14=100
January, 1997	38	47	15=100
November, 1996	40	43	17=100
July, 1996	38	48	14=100
June, 1996	36	50	14=100
April, 1996	39	46	15=100
March, 1996	35	51	14=100
February, 1996	33	53	14=100
January, 1996	36	54	10=100
October, 1995	36	51	13=100
September, 1995	36	50	14=100
August, 1995	38	45	17=100
June, 1995	41	45	14=100
April, 1995	44	43	13=100
March 1995	43	39	18=100
December, 1994	52	28	20=100

Q.3 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?
[READ AND ROTATE LIST]

**SPLIT FORM ITEMS ‘b’ THRU ‘i’; ASK ALL ITEM ‘a’:
 [FORM 1: N=516; FORM 2: N=496]**

		Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	(VOL) <u>DK</u>
a.	News about candidates and election campaigns in your state and district	9	27	33	30	1=100
	April, 1998 ⁴	16	33	24	27	*=100
	November, 1994	18	42	25	15	*=100
	October, 1994	14	38	31	16	1=100
	Early October, 1994	23	34	23	19	1=100
	September, 1994	19	34	29	18	*=100
	November, 1990 ⁵	38	34	17	11	*=100
	October, 1990	18	32	28	22	*=100
b.F1	Allegations of sexual misconduct against Bill Clinton	28	32	24	15	1=100
	April, 1998	27	39	20	14	*=100
	March, 1998	30	35	25	9	1=100
	February, 1998 ⁶	21	44	25	10	*=100
	Early February, 1998	34	42	17	7	0=100
c.F2	Recent political turmoil in Indonesia	12	27	30	31	*=100
d.F1	The shooting at a high school in Springfield, Oregon	46	36	14	4	*=100
e.F2	The new drug Viagra, designed to help men overcome impotence	15	28	29	27	1=100
f.F1	The death of Frank Sinatra	17	31	31	20	1=100
g.F2	The testing of nuclear bombs by India and Pakistan	36	34	16	14	*=100
h.F1	The merger of the Chrysler Corporation and Daimler Benz	12	22	27	38	1=100
i.F2	Allegations that the United States policy on China was influenced by campaign contributions	16	30	27	26	1=100

⁴ In April 1998, September 1994 and October 1990, story was listed as “Candidates and election campaigns in your state.”

⁵ In November 1990, story was listed as “Candidates and elections in your state.”

⁶ In February 1998, story was listed as “Allegations that President Clinton had an affair with former White House intern, Monica Lewinsky.”

On another subject...

Q.4 If the elections for U.S. Congress were being held TODAY, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in your district?

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '3' OR '9' IN Q.4, ASK:

Q.4a As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=771]

	Republican/ <u>Lean Rep.</u>	Democrat/ <u>Lean Dem.</u>	Other/ <u>Undecided</u>
June, 1998	44	46	10=100
March, 1998	40	52	8=100
February, 1998	41	50	9=100
January, 1998	41	51	8=100
August, 1997	45	48	7=100
Early November, 1996 ⁷	44	48	8=100
October, 1996	42	49	9=100
Late September, 1996	43	49	8=100
Early September, 1996	43	51	6=100
July, 1996	46	47	7=100
June, 1996	44	50	6=100
March, 1996	44	49	7=100
January, 1996	46	47	7=100
October, 1995	48	48	4=100
August, 1995	50	43	7=100
November, 1994	45	43	12=100
October, 1994	47	44	9=100
Early October, 1994	52	40	8=100
September, 1994	48	46	6=100
July, 1994	45	47	8=100

ASK ALL:

Q.5 What will make the biggest difference in how you vote for Congress in your district — national issues, local or state issues, the candidate's political party, or the candidate's character or experience? **(IF MORE THAN ONE, PROBE WITH: Well, which is most important?)**

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=771]

	March <u>1998</u>	Nov <u>1996</u>	Oct <u>1996</u>	Late Sept <u>1996</u>	Early Sept <u>1996</u>	Nov <u>1994</u>	Late Oct <u>1994</u>	Early Oct <u>1994</u>	--- CBS/NYT --- 10/24-28 9/28-10/1 <u>1986</u> <u>1986</u>	
22 National issue	18	23	19	25	18	22	22	22	22	20
37 State/local issue	37	38	45	38	42	38	38	27	25	23
4 Political party	6	6	7	6	6	5	3	5	6	9
32 Character/Experience	35	25	26	24	30	30	29	39	40	41
1 Other (VOL)	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	3
1 None (VOL)	1	*	1	*	*	*	1	1	1	*
<u>3</u> Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

⁷

Based on likely voters.

