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America's New Number One Problem
FROM NEWS INTEREST TO LIFESTYLES, ENERGY TAKES HOLD

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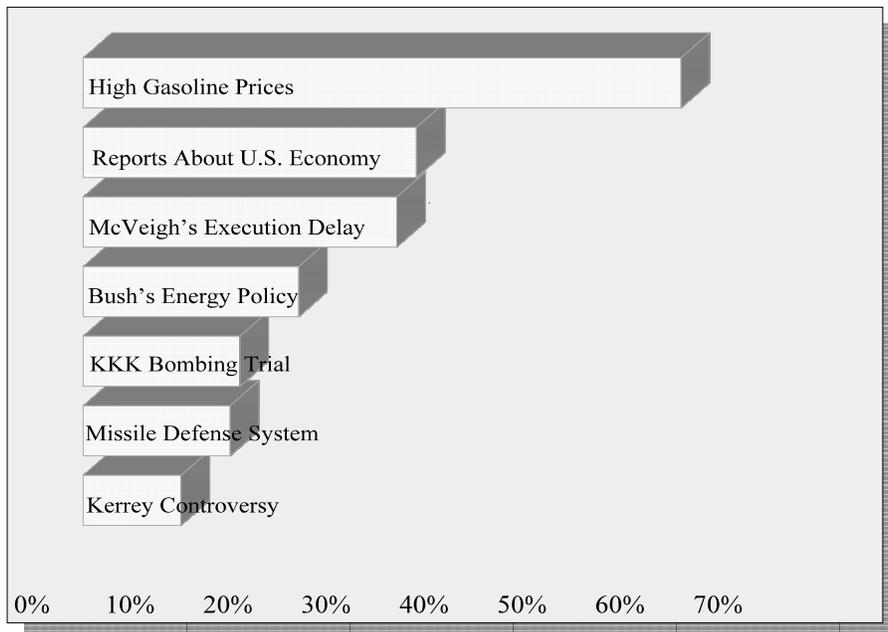
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Carroll Doherty, Editor
Kimberly Parker, Research Director
Michael Dimock, Survey Director
Peyton Craighill & Nilanthi Samaranayake, Project Directors
Pew Research Center for The People & The Press
202/293-3126
<http://www.people-press.org>

The Pew Research Center News Interest Index

Public Interest and Awareness of the News



May 2001

America's New Number One Problem FROM NEWS INTEREST TO LIFESTYLES, ENERGY TAKES HOLD

Rising energy costs are having a major impact on how Americans are living their lives, affecting everything from their driving habits to the news stories they follow. More than two-thirds say they have been adjusting their thermostats to cope with soaring utility bills, and half report cutting back on driving to save money on gasoline. Better than one-in-three say they have considered buying a vehicle that gets better gas mileage, and fully 31% say they have changed summer vacation plans to avoid long drives.

In turn, rising concerns over energy problems have captured the attention of the American public to an extraordinary degree. Six times as many Americans closely followed news about higher gas prices as paid attention to news about former Sen. Bob Kerrey's troubled Vietnam experiences, which drew intense media coverage in the past month. The gasoline situation even dwarfed news interest in the delayed execution of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh: 61% of respondents in the Pew Research Center's latest national survey paid very close attention to higher prices at the pump, compared to 32% who closely followed McVeigh's postponed execution.

In a dramatic shift, respondents in the survey, conducted May 15-20, cited energy as the nation's top concern — 22% identified it as such. This is the first time since the mid-1990's that any single problem has been identified by this many respondents in a Center survey. This is comparable to the number who cited unemployment as the top problem eight years ago, as President Bill Clinton was settling into office in the midst of a recession.

Despite this obvious public concern, George W. Bush's new energy plan has not yet registered strongly with most Americans. Just 22% say they paid very close attention to news of the administration's policy, which was announced as the poll was being conducted. Interest in the Bush plan increased over the period of the survey — from 17% in the days before Bush's announcement to 28% after the rollout of the plan. But even at that, this is far lower than the attention paid to Clinton's economic and health care initiatives eight years ago.

A Serious Problem ...

Problem for self/family:

Rising gasoline prices	49%
Increasing utility costs	41%
Energy shortages	16%

... With Serious Consequences

Changing behaviors:

Adjust temp to lower utility costs	69%
Shop for best gas price	65%
Drive less to save gas	52%
Consider car w/better gas mileage	36%
Change summer travel plans	31%
Car-pool/Use public transportation	16%

But Public Interest in Energy ...

Followed very closely:

High price of gasoline	61%
McVeigh's execution delay	32%
Bob Kerrey controversy	10%

... Stops At the Pump

Followed very closely:

Bush's energy plan	
Post-speech (5/17-20)	28%
Pre-speech (5/15-16)	17%

Compared to:

Clinton's economic plan (2/93)	49%
Clinton's health care plan (9/93)	49%
Bush Sr.'s drug plan (9/89)	40%

Worse for the president, only a bare majority of Americans are expressing confidence that he can solve the nation's energy problems. While 52% express some confidence in Bush, a large number (43%) say they have little or no confidence in him on this issue. Bush's mixed ratings may well be a consequence of his perceived lack of sensitivity to the environment and charges he has given short shrift to conservation. Those who put more emphasis on conservation have much less faith in Bush than those who think the answer is more oil drilling and expanded production.

On the other hand, Bush is taking little heat from the public over the claim, made frequently by congressional Democrats, that he is paying too much attention to the nation's long-term energy needs while focusing too little on current problems. In fact, most of the public — including nearly half of Democrats — give higher priority to finding new sources for the long-term rather than controlling prices and dealing with the immediate energy crunch.

The energy problem — especially rising gasoline prices and higher utility costs — is more problematic for people with family incomes below \$50,000, women and non-whites. Politically, Democrats and independents report being stretched by rising costs more than Republicans. Parents, a key political swing group during the 2000 campaign, are more likely than non-parents to report that soaring energy costs are forcing lifestyle changes, including cutting back on summer road trips.

Still, unlike some recent polls, the Center's survey finds only a modest decline in public evaluations of Bush's overall job performance. But even as approval of Bush remains fairly high at 53%, disapproval has steadily increased — from 21% in February, to 27% in April to 32% in the current survey.

Criticism of the president has not increased at either end of the political spectrum. Conservative Republicans continue to overwhelmingly endorse Bush's performance and liberal Democrats continue to oppose him. Rather, there are a growing number of White House critics among moderate and conservative Democrats, as well as among independents.

Disapproval Grows in the Middle			
<i>Party and Ideology</i>	<i>Bush Job Disapproval</i>		
	<u>Feb</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Conserv. Rep	2	4	+2
Mod./Liberal Rep	5	10	+5
Independent	20	36	+16
Conserv./Mod. Dem	37	52	+15
Liberal Dem	53	56	+3

GOP Leaders' Improving Image

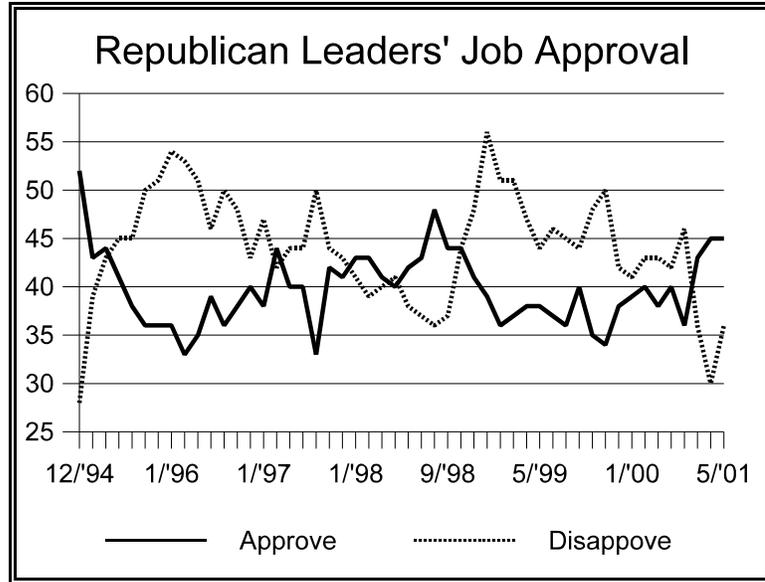
Meanwhile, the image of GOP leaders at the other end of Pennsylvania Ave. has undergone a quiet transformation. As the public assesses the more narrowly divided Congress produced by the 2000 election, they see less partisanship than in the past, and like its leadership better.

Since the election, Americans have, on balance, approved of the job Republican leaders in Congress are doing —

45% give them good marks now, compared to 36% who disapprove of their job performance. This marks the only sustained period of general approval since 1998, and prior to then, the very beginning of the Republican revolution in late 1994 and early 1995.

A small plurality of Americans (44%) say they are happy that the Republican Party maintained control of the U.S. Congress last fall, while 38% say they are unhappy. Not surprisingly, this opinion reflects a partisan point of view. Fully 83% of Republicans are happy with Republican rule, while just 15% of Democrats agree. Independents are split, with 41% happy, 36% unhappy, and 23% expressing no opinion. The poll was completed prior to reports that Vermont Senator James Jeffords would leave the Republican Party — giving Democrats control of the U.S. Senate.

In a striking change from last year, the public sees a greater level of collegiality and an effort to achieve results in the current Congress, a factor that has likely contributed to the improved ratings for Republican leaders. About one-in-three (34%) say Republicans and Democrats are working together more to solve problems, up from 21% in July 2000 and 20% in the summer of 1999. Though slightly more (41%) say the parties have been bickering more than usual, this is down from 54% last summer and 68% in the summer of 1999.



This perception of increased collegiality plays a role in how Democrats and independents rate the Republican leadership. Independents who see less bickering in Congress approve of the Republican leadership by better than a two-to-one margin (57% approve, 24% disapprove); among independents who say Congress is less collegial, 55% disapprove of the GOP leadership and just 30% approve.

Democrats who see more collegiality on Capitol Hill are split in their view of the leadership — 39% approve and 41% disapprove. But among Democrats who see more partisanship, fully 70% disapprove of the Republican leadership.

Democrats Remain Unimpressed

Nonetheless, the rise in approval of the congressional leadership is mostly driven by a high level of support among Republicans, 82% of whom approve of the leadership’s job performance, up from 64% a year ago. Democrats, on the other hand, are slightly less likely to approve of the Republican leadership today than they were last year, and the views of independents have remained largely unchanged.

In particular, GOP leaders are doing better with both higher income Americans and religious conservatives. Compared to a year ago, more Americans with household incomes of at least \$50,000 give good marks to the Republican leadership, while those with incomes under \$50,000 have not changed their views.

	<i>Approve GOP Congress</i>		
	May <u>2000</u>	Jan <u>2001</u>	May <u>2001</u>
<i>Party identification ...</i>	%	%	%
Republican	64	74	82
Democrat	28	23	21
Independent	37	41	39
<i>Family Income ...</i>			
Under \$50,000	40	37	41
\$50,000+	44	56	55
<i>Religion (Whites) ...</i>			
Evangelical Protestant	46	52	63
Mainline Protestant	43	43	47
Catholic	43	54	48

GOP leaders are getting much more favorable ratings from white evangelical Protestants; fully 63% of this group approve of the job Republican leaders are doing, up from just 46% at this time last year. White mainline Protestants and Catholics give the leadership much lower ratings than evangelicals, and those evaluations have not changed markedly over the past year.

Modest Achievements

Perhaps not surprisingly, the achievements of the new Congress — which is just now considering major legislation on taxes and education — have yet to make much of an impression on most Americans. When asked to cite the most important accomplishment of Congress in an open-ended format, only 39% of respondents could come up with an answer.

	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Recalled something	50	35	37
Tax Cut	24	9	9
Budget	4	4	4
Gas/Energy	4	2	2
Other	21	23	24
Nothing/DK/NA	<u>50</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>63</u>
	100	100	100

Republicans are more likely than Democrats or independents to be able to name an achievement by Congress. Half of Republicans could cite an important action in Congress, and one-in-four specifically referred to Bush’s tax cut proposal. By comparison, just over one-third of Democrats and 37% of independents cited any important action in Congress. And though the top issue for these respondents was still Bush's tax cut, only about one-in-ten in each group (9%) referred to it specifically.

Shifting Views on Divided Government

Overall, the public remains largely indifferent as to whether it is better for one party to control both the White House and Congress, or whether divided government is preferable. As in recent years, a plurality (45%) says it doesn’t matter whether one party controls both institutions or not, while 28% favor divided government and 19% prefer one party in control.

	<i>Republicans</i>		
	Mar <u>1998</u>	July <u>2000</u>	May <u>2001</u>
<i>Better when power is ...</i>	%	%	%
Unified	17	31	31
Divided	43	24	20
Doesn't matter	34	36	42
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100	100
	<i>Democrats</i>		
	Mar <u>1998</u>	July <u>2000</u>	May <u>2001</u>
<i>Better when power is ...</i>	%	%	%
Unified	24	27	15
Divided	26	28	35
Doesn't matter	44	40	42
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100

But while pluralities of Republicans and Democrats, as well as independents, say the issue of single-party control doesn’t matter, there have been noticeable shifts among the parties recently, reflecting the GOP’s control over both branches of government and the Democrats’ new status as a minority party.

Whereas Democrats were split over whether single-party control or divided power was better for the country during Clinton's tenure, they favor split control today by a 35% to 15% margin. As recently as last July, when the possibility still existed for Democrats to gain control over both the White House and Congress, 27% preferred unified power.

By contrast, just 20% of Republicans favor divided government, while 31% prefer one-party control. That is sharply different than the view Republicans held in March 1998, when Clinton was in the White House and the GOP was fighting to retain its congressional majority. At that time, 43% of Republicans favored divided government, while just 17% thought it was better for a single party to have unified control.

GOP Morale Rises

Reflecting the enthusiasm they have for the president and congressional leadership, Republicans think the party is doing a good job of standing up for its traditional positions such as reducing the size of government, cutting taxes and promoting conservative social values. On the other hand, Democrats are noticeably less enthusiastic about their party's efforts on behalf of minorities, the poor and needy, and working people than they were a year ago.

Six-in-ten Republicans (60%) say their party is doing an excellent or good job standing up for its traditional positions, up from 49% in September of last year. By comparison, fewer than half of Democrats (47%) feel their party is doing a good job of standing up for its traditional positions, down from 63% last September.

Much of the increase in the rating of the Republican party comes from self-described conservatives within the party, 77% of whom say

the party is doing an excellent or good job today, up from 56% last September. By comparison, the views of more moderate Republicans have not changed significantly — 49% give an excellent or good rating to their party today, up just 2% from last September.