ROTATE QUESTIONS 6 AND 7

Q.6 Do you think of your vote for Congress this fall as a vote for Bill Clinton, as a vote against Bill Clinton, or isn't Bill Clinton much of a factor in your vote?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=771]

		March	Sept	Nov	Oct	Early	Bush	----- Reagan -----		
		1998	1996	1994	1994	Oct	10/28-31	10/24-28	9/28-10/1	10/23-28
						1994	1990	1986	1986	1982
20	For	21	24	17	17	17	19	26	26	23
18	Against	15	18	21	21	23	15	12	16	21
57	Not a factor	59	51	55	57	54	61	55	51	51
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.7 Thinking about your vote for Congress this fall, will the issue of which party, the Republicans or the Democrats, controls Congress be a factor in your vote, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=771]

45 Yes, will be a factor
 51 No, will not
4 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q.8 What one issue would you most like to hear the candidates in your state or district talk about? (**OPEN-ENDED; ACCEPT UP TO THREE MENTIONS**)

- 20 Education
- 12 Taxation
- 8 Social Security
- 8 Crime/Crime control/All other crime issues
- 5 Job/Employment
- 5 Health care
- 4 Youthful violence/Violence
- 4 Economy/Economic issues
- 4 Abortion
- 3 Family/Child care issues
- 3 All other social issues
- 3 Morality/Character issues
- 3 Environment
- 2 Balanced budget
- 2 Drugs
- 2 Foreign policy/International relations
- 2 Poverty/Homlessness
- 2 Highway improvement/Road construction
- 1 National security
- 1 Tobacco/Smoking
- 1 Immigration
- 1 Religion
- 1 Women's issues
- * Police/Quality of law enforcement
- 5 All other miscellaneous mentions
- 2 All other economic issues
- * None
- 21 No answer/DK/Refused

Q.9 Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then or hardly at all?

		Nov 1997	Nov* 1996	Oct* 1996	Oct 1995	April 1995	Nov 1994	Oct 1994	July 1994	May 1990	May 1988	Jan 1988	May 1987
36	Most of the time	41	52	43	46	43	49	45	46	39	37	37	41
34	Some of the time	36	32	37	35	35	30	35	33	34	37	35	35
21	Only now and then	16	12	13	14	16	13	14	15	18	17	18	15
9	Hardly at all	7	4	6	5	6	7	6	6	9	6	8	7
*	Don't know	*	*	1	*	*	1	*	*	*	3	2	2
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Based on Registered Voters

Q.10 These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district, or haven't you been able to register so far?

IF YES, ASK:

Q.11 Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote, or is there a chance your registration has lapsed because you moved or for some other reason?

		Nov 1997	Sept 1997	Nov 1996	June 1996	Oct 1995	Apr 1995	Dec 1994	Nov 1994	Oct 1994	Oct 1994	July 1994	May 1993	June 1992	Nov 1990
78	Yes, registered	80	79	76	79	76	76	74	73	77	76	79	82	76	80
73	Yes, absolutely certain	75	76	69	75	73	74	70	70	74	72	75	--	73	--
	Chance registration														
4	may have lapsed	4	3	2	4	3	2	3	2	3	4	4	--	3	--
1	Don't know/Refused	1	*	*	0	*	0	1	1	0	*	0	--	0	--
22	No, not registered	20	20	24	21	23	23	24	26	22	23	20	17	23	20
*	Don't know/Refused	*	1	*	*	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	--
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

ASK ALL:

Q.12 How often would you say you vote... always, nearly always, part of the time or seldom?