The drop in partisan enthusiasm among Democrats has occurred across the ideological spectrum, with liberal, moderate, and conservative Democrats all giving lower ratings to their party today than they did last year. Older Democrats, those living in large cities, and women have become especially dispirited with the party over the past year.

Last September, more than seven-in-ten (71%) Democrats 65 and older thought their party was doing at least a good job of standing up for its traditional positions. Just 41% of Democratic seniors feel that way today.

Democrats Disillusioned*				
<i>Job on</i>	<i>Party Ratings By ...</i>			
	<i>Republicans</i>		<i>Democrats</i>	
	<i>Sept</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>May</i>
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
<i>core values:</i>	%	%	%	%
Excellent/Good	49	60	63	47
Only fair/Poor	49	37	36	47
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100

* September 2000 numbers based on registered voters.

The Issues — Advantage Democrats

The Bush agenda is affecting the image of both political parties. The president’s education plan has allowed the GOP to gain significant ground on what had been a Democratic strong suit. But if anything, Bush’s policies on the environment have worsened the GOP’s already poor image on that issue. By about a two-to-one margin (51%-25%), the public believes the Democrats can do a better job of protecting the environment.

Overall, the GOP holds a slight edge on just one major issue— foreign policy (39%-34%). Neither party holds a clear advantage on energy policy, education or taxes. Democrats are seen as better able to handle Social Security, maintain economic prosperity, strike the proper balance between the economy and environment, and protect the environment.

Despite Bush’s success in moving his tax cut through Congress, the GOP has been unable to seize the advantage on that issue. Perhaps more important, the Democrats have slightly increased their lead on maintaining economic prosperity over the past two years, and now hold an 11-point edge (44%-33%). And as Democrats have added to their formidable advantage on protecting the environment, they also are seen as the party able to strike the right balance between maintaining economic growth and protecting the environment.

Still, Bush’s emphasis on education has enabled the GOP to dramatically reshape its image on that issue, which is among the public's top concerns. Just two years ago, Democrats held a 52%-29% lead on education; since then, the GOP has gained seven points and the Democrats have lost 14 points to put the two parties in a virtual tie.

<i>Party that could do a better job on ...</i>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Both/</u>	
	%	%	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK</u>
			%	%
Foreign Policy	39	34	14	13=100
Energy Problems	36	34	17	13=100
Education	36	38	17	9=100
June 1999	29	52	12	7=100
Taxes	37	40	14	9=100
Social Security	35	43	11	11=100
Maintain Prosperity	33	44	13	10=100
June 1999	37	43	11	9=100
Balance Environment/Economy	33	44	11	12=100
Protect Environment	25	51	11	13=100
June 1999	27	45	12	16=100

Energy # 1 Problem

Energy concerns now top the public's list of the most important problem facing the country. Fully 22% cite energy-related issues, such as rising gas and heating prices, when asked in an open-ended format to name the nation's most important problem. This issue wasn't even on the public's radar screen until February of this year, and concern is up significantly since then (4% then vs. 22% now).

Concern over morality, ethics and family values, which topped the list in February, has fallen off somewhat in recent months. Today 6% cite this as the most important problem facing the country, placing it behind education (8%) and the economy (7%) and just ahead of unemployment (5%) and teen violence (5%).

It's Energy, Stupid		
	Feb <u>2001</u>	May <u>2001</u>
<i>Volunteered problems:</i>	%	%
Energy crisis	4	22
Education	11	8
Economy	7	7
Morality	12	6
Unemployment	6	5
Teen violence	1	5
Health care	6	4
Crime	8	4
Drugs	6	4
Poverty	3	3

Men and women differ substantially in their views on this matter. Men are much more likely than women to cite the energy crisis as the country's most important problem (28% vs. 16%). And men are much more concerned than women about economic issues overall, including energy: 50% point to economic issues, compared to only 32% of women. Women are more focused than men on education, teen violence, health care, and crime.

While Republicans and Democrats may not agree on the best approach to dealing with the nation's energy woes, they do agree that this is currently the most important problem facing the country — 20% of Republicans and 22% of Democrats place energy at the top of their list, as do 22% of independents.

Poor, Minorities Most Affected

Washington's energy policy debate may not be resonating beyond the Beltway, but Americans clearly are feeling the effects of energy price hikes and, to a lesser degree, regional supply shortages. And this is having an impact on a wide range of activities, from people's driving habits to their choice of vehicles.

Overall, about half of Americans see the rising price of gasoline as a serious problem and four-in-ten say the same about higher costs for electricity and other home utilities. But the effects are greatest on those with lower incomes, as well as members of minority groups.

More than six-in-ten of those with annual family incomes of less than \$20,000 — and a solid majority of those with incomes of under \$50,000 — call rising gas prices a serious problem. Better than two-thirds of African-Americans (69%) also regard this as a serious problem.

Just 39% of those with annual incomes of at least \$50,000 call high gas prices a serious problem; most in this group see it as a minor problem (45%) or no problem at all (16%). While blacks overwhelmingly regard gas prices as a major problem, whites are split — 46% see it as serious, while 39% say it is minor and 15% believe it is not a problem.

The same pattern is evident in attitudes toward rising home utility costs. More than half (52%) of those with annual incomes of below \$20,000 rate this as a serious problem

— the only income category where a majority feels this way. Among those at the other end of the income scale — people with annual family incomes above \$75,000 — relatively few (29%) regard higher home utility costs as a serious problem, while most (52%) regard it as a minor problem.

The regional nature of the nation’s various energy problems is also reflected in how severely people are impacted. A majority of those in the Midwest (58%), where gas prices are generally higher than elsewhere, rate that as a serious problem; fewer than half of those living in other regions rate rising gas prices as very serious.

Thus far, shortages of electricity and other energy supplies have been largely confined to California, so a relatively small percentage of survey respondents nationwide (16%) rate energy shortfalls as a serious problem. Not surprisingly, four-in-ten Californians rate that situation as serious. Majorities of Golden State residents also see the rising price of gas (55%) and spikes in home utility costs (52%) as serious problems.

Most Adjust Thermostats

Though the nation is not struggling with gas lines or widespread electricity shortages, energy problems are putting a crimp in the lifestyles of most Americans. Solid majorities in all income categories and age groups say they have been adjusting thermostats to cut energy costs. This practice is as prevalent in the Midwest (70%) and South (69%) as it is in California (69%).

	Poor Hit Hardest		
	<i>Serious Problem ...</i>		
	Rising Gasoline Prices	Increasing Utility Costs	Energy Shortages
	%	%	%
Total public	49	41	16
<i>Family Income:</i>			
\$75,000+	33	29	11
\$50,000-\$74,999	46	37	13
\$30,000-\$49,999	52	45	15
\$20,000-\$29,999	53	46	17
<\$20,000	63	52	26

Rising gas prices are also affecting the habits of the vast majority of Americans, either by inducing them to shop around for lower prices or to cut back on driving altogether. But income differences are clearly evident in whether people are changing their driving habits. Fully six-in-ten of those with annual family incomes under \$30,000 say they are driving less to save money on gas; just 39% of those with annual incomes of at least \$75,000 have limited their driving. Similarly, those with lower incomes are much more likely than those with higher incomes to cut back on summer travel plans and car-pool to work.