		Nov 1997	Sept 1997	June 1996	Feb 1996	Oct 1995	April 1995	Nov 1994	Oct 1994	July 1994	June 1992	May 1992	Nov 1991	May 1990	Feb 1989	Jan 1988	May 1987
40	Always	33	51	41	32	41	42	43	43	40	47	41	38	33	45	39	34
29	Nearly always	38	23	30	34	32	29	24	28	30	26	32	37	35	30	33	37
15	Part of the time	15	11	12	15	12	12	11	13	14	10	13	13	12	10	12	11
12	Seldom	9	10	12	11	11	11	13	10	11	11	11	9	10	8	8	6
4	(VOL) Other	*	*	1	1	*	*	1	5	*	1	*	0	1	1	1	2
0	(VOL) Never vote	5	5	4	6	3	6	8	1	5	5	3	3	8	6	6	9
*	Don't know	*	*	*	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	1	1
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

- Q.13 Do you, yourself, plan to vote in the election this November?
 Q.13a How certain are you that you will vote? Are you absolutely certain, fairly certain or not certain?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=771]

	<u>Yes, Plan To Vote</u>	<u>Absolutely Certain</u>	<u>Fairly Certain</u>	<u>Not Certain</u>	<u>No, Don't Plan To</u>	<u>Can't Say/DK</u>
June, 1998	95	74	19	2	3	2=100
November, 1996 ⁸	96	--	--	--	2	2=100
October, 1996	98	87	10	1	1	1=100
September, 1996	98	89	8	1	1	1=100
September, 1996	96	83	11	2	2	2=100
July, 1996	95	82	12	1	3	2=100
June, 1996	96	84	11	1	2	2=100
November, 1994+	71	--	--	--	26	3=100
October, 1994+	95	--	--	--	3	2=100
October, 1992	98	91	6	1	1	1=100
September, 1992	98	85	11	2	1	1=100
August, 1992	97	89	8	*	1	2=100
June, 1992	97	88	8	1	1	2=100
<i>Gallup</i> : November, 1988	97	87	9	1	2	1=100
<i>Gallup</i> : October, 1988	98	--	--	--	1	1=100

+ Non-Presidential elections

IF ANSWERED "1" ALWAYS VOTE IN Q.12, SKIP; OTHERWISE ASK: [N=596]

- Q.14 I am going to read a list of reasons people sometimes give for not always voting. Please tell me if each is a very important, fairly important, not too important or not at all important reason why you sometimes don't vote. First, **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)** is this a very important, fairly important, not too important or not at all important reason why you sometimes don't vote.

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Fairly Important</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. I'm not interested in politics	15	21	22	38	4=100
b. There are fewer major national problems these days	19	20	17	38	6=100
c. Voting doesn't really change things	21	18	17	41	3=100

⁸ In November 1996 and November 1994 the question was worded: "Do you yourself plan to vote in the election this Tuesday, or not?"

On another subject...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=516]

Q.15F1 So far, do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the 1998 congressional elections, too little coverage to the congressional elections, or the right amount of coverage?

15 Too much
 24 Too little
 53 Right amount
8 Don't know/Refused
 100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=496]

Q.16F2 So far, do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the upcoming elections for state and local offices, too little coverage to the upcoming elections for state and local offices, or the right amount of coverage?

17 Too much
 28 Too little
 49 Right amount
 1 Didn't know there were elections this year (VOL)
5 Don't know/Refused
 100

NO QUESTION 17

ASK ALL:

Q.18 Now, I'm going to read you a series of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. For each statement, please tell me if you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it. The first one is... **(READ ITEMS IN ORDER.)**

	Completely <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Disagree</u>	Completely <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. It is time for Washington politicians to step aside and make room for new leaders	20	46	24	7	3=100
November, 1997	27	41	23	4	5=100
July, 1994	34	45	14	4	3=100
June, 1992	38	46	12	2	2=100
November, 1991	32	45	16	4	3=100
May, 1990	21	40	26	4	9=100
February, 1989	20	38	30	4	8=100
May, 1988	26	42	22	3	7=100
May, 1987	16	46	26	3	9=100
b. Labor unions are necessary to protect the working person	35	34	19	11	1=100
November, 1997	29	41	19	8	3=100
May, 1990	25	46	19	6	4=100
May, 1988	26	43	19	7	5=100
May, 1987	19	48	21	6	6=100

Q.18 CONTINUED ...

		Completely <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Disagree</u>	Completely <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
c.	Today it's really true that the rich just get richer while the poor get poorer	41	31	18	8	2=100
	November, 1997	34	36	22	6	2=100
	July, 1994	33	38	20	7	2=100
	June, 1992	38	40	16	4	2=100
	November, 1991	45	35	13	5	2=100
	May, 1990	38	40	16	3	3=100
	February, 1989	40	38	15	4	3=100
	May, 1988	34	42	18	3	3=100
	May, 1987	31	43	19	3	4=100
d.	I'm pretty well satisfied with the way things are going for me financially	17	45	24	14	*=100
	November, 1997	18	47	23	12	*=100
	July, 1994	17	47	24	11	1=100
	May, 1993	12	46	28	13	1=100
	June, 1992	16	42	25	16	1=100
	November, 1991	16	41	26	16	1=100
	May, 1990	9	49	28	13	1=100
	February, 1989	13	49	25	12	1=100
	May, 1988	13	52	25	9	1=100
	May, 1987	11	52	27	8	2=100
e.	I feel it's my duty as a citizen to always vote	65	24	6	5	*=100
	November, 1997	63	26	7	4	*=100
	July, 1994	66	27	4	3	*=100
	May, 1993	66	28	4	1	1=100
	June, 1992	69	22	6	2	1=100
	November, 1991	72	21	4	2	1=100
	May, 1990	50	35	9	4	2=100
	February, 1989	64	26	6	2	2=100
	May, 1988	56	32	7	2	3=100
	May, 1987	46	39	9	3	3=100
f.	I'm interested in keeping up with national affairs	39	43	13	4	1=100
	November, 1997	40	46	10	3	1=100
	July, 1994	46	43	9	2	*=100
	June, 1992	51	40	6	2	1=100
	November, 1991	46	44	7	2	1=100
	May, 1990	33	49	12	4	2=100
	February, 1989	34	50	12	2	2=100
	May, 1988	39	47	10	2	2=100
	May, 1987	28	53	12	3	4=100

Q.18 CONTINUED ...

		Completely <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Disagree</u>	Completely <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
g.	I'm generally bored by what goes on in Washington	16	33	33	16	2=100
	November, 1997	14	37	34	14	1=100
	July, 1994	17	34	33	15	1=100
	June, 1992	20	35	31	13	1=100
	November, 1991	16	36	30	16	2=100
	May, 1990	12	36	38	12	2=100
	February, 1989	10	37	37	13	3=100
	May, 1988	11	37	38	12	2=100
	May, 1987	8	34	41	13	4=100
h.	I'm pretty interested in following local politics	25	49	19	6	1=100
	November, 1997	20	48	25	6	1=100
	July, 1994	24	52	18	5	1=100
	June, 1992	26	47	21	5	1=100
	November, 1991	29	48	16	5	2=100
	May, 1990	17	53	23	6	1=100
	February, 1989	24	49	21	5	1=100
	May, 1988	21	51	22	5	1=100
	May, 1987	16	54	22	4	4=100
i.	Most issues discussed in Washington don't affect me personally	9	29	39	22	1=100
	November, 1997	8	27	45	19	1=100
	July, 1994	5	25	42	27	1=100
	June, 1992	7	26	43	22	2=100
	November, 1991	8	25	41	23	3=100
	May, 1990	7	28	46	16	3=100
	February, 1989	7	26	44	20	3=100
	May, 1988	7	29	45	17	2=100
	May, 1987	5	26	50	15	4=100
j.	I feel guilty when I don't get a chance to vote	35	28	18	14	5=100
	November, 1997	36	32	17	12	3=100
	July, 1994	38	32	18	9	3=100
	June, 1992	39	30	16	9	6=100
	November, 1991	46	28	14	8	4=100
	May, 1990	30	37	22	8	3=100
	February, 1989	38	34	17	7	4=100
	May, 1988	32	37	18	8	5=100
	May, 1987	25	41	22	6	6=100

Now a few questions about some issues that have been in the news lately...