Parents also have been hit hard by energy problems. They are more likely than non-parents to rate higher gas prices and home utility costs as a serious problem. And more parents are altering their behavior as a result — 39% of parents say they have changed summer travel plans to cut back on long-distance driving, compared to 26% of non-parents.

Perhaps surprisingly, there are also political differences in how people are coping with higher energy costs. Those who voted for Al Gore in the 2000 election are more likely than Bush voters to engage in several efforts to conserve energy and cut costs, including lowering their thermostats and cutting back on driving.

	Bush Voters	Gore Voters
<i>Coping with energy costs ...</i>	%	%
Adjusting thermostat	60	75
Driving less to save money	47	56
Changing travel plans	25	33
Car-pooling	12	19

When it comes to considering the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles, however, independents take the lead. Better than four-in-ten independents (44%) say they have thought about buying a car that gets better gas mileage; just 30% of both Republicans and Democrats say they have considered buying a more fuel-efficient car.

Energy Policy Divisions

The public is conflicted over several energy-related issues, including the tradeoffs between energy development and environmental protection, and expanded exploration versus conservation. But on one key point in the energy debate, there is broad agreement. By nearly a two-to-one margin (56%-31%), Americans say that securing long-range energy supplies is more important than finding a fix to the current energy crunch.

Some leading Democrats have argued that Bush's plan overlooks immediate concerns in favor of long-term supplies, but that criticism appears to be falling mostly on deaf ears even within the Democratic Party. By a 12-point margin (49%-37%) Democrats say long-term energy problems should take precedence over short-term needs. Solid majorities of Republicans (67%) and independents (57%) also endorse a long-term approach.

On other issues, the public is far more divided. By a narrow 49%-42% margin, Americans say that developing energy sources should take precedence over environmental protection. But a slight plurality (49%) rates energy conservation as a higher priority than expanded exploration, mining and drilling. Republicans are far more likely than Democrats to give greater priority to developing new energy sources over either protecting the environment or conserving existing resources.

Nearly two-thirds of Republicans (64%) say developing new energy sources should take precedence over protecting the environment; just 40% of Democrats and 47%

of independents agree. Most Republicans (61%) also believe the expansion of energy exploration ranks as more important than increased conservation. Here, the gap is even wider. By nearly a two-to-one margin (62%-32%), Democrats favor increased conservation over expanded energy development. Independents back conservation over increasing exploration by 54%-42%.

Women Favor Conservation

Gender and age are also important factors in attitudes on energy policy. While men and older Americans tend to place greater priority on energy development, women and younger people believe that environmental considerations and conservation should take precedence.

By 52%-38%, men favor developing new energy sources over protecting the environment, and by a similar margin (53%-41%) they support increased exploration and drilling over conservation. Women are divided over whether new energy supplies or environmental protection rates as a higher priority (46% environment, 45% energy supplies). But women, by a substantial margin (57%-36%) favor more conservation over expanded energy exploration.

Americans under age 50 narrowly support environmental protection over developing new energy supplies (50%-45%), and favor conservation over more exploration by a more substantial margin (54%-40%). People over 50, by contrast, strongly back developing new energy sources over protecting the environment (55%-31%) and increased exploration over conservation (52%-40%).

Parties Differ Over Energy Priorities				
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	%	%	%	%
<i>Higher energy priority for president and Congress ...</i>				
Control rising gasoline prices and deal with current shortages	31	24	37	31
Find new long-term supplies	56	67	49	57
Both/Don't know	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Higher priority for country ...</i>				
Protect environment	42	28	50	45
Develop new sources of energy	49	64	40	47
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>More important priority for U.S. energy policy ...</i>				
Expand exploration/construct new power plants	44	61	32	42
More energy conservation/energy regulations	49	33	62	54
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100

Bush's Middling Reviews

As one might expect, the public views Bush's approach for dealing with energy problems through a partisan prism. Nearly eight-in-ten Republicans (78%) express at least some confidence in the president's ability to handle energy problems, compared to 36% of Democrats and 52% of independents.

Bush's plan is playing best in the South, where more than six-in-ten (61%) say they have at least some confidence in the president's approach. But a majority of those in the West (53%) say they have little or no confidence in the president on energy.

South Backs Bush on Energy			
<i>Confidence in energy plan ...</i>	<u>Yes</u> %	<u>No</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
East	52	44	4=100
Midwest	47	49	4=100
South	61	33	6=100
West	43	53	4=100

Differences based on gender and age over how to solve the nation's energy problems have not figured into Bush's ratings — in most groups, about half of respondents express confidence in the president. A major exception is African-Americans — just 36% voice confidence in the president, compared to 56% of whites — but blacks generally rate Bush's performance more critically than whites.

Bush's release of his comprehensive energy plan on May 17 had virtually no impact on evaluations of his approach to the problem, which is another sign that the public is not yet fully engaged by the policy debate. About the same proportion of Americans expressed at least some confidence in Bush before the plan's unveiling (May 15-16) as after its release (May 17-20).

Gas Prices Dominate News Interest

Gas prices are clearly the month's top news story, and this story has attracted considerable interest for a year or more. This month, interest in gas prices has been particularly strong in the Midwest, where prices have generally been among the nation's highest. More than seven-in-ten people in the Midwest followed this story very closely. In the West, where California's electricity shortfall is dominating the news, only 50% followed gas prices very closely.

About a third of the public (34%) followed reports about the condition of the U.S. economy very closely. This is largely unchanged from last month. Men paid more attention than women to this story (42% vs. 28%), with men age 50 and older paying the most attention (58%).

Also, about a third of Americans (32%) followed the delay in McVeigh's execution. Nearly half of African-Americans (47%) followed this story very closely, compared to 31% of whites.

The president's new energy policy was followed by about one-fifth (22%) of the public. Interest increased somewhat after Bush gave his May 17 speech unveiling the plan — 28% followed it very closely from May 17-20, compared to 17% who paid very close attention May 15-16. Almost twice as many men followed the story as did women.

Only 16% of the public paid very close attention to the trial and conviction of a Ku Klux Klansman for the bombing of a black church in 1963. Four-in-ten blacks followed this story compared to only 12% of whites.

Bush's announcement of support for a national missile defense system attracted very close attention from 15% of Americans. Again, many more men than women followed this story very closely (23% vs. 8%). Not surprisingly, more conservative Republicans followed this story (20%) than members of other party and ideological groups.

Just one-in-ten Americans paid close attention to the controversy surrounding Bob Kerrey's role in the death of unarmed civilians during the Vietnam War. The age gap in attention to this story shows that younger people have limited interest in revisiting the history of this conflict. Nearly one-fifth (19%) of Americans 65 and older paid very close attention to the Kerrey story, compared to just 3% of those under age 30.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	High Gasoline Prices*	Reports About U.S. Economy*	McVeigh's Execution Delay*	Bush's Energy Policy*	KKK Bombing Trial	Missile Defense System	Bob Kerrey Controversy*	(N)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	61	34	32	22	16	15	10	(1202)
Sex								
Male	63	42	33	28	16	23	15	(570)
Female	59	28	32	16	15	8	7	(632)
Race								
White	58	33	31	19	12	14	10	(967)
Non-white	71	38	40	28	31	16	10	(217)
Black	77	41	47	28	40	15	16	(119)
Age								
Under 30	56	14	27	13	12	9	3	(258)
30-49	63	37	37	17	15	14	10	(497)
50+	62	43	31	31	19	20	16	(430)
Education								
College Grad.	56	44	25	29	12	22	10	(386)
Some College	58	32	29	18	17	17	8	(319)
H. S. Grad. or less	65	30	38	19	17	10	12	(491)
Region								
East	56	33	25	23	14	16	14	(211)
Midwest	72	37	35	22	14	15	8	(290)
South	64	33	34	19	18	12	12	(453)
West	50	35	33	24	15	18	8	(248)
Party ID								
Republican	58	33	27	22	13	17	9	(349)
Democrat	66	36	38	18	18	10	12	(339)
Independent	63	35	33	23	16	17	11	(450)
Internet User								
Yes	58	35	30	20	13	16	8	(825)
No	66	33	36	25	20	12	14	(377)

* These items are based on split samples; the (N) size reported is smaller for these sub-groups.

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?

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

April 2001 vs. May 2001

	----- April 2001 -----			----- May 2001 -----			Change in Disapprove	(N)
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK</u>		
	%	%	%	%	%	%		
Total	56	27	17=100	53	32	15=100	+5	(1202)
Sex								
Male	60	24	16	55	34	11	+10	(570)
Female	51	30	19	51	31	18	+1	(632)
Race								
White	57	26	17	58	29	13	+3	(967)
Non-white	47	33	20	34	46	20	+13	(217)
Black	42	33	25	29	54	17	+21	(119)
Hispanic*	62	31	7	46	38	16	+7	(79)
Race and Sex								
White Men	59	25	16	61	31	8	+6	(461)
White Women	55	28	17	56	27	17	-1	(506)
Age								
Under 30	51	30	19	53	35	12	+5	(258)
30-49	55	27	18	54	32	14	+5	(497)
50-64	56	28	16	52	35	13	+7	(255)
65+	59	24	17	52	27	21	+3	(175)
Sex and Age								
Men under 50	57	26	17	56	34	10	+8	(386)
Women under 50	51	31	18	52	31	17	0	(369)
Men 50+	63	24	13	56	32	12	+8	(182)
Women 50+	52	29	19	49	31	20	+2	(248)
Education								
College Grad.	61	28	11	54	36	10	+8	(386)
Some College	57	27	16	55	32	13	+5	(319)
High School Grad.	53	28	19	55	27	18	-1	(417)
<H.S. Grad.	49	26	25	41	41	18	+15	(74)
Family Income								
\$75,000+	62	30	8	59	31	10	+1	(236)
\$50,000-\$74,999	61	24	15	59	29	12	+5	(187)
\$30,000-\$49,999	59	25	16	54	32	14	+7	(285)
\$20,000-\$29,999	50	29	21	50	36	14	+7	(169)
<\$20,000	45	33	22	43	40	17	+7	(174)

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

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Continued ...

	----- April 2001 -----			----- May 2001 -----			Change in Disapprove	(N)
	Approve	Disapprove	DK	Approve	Disapprove	DK		
	%	%	%	%	%	%		
Total	56	27	17=100	53	32	15=100	+5	(1202)
Region								
East	57	29	14	47	36	17	+7	(211)
Midwest	52	26	22	51	34	15	+8	(290)
South	59	24	17	62	27	11	+3	(453)
West	52	32	16	44	37	19	+5	(248)
Religious Affiliation								
Total White Protestant	63	20	17	63	24	13	+4	(528)
White Protestant Evangelical	70	15	15	74	16	10	+1	(244)
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	57	25	18	54	31	15	+6	(284)
White Catholic	56	28	16	57	31	12	+3	(221)
Secular	39	41	20	44	40	16	-1	(120)
Community Size								
Large City	44	41	15	46	39	15	-2	(251)
Suburb	61	26	13	52	35	13	+9	(292)
Small City/Town	56	24	20	57	28	15	+4	(418)
Rural Area	58	21	21	54	30	16	+9	(234)
Party ID								
Republican	87	5	8	85	6	9	+1	(349)
Democrat	36	46	18	29	53	18	+7	(339)
Independent	56	26	18	50	36	14	+10	(450)
Party and Ideology								
Conservative Republican	94	1	5	92	4	4	+3	(208)
Moderate/Liberal Republican	79	10	11	77	10	13	0	(131)
Conservative/Moderate Dem.	40	41	19	31	52	17	+11	(212)
Liberal Democrat	29	58	13	25	56	19	-2	(109)
GOP Congressional Approval								
Approve	80	14	6	88	7	5	-7	(568)
Disapprove	29	54	17	18	72	10	+18	(422)
2000 Presidential Vote								
Bush	92	2	6	89	6	5	+4	(405)
Gore	33	49	18	20	62	18	+13	(349)
Marital Status								
Married	62	25	13	58	28	14	+3	(654)
Unmarried	48	30	22	47	37	16	+7	(544)
Parental Status								
Parent	58	26	16	53	32	15	+6	(434)
Non-Parent	54	28	18	53	33	14	+5	(766)
Labor Union								
Union Household	51	36	13	45	37	18	+1	(147)
Non-Union Household	56	26	18	54	32	14	+6	(1037)

A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ...

	<u>Rising Price Of Gasoline</u>	<u>Increasing Home Utility Costs</u>	<u>Energy Shortages</u>
	%	%	%
Total	49	41	16
Sex			
Male	46	35	15
Female	53	45	17
Race			
White	46	38	15
Non-white	65	53	22
Black	69	54	20
Hispanic*	54	46	20
Race and Sex			
White Men	42	34	14
White Women	49	41	15
Age			
Under 30	53	38	10
30-49	49	44	16
50-64	45	36	20
65+	52	44	19
Sex and Age			
Men under 50	46	36	13
Women under 50	54	47	16
Men 50+	44	34	20
Women 50+	52	44	20
Education			
College Grad.	33	31	13
Some College	48	39	15
High School Grad.	54	44	17
<H.S. Grad.	74	52	24
Family Income			
\$75,000+	33	29	12
\$50,000-\$74,999	46	37	14
\$30,000-\$49,999	52	45	15
\$20,000-\$29,999	53	46	17
<\$20,000	64	52	26

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

Question: How much of a problem has (INSERT ITEM) been for you and your family lately — a serious problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all... (The rising price of gasoline/The increase in home utility costs, such as electricity, gas and oil/Energy shortages in your area)

Continued ...

	<u>Rising Price Of Gasoline</u>	<u>Increasing Home Utility Costs</u>	<u>Energy Shortages</u>
	%	%	%
Total	49	41	16
Region			
East	48	40	10
Midwest	58	46	16
South	46	36	13
West	46	43	27
Religious Affiliation			
Total White Protestant	45	37	14
White Protestant Evangelical	44	37	13
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	47	38	15
White Catholic	50	40	14
Secular	42	36	10
Community Size			
Large City	49	45	13
Suburb	43	37	13
Small City/Town	50	40	17
Rural Area	56	41	20
Party ID			
Republican	40	28	10
Democrat	55	49	23
Independent	52	43	16
Party and Ideology			
Conservative Republican	38	24	11
Moderate/Liberal Republican	42	32	9
Conservative/Moderate Dem.	58	54	23
Liberal Democrat	46	42	22
Bush Approval			
Approve	42	33	12
Disapprove	57	51	24
GOP Congressional Approval			
Approve	41	33	12
Disapprove	56	50	22
2000 Presidential Vote			
Bush	38	31	11
Gore	53	47	20
Marital Status			
Married	48	39	15
Unmarried	51	42	18
Parental Status			
Parent	56	48	17
Non-Parent	46	36	16
Labor Union			
Union Household	53	45	22
Non-Union Household	49	40	15

HAVE DONE THIS TO DEAL WITH INCREASING ENERGY COSTS ...

	<u>Adjust Home Temperature</u> %	<u>Shop For Best Gas Price</u> %	<u>Drive Less To Save Money</u> %	<u>Think About Buying New Car</u> %	<u>Change Summer Travel Plans</u> %	<u>Car-pool/ Use Public Transportation</u> %
<i>Total</i>	69	65	52	36	31	16
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	66	66	50	42	29	14
Female	72	65	53	30	32	19
<i>Race</i>						
White	67	64	49	35	28	14
Non-white	76	72	63	38	40	26
Black	78	73	68	40	42	29
Hispanic*	63	68	48	36	39	23
<i>Race and Sex</i>						
White Men	64	64	49	42	28	12
White Women	70	64	49	29	27	16
<i>Age</i>						
Under 30	68	69	54	43	24	24
30-49	74	68	55	42	36	19
50-64	63	64	48	32	28	13
65+	65	58	47	17	30	7
<i>Sex and Age</i>						
Men under 50	69	66	51	48	28	17
Women under 50	75	71	58	37	35	24
Men 50+	58	65	47	32	30	9
Women 50+	68	58	47	20	28	12
<i>Education</i>						
College Grad.	66	67	42	39	25	14
Some College	70	69	53	36	31	18
High School Grad.	70	64	54	34	32	16
<H.S. Grad.	70	64	59	34	36	20
<i>Family Income</i>						
\$75,000+	65	66	39	42	21	13
\$50,000-\$74,999	67	68	46	33	27	11
\$30,000-\$49,999	71	71	56	37	35	19
\$20,000-\$29,999	71	63	64	42	32	19
<\$20,000	72	61	59	31	39	25

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

Question: Now I'm going to list a few steps some people may be taking lately to deal with increasing energy costs. Not everyone will have done these. Have you (Been adjusting the temperature in your house to lower your utility bills/Been shopping around for gasoline at the best price/Been driving less to save money on gas/Thought about buying a car that gets better gas mileage/Changed your plans for summer travel to avoid driving long distances/Started car-pooling to work or taking public transportation) lately, or not?

Continued ...

	<u>Adjust Home Temperature</u>	<u>Shop For Best Gas Price</u>	<u>Drive Less To Save Money</u>	<u>Think About Buying New Car</u>	<u>Change Summer Travel Plans</u>	<u>Car-pool/ Use Public Transportation</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	69	65	52	36	31	16
Region						
East	65	58	47	40	25	21
Midwest	70	66	57	43	33	14
South	69	68	50	31	29	14
West	69	66	52	32	34	19
Religious Affiliation						
Total White Protestant	67	63	49	33	29	12
White Protestant Evangelical	64	63	50	34	28	12
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	69	64	49	32	30	13
White Catholic	70	67	52	35	24	13
Secular	68	62	46	42	29	18
Community Size						
Large City	69	62	44	30	30	23
Suburb	66	66	50	38	30	15
Small City/Town	70	67	51	37	27	15
Rural Area	70	67	62	38	39	16
Party ID						
Republican	62	66	45	30	27	13
Democrat	72	66	57	30	31	17
Independent	71	66	54	44	34	19
Party and Ideology						
Conservative Republican	59	66	46	32	26	12
Moderate/Liberal Republican	67	68	45	29	26	15
Conservative/Moderate Dem.	75	68	57	31	34	14
Liberal Democrat	67	65	56	31	25	22
Bush Approval						
Approve	66	66	49	35	27	13
Disapprove	74	66	59	38	37	25
GOP Congressional Approval						
Approve	64	66	49	35	27	12
Disapprove	75	67	58	39	37	25
2000 Presidential Vote						
Bush	60	68	47	34	25	12
Gore	75	68	56	34	33	19
Marital Status						
Married	69	70	52	36	33	15
Unmarried	68	60	51	35	27	18
Parental Status						
Parent	73	71	56	42	39	21
Non-Parent	66	62	49	32	26	14
Labor Union						
Union Household	71	69	52	35	29	16
Non-Union Household	68	65	51	36	31	17

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 1,202 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period May 15-20, 2001. 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=621) or Form 2 (N=581), the sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

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

SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

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

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

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

At least 5 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 is at home." This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

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

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 2000). 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.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
MAY 2001 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
— FINAL TOPLINE —
May 15-20, 2001
N=1,202

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush 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 George W. Bush is handling his job as president? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
May, 2001	53	32	15=100
April, 2001	56	27	17=100
February, 2001	53	21	26=100
Clinton: May, 1993+	44	46	10=100
Bush: May, 1989+	63	18	19=100
Reagan: May, 1981+	68	21	11=100
Carter: May, 1977+	64	19	17=100

+ Gallup trend

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>
May, 2001	45	36	19=100
April, 2001	45	30	25=100
January, 2001	43	36	21=100
July, 2000	36	46	18=100
May, 2000	40	42	18=100
March, 2000	38	43	19=100
February, 2000	40	43	17=100
January, 2000	39	41	20=100
December, 1999	38	42	20=100
October, 1999	34	50	16=100
Late September, 1999	34	46	20=100
September, 1999	35	48	17=100
August, 1999	40	44	16=100
July, 1999	36	45	19=100
June, 1999	37	46	17=100
May, 1999	38	44	18=100
March, 1999	38	47	15=100
February, 1999	37	51	12=100
Mid-January, 1999	36	51	13=100
January, 1999	38	50	12=100
Late December, 1998	39	56	5=100
Early December, 1998	38	49	13=100
November, 1998	41	48	11=100
September 21-22, 1998	44	44	12=100
September 19-20, 1998	46	41	13=100

Q. 2 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Early September, 1998	44	37	19=100
Late August, 1998	48	36	16=100
Early August, 1998	43	37	20=100
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

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=621]:

On another subject...

Q.3F1 What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today? (**RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR CLARITY — DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD ALL IN ORDER OF MENTION.**)

	Feb 2001	Aug 1999	June 1999	May 1998	Nov 1997	July 1996	June 1995	Mar 1994	Dec 1993	June 1993	Jan 1992	May 1990	Feb 1989	April 1987
22 Energy crisis/Rising gas/heating prices	4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
8 Education	11	8	7	9	5	6	6	5	5	5	2	4	4	0
7 Economy (general)	7	2	3	4	4	4	5	4	6	17	43	5	4	7
6 Morality/Ethics/Family values	12	13	11	10	9	13	12	10	6	7	3	5	2	3
5 Unemployment/Lack of jobs	6	3	4	6	6	7	10	12	15	19	22	7	9	13
5 Teen violence in school	1	6	7	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4 Health care/Cost/availability of health care	6	6	3	4	5	4	7	14	14	11	3	3	1	*
4 Crime/Gangs/Justice system	8	12	11	13	12	19	22	31	25	7	3	7	8	3
4 Drugs/Alcohol	6	6	5	7	7	8	5	10	8	5	4	37	23	6
3 Poverty	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	2	3	3	1	3	4	6
3 Social Security	1	4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Q.3F1 CONTINUED ...

	Feb 2001	Aug 1999	June 1999	May 1998	Nov 1997	July 1996	June 1995	Mar 1994	Dec 1993	June 1993	Jan 1992	May 1990	Feb 1989	April 1987
3 Taxes	3	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	2	4	1	3	2	0
Youth/Teenage kids														
3 not acting responsibly	2	2	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3 Environment/Pollution	1	*	*	2	1	1	1	2	1	*	1	8	2	0
2 Other International issues	2	2	4	3	--	*	4	1	2	3	4	6	10	22
Race relations/Racism/Racial														
2 profiling	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	0	0
2 Other economic issues	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2 Issues related to elderly	2	1	3	3	1	2	*	1	1	2	1	2	2	0
2 Dissatisfaction with govt/politics	4	3	3	5	4	8	6	5	2	5	2	2	1	0
1 Medicare	1	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Inflation/Difference														
1 between wages/costs	3	1	*	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3
1 Too many guns/Gun control	1	4	6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1 Recession/slowing of the economy	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5	*	*	*
1 Immigration	2	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Deficit/National debt/Balanced														
1 budget	1	3	1	6	5	7	9	5	6	13	4	11	19	12
1 Other social issues	3	4	4	3	--	2	0	*	3	*	*	*	*	*
1 Welfare abuse	1	2	1	3	1	7	5	2	*	*	*	*	*	*
1 Uneven distribution of wealth	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Defense issues/National security/														
1 Military buildup	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1 Abortion 1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	--
1 Homelessness	2	2	4	2	3	2	4	3	5	5	6	8	10	*
1 Terrorism	*	*	*	*	*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3 Other	5	1	6	5	6	2	2	2	*	4	1	5	9	1
* None	2	*	1	*	1	*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
8 Don't know/No answer	7	11	11	12	7	6	3	4	6	2	3	1	3	3
40 ECONOMIC (NET)	26	15	8	16	18	18	28	26	33	53	76	26	28	35
7 HEALTHCARE (NET)	10	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4 POVERTY/HOMELESS (NET)	5	6	6	6	6	5	8	6	*	*	*	*	*	*
3 DEFENSE/INTER-NATIONAL(NET)	5	7	11	5	10	1	9	2	*	*	*	*	*	*

ASK ALL:

Q.4 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?
[INSERT ITEM; ROTATE]

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a. George W. Bush's announcement of support for a national missile defense system	15	26	25	33	1=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=621]

b.F1 The controversy surrounding former Senator Bob Kerrey's role in the death of unarmed civilians during the Vietnam War	10	20	22	47	1=100
c.F1 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	34	36	15	15	0=100
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1=100
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1=100
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2=100
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*=100
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*=100
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1=100
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*=100
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1=100
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*=100
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1=100
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1=100
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*=100
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1=100
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*=100
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1=100
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*=100
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*=100
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1=100
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*=100
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*=100
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	*=100
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1=100
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*=100
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1=100
d.F1 The delay in Timothy McVeigh's execution	32	39	20	8	1=100

Q.4 CONTINUED ...

		Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/Ref
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=581]:						
e.F2	The high price of gasoline these days	61	26	6	6	1=100
	Early October, 2000	56	25	12	6	1=100
	June, 2000 ¹	61	25	9	5	*=100
	March, 2000	58	28	10	4	*=100
	October, 1990	62	26	8	4	*=100
	September, 1990	56	28	11	5	*=100
	August, 1990	57	27	10	5	1=100
f.F2	George W. Bush's new energy policy	22	33	21	22	2=100
ASK ALL:						
g.	The trial and conviction of a Ku Klux Klansman for the bombing of a black church in 1963	16	25	23	35	1=100

NO QUESTION 5, 6

On another subject...

Q.7 In general, are you happy or unhappy that the Republican Party maintained control of the U.S. Congress last year?²

		Nov <u>1998</u>	Jan <u>1996</u>	Aug <u>1995</u>	June <u>1995</u>	April <u>1995</u>	March <u>1995</u>	Dec <u>1994</u>
44	Happy	47	47	50	46	52	55	57
38	Unhappy	32	43	39	41	36	31	31
<u>18</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>21</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹ In August 1990 through June 2000 the question was worded "Recent increases in the price of gasoline."

² From December 1994 to August April 1995 question was worded "In general, are you happy or unhappy that the Republican Party won control of the U.S. Congress? In January 1996, the question was worded "Generally, are you happy or unhappy that the Republican Party won control of the U.S. Congress in November 1994?"

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=581]:

Q.8F2 What do you think is the most important thing that has happened in the new Congress so far this year? **(RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR CLARITY — DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD ALL IN ORDER OF MENTION.)**

- 14 Bush tax cut proposal/Taxes
- 4 Budget
- 4 Gas prices/Energy shortages/Energy
- 2 Republicans gaining strength/control of Congress
- 2 Environment
- 2 Education
- 1 Economy/Economic issues
- 1 Abortion
- 1 Drilling in Alaska
- 1 Social Security/The elderly
- 1 Bipartisanship/Cooperating with administration
- 1 Campaign finance
- 1 Interest rates
- 1 China/US plane incident
- 1 Gun control
- 1 Health care/Medicare
- 1 Democrats gaining strength/control of Congress
- * Hasn't followed closely enough to say
- 10 Nothing important has happened yet
- 7 Other
- 49 Don't know/Refused
- 2 No answer

ASK ALL:

Q.9 Generally, what's the better situation: that a president's political party also have a controlling majority in Congress, OR is it better that one party controls the White House while the other party controls the Congress... or don't you think it matters too much one way or the other?

		July <u>2000</u>	March <u>1998</u>	Aug <u>1997</u>	May <u>1992</u>
19	President's party also control	25	19	18	26
28	One party control each	27	34	32	23
45	Doesn't matter	41	40	42	40
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100	100

Q.10 This year, have Republicans and Democrats in Washington been working together more to solve problems, OR have they been bickering and opposing one another more than usual?

		July <u>2000</u>	Aug <u>1999</u>	Aug <u>1998</u>	Nov <u>1997</u>	Aug <u>1997</u>	June <u>1997</u>	Oct <u>1995</u>	Aug <u>1993</u>
34	Working together more	21	20	27	38	43	34	21	20
41	Opposing each other more	54	68	51	45	46	49	72	57
9	Same as in past (VOL)	10	4	8	7	3	6	3	13
<u>16</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>15</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.11 Please tell me if you think the REPUBLICAN Party or the DEMOCRATIC Party could do a better job in each of the following areas... (First,) which party could do a better job of...(READ AND ROTATE, EXCEPT ITEM i)

		Republican <u>Party</u>	Democratic <u>Party</u>	(VOL) <u>Both</u> <u>Equally</u>	(VOL) <u>Neither</u>	Don't <u>Know</u>
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=621]:						
a.F1	Making wise decisions about foreign policy	39	34	11	3	13=100
	June, 1999	37	36	7	6	14=100
	March, 1999	42	37	6	4	11=100
	September, 1998	40	31	11	5	13=100
	March, 1998	41	33	12	4	10=100
	October, 1994	47	30	7	5	11=100
	July, 1994 ³	51	31	4	6	8=100
	December, 1993	49	23	n/a	10	18=100
	May, 1990	39	28	n/a	17	16=100
b.F1	Keeping the country prosperous	33	44	8	5	10=100
	June, 1999	37	43	8	3	9=100
	March, 1999	39	44	5	3	9=100
	September, 1998	40	38	8	4	10=100
	March, 1998	40	40	12	3	5=100
	October, 1994	45	33	5	7	10=100
	October, 1992 ⁴	36	45	10	0	9=100
	October, 1990 ⁵	37	35	0	0	28=100
c.F1	Protecting the environment	25	51	7	4	13=100
	June, 1999	27	45	7	5	16=100
	September, 1998	25	51	8	4	12=100
	March, 1998	22	56	8	5	9=100
	July, 1994	28	56	4	4	8=100
	December, 1993	22	46	n/a	12	20=100
	May, 1990	24	40	n/a	19	17=100

³ In July 1994 and May 1990, question was worded "Making wise decisions about the country's defense policies."

⁴ Gallup poll conducted Oct. 23-25, 1992 based on registered voters.

⁵ Gallup poll Oct 25-28, 1990.

Q.11 CONTINUED ...

		Republican	Democratic	(VOL) Both	(VOL) Neither	Don't Know
		<u>Party</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Equally</u>		
d.F1	Dealing with taxes	37	40	8	6	9=100
	June, 1999	38	38	5	7	12=100
	September, 1998	41	37	7	5	10=100
	March, 1998	39	40	6	7	8=100
	October, 1994	43	34	5	9	9=100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=581]:

e.F2	Improving our educational system	36	38	11	6	9=100
	June, 1999	29	52	7	5	7=100
	March, 1999	33	46	6	5	10=100
	September, 1998	34	42	10	4	10=100
	March, 1998	29	49	10	5	7=100
	July, 1994	37	46	4	5	8=100
	January, 1992	28	48	n/a	10	14=100
	May, 1990	30	42	n/a	14	14=100
f.F2	Keeping Social Security financially sound	35	43	6	5	11=100
	June, 1999	33	41	4	9	13=100
	September, 1998	37	42	7	5	9=100
	May, 1990	28	41	n/a	16	15=100
g.F2	Dealing with the nation's energy problems	36	34	10	7	13=100
h.F2	Striking the right balance between protecting the environment and keeping the economy growing	33	44	8	3	12=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=621]:

Q.12F1 Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be a more important priority for this country...
(READ AND ROTATE)?

		----- <i>Newsweek</i> -----	
		<u>May 2001</u>	<u>April 2001</u>
42	Protecting the environment [OR]	41	44
49	Developing new sources of energy	52	49
<u>9</u>	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=581]:

Q13F2 Which should be a higher priority for the president and Congress now... **(READ AND ROTATE)?**

- 31 Controlling rising gasoline prices and dealing with current energy shortages [OR]
- 56 Trying to find new energy supplies that will deal with our long term problems?
- 10 **(DO NOT READ)** Both are equally important
- 3 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused
- 100

ASK ALL:

Q.15 In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat or Independent?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL) No <u>Preference</u>	(VOL) Other <u>Party</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
May, 2001	27	30	37	4	1	1=100
September, 2000	27	34	30	6	*	3=100
February, 2000	27	30	34	6	1	2=100
Late September, 1999	24	31	36	5	1	3=100
August, 1999	25	33	37	3	*	2=100
November, 1997	25	32	38	3	*	2=100
June, 1996	30	33	34	2	*	1=100
February, 1996	30	32	32	3	1	2=100
October, 1995	30	30	35	3	*	2=100
April, 1995	30	29	37	3	*	1=100
March, 1995	35	28	32	--	2	3=100
February, 1995	33	30	33	--	2	2=100
December, 1994	35	31	30	--	2	2=100
November, 1994	28	31	35	4	*	2=100
October, 1994	31	32	33	3	*	1=100
Early October, 1994	33	30	32	--	2	3=100
July, 1994	29	33	35	2	*	1=100
June, 1992	28	32	36	1	*	3=100
May, 1990	28	33	28	9	*	2=100
February, 1989	31	38	23	7	*	1=100
May, 1988	28	38	26	6	*	2=100
January, 1988	27	39	26	6	*	2=100
May, 1987	25	37	28	8	*	2=100

ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO ANSWERED INDEPENDENT/NO PREFERENCE/OTHER/DON'T KNOW

(Q.15=3, 4, 5, 9) [N=514]:

Q.16 As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

- 35 Republican
- 38 Democrat
- 27 Other/Don't know/Refused **(VOL)**
- 100

ASK REPUBLICANS/REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (Q.15=1 OR Q.16=1) [N=532]:

Q.17 How good a job is the Republican Party doing these days in standing up for its traditional positions on such things as reducing the size of government, cutting taxes and promoting conservative social values — would you say the Party is doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job or a poor job?

		Rep/Lean Rep RV's	
		<u>Sept 2000</u>	
10	Excellent		6
50	Good		43
32	Only fair		44
5	Poor		5
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused		<u>2</u>
100			100

ASK DEMOCRATS AND DEMOCRATIC LEANERS ONLY (Q.15=2 OR Q.16=2) [N=538]:

Q.18 How good a job is the Democratic Party doing these days in standing up for its traditional positions on such things as protecting the interests of minorities, helping the poor and needy, and representing working people — would you say the Party is doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job or a poor job?

		Dem/Lean Dem RV's	
		<u>Sept 2000</u>	
8	Excellent		11
39	Good		52
40	Only fair		32
7	Poor		4
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused		<u>1</u>
100			100

On another subject...

E.1 How confident are you that George W. Bush is taking the right approach to solving the nation's energy problems... Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

		May	May
		<u>17-20</u>	<u>15-16</u>
14	Very confident	14	14
38	Somewhat confident	38	38
23	Not too confident	20	25
20	Not at all confident	23	18
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100
		(N=491)	(N=711)

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=581]:

Q.29F2 Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be the more important priority for U.S. energy policy... **(READ AND ROTATE)?**

		<i>Newsweek</i> <u>May 2001</u>
44	Expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and the construction of new power plants [OR]	42
49	More energy conservation and regulation on energy use and prices	51
<u>7</u>	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>
100		100

NO QUESTION 30

ASK ALL:

Q.31 How much of a problem has **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)** been for you and your family lately — a serious problem, a minor problem, or not a problem at all?

		<u>A Serious Problem</u>	<u>A Minor Problem</u>	<u>Not A Problem At All</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	The rising price of gasoline	49	37	14	*=100
b.	The increase in home utility costs, such as electricity, gas and oil	41	40	18	1=100
c.	Energy shortages in your area	16	27	56	1=100

Q.32 Now I'm going to list a few steps some people may be taking lately to deal with increasing energy costs. Not everyone will have done these. Have you **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)** lately, or not?

		<u>Yes, Have Done This</u>	<u>No, Haven't Done This</u>	<u>(VOL) Does not Apply</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Been driving less to save money on gas	52	43	5	*=100
b.	Been shopping around for gasoline at the best price	65	32	3	*=100
c.	Changed your plans for summer travel to avoid driving long distances	31	60	9	*=100
d.	Started car-pooling to work or taking public transportation	16	68	16	0=100
e.	Thought about buying a car that gets better gas mileage	36	55	9	*=100
f.	Been adjusting the temperature in your house to lower your utility bills	69	27	4	*=100

ASK ALL:

Finally, I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only...

Q.41 Do you use a computer at your workplace, at school, at home or anywhere else on at least an occasional basis?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
May, 2001	75	25	*=100
April, 2001	72	28	*=100
February, 2001	72	28	0=100
January, 