Q.19 First, if it turns out that the federal government has a budget SURPLUS this year, in your opinion, which ONE of the following should be done with the available money? Should the money be used (**INSERT ITEM; ROTATE**)

		Jan <u>1998</u>
9	For a tax cut;	11
17	To pay off the national debt more quickly;	22
28	For increased spending on domestic programs such as health, education, and the environment;	33
44	To help make the Social Security and Medicare programs financially sound;	32
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL)	<u>2</u>
100		100

Q.20 How much, if anything, have you heard about the dispute between Microsoft and both the federal and state governments, which have charged that Microsoft engaged in unfair business practices — a lot, a little or nothing at all?

36	A lot
38	A little
25	Nothing at all — GO TO Q.21
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused — GO TO Q.21
100	

IF "A LOT" OR "A LITTLE" IN Q.20, ASK: [N= 787]

Q.20a Who do you side with more in this dispute, Microsoft or the government?

47	Microsoft
28	Government
8	Neither (VOL)
<u>17</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK ALL:

Q.21 How much, if anything, have you heard about a proposal which would allow Americans to put a portion of their Social Security taxes into a personal savings account to be used for retirement — a lot, a little or nothing at all?

16	A lot
44	A little
40	Nothing at all — GO TO Q.22
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused — GO TO Q.22
100	

IF “A LOT” OR “A LITTLE” IN Q.21, ASK: [N=629]

Q.21a Generally, do you favor or oppose this proposal?

69	Favor
20	Oppose
<u>11</u>	Don't know/refused
100	

ASK ALL:

Q.22 How much, if anything, have you heard about the dispute between the tobacco industry and the federal and state governments regarding the advertising and sale of tobacco products — a lot, a little or nothing at all?

72	A lot
23	A little
5	Nothing at all — GO TO Q.23
*	Don't know/Refused — GO TO Q.23
<u>100</u>	

IF “A LOT” OR “A LITTLE” IN Q.22, ASK: [N=964]

Q.22a Who do you side with more in this dispute, the tobacco industry or the government?

29	Tobacco
62	Government
6	Neither (VOL)
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK ONLY THOSE RESPONDENTS WHO ANSWERED 1, 2 OR 3 IN Q.3i:

Q.23 Based on what you've heard or read, do you think it is true or not true that the Clinton Administration favored China in foreign policy and trade decisions because China contributed money to the Democratic party?

74	Followed story very/fairly/not too closely
39	True
20	Not true
15	Not sure/don't know/refused
<u>26</u>	Did not follow story
100	

NO QUESTION 24

Q.25 Now, I'm going to read you some more statements. For each one I read, please tell me whether you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it. The first one is...

	Completely <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Disagree</u>	Completely <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a. I often don't become aware of political candidates until I see their advertising on television.	23	40	25	11	1=100
June, 1992	20	42	27	10	1=100
May, 1990	17	45	28	7	3=100
May, 1987	10	42	34	10	4=100
b. I get some sense of what a candidate is like through his or her TV commercials.	10	37	35	16	2=100
June, 1992	13	41	33	12	1=100
May, 1990	9	49	30	8	4=100
May, 1987	7	50	31	8	4=100
c. I like to have a picture of a candidate in my mind when I go to vote for him or her.	26	38	19	16	1=100
June, 1992	26	50	15	6	3=100
May, 1990	21	53	14	6	6=100
May, 1987	16	54	16	6	8=100

On a different subject...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=516]

Q.26F1 We are interested in how people get to know about political candidates... Which gives you a better idea of where a candidate stands on issues: news reports on TV or candidates' TV commercials?

	Nov <u>1996</u> ⁹	Nov <u>1992</u>	Oct <u>1992</u>	June <u>1992</u>	Nov <u>1990</u> ¹⁰	May <u>1990</u>	May <u>1987</u>
74 News reports	77	74	65	81	63	74	79
18 Candidates' TV commercials	16	22	18	15	28	17	13
<u>8</u> Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

⁹ November 1996 and November 1992 figures are based on voters. The question was worded: "Which gave you a better idea of where the *presidential* candidates stood on issues -- news reports or TV commercials and advertisements about the candidates?"

¹⁰ November 1990 figures based on voters.

Q.27F1 Which gives you a better idea of what a candidate is like personally: news reports on TV or candidates' TV commercials?

		Nov 1996 ¹¹	Nov 1992	Oct 1992	June 1992	Nov 1990	May 1990	May 1987
62	News reports	67	58	63	74	53	65	67
29	Candidates' TV commercials	26	35	23	22	38	26	24
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=496]

Q.28F2 We are interested in how useful you think each of the following things is for finding out about the candidates running for office in your state or district. First how useful are **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)** for finding out about the candidates running for office in your state or district? Are they very useful, somewhat useful, not too useful, or not at all useful. Next,...

		Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not too Useful	Not at all Useful	(VOL) Never Use	DK
a.	News reports	33	53	8	4	*	2=100
b.	Candidate debates	40	42	8	8	*	2=100
c.	Talk shows on the radio where people call in the express their opinions	26	38	16	17	1	2=100

¹¹ November 1996, November 1992 and November 1990 figures based on voters. The question was worded: "... news reports or candidates' TV commercials and advertisements?"

QUESTIONS 29 AND 30 HAVE DIFFERENT INTROS. BUT USE THE SAME ITEMS (a-g)

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=516]

Q.29F1 Here are some things that have been in news recently. Please tell me how important each item is to you personally... very important, fairly important, not too important or not at all important. First, how important to you personally is (INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)? Is this very important, fairly important, not too important or not at all important?

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=496]

Q.30 Here are some things that have been in news recently. Please tell me how important each item is for the country... very important, fairly important, not too important or not at all important. First, how important for the country is (INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)? Is this very important, fairly important, not too important or not at all important?

		Very <u>Important</u>	Fairly <u>Important</u>	Not too <u>Important</u>	Not at all <u>Important</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a.	Government efforts to regulate the sale of tobacco products					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	48	29	14	9	*=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	40	28	17	13	2=100
b.	Reforming the campaign finance laws					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	33	35	19	10	3=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	47	34	12	5	2=100
c.	The debate in Washington about regulating health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and managed health care plans					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	60	28	7	5	0=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	69	23	5	3	0=100
d.	Major corporate mergers involving banks, automobile companies and airlines					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	27	40	21	11	1=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	42	34	13	6	5=100
e.	The Justice Department's investigation into the business practices of Microsoft					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	19	31	30	17	3=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	21	33	27	13	6=100
f.	Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation into the relationship between President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	17	17	18	47	1=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	18	14	19	48	1=100
g.	The outcome of the 1998 congressional elections and specifically which party controls Congress					
	To you personally (FORM 1)	41	32	16	10	1=100
	For the country (FORM 2)	51	31	13	3	2=100

Now two (FOR AL, CA, IA, NJ, NM, MS, AND SD RESPONDENTS, SUBSTITUTE “THREE” FOR TWO) final questions about the 1998 elections...

ASK RESPONDENTS FROM AL, CA, IA, NJ, NM, MS, AND SD ONLY: [N=163]

Q.31 Did you happen to vote in Tuesday’s primary election here in (INSERT NAME OF STATE), or didn’t you have a chance to vote?

39	Yes, voted
61	No, didn’t vote
<u>*</u>	Don’t know/Refused
100	

ASK ALL:

Q.32 Thinking about the congressional elections that will be held this November, compared to previous elections, are you more enthusiastic about voting than usual, or less enthusiastic?

		-- Gallup --	
		<u>April 1998</u>	<u>Oct 1994</u>
37	More	30	34
47	Less	48	46
14	Same (VOL)	19	18
<u>2</u>	Don’t know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100

Q.33 Some people who plan to vote can’t always get around to it on election day. With your own personal daily schedule in mind, rate the chances that you will vote in the U.S. House of Representatives election in November. Are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances about 50-50, less than 50-50, or don’t you think you will vote in the House of Representatives election next November?

		-- ABC/Wash. Post --	
		<u>July 1990</u> ¹²	
52	Absolutely certain to vote	53	
20	Will probably vote	21	
17	Chances 50-50	15	
5	Less than 50-50	4	
6	Don’t think will vote	6	
<u>*</u>	Don’t know/Refused	<u>1</u>	
100		100	

¹² The ABC/Washington Post trend was worded slightly differently: “Some people have busier schedules than others. Because of this, some people who plan to vote can’t always get around to it on election day. With your own personal daily schedule in mind, I’d like to rate the chances that you will vote in the U.S. House of Representatives election in November in the Congressional district where you live: are you absolutely certain to vote ...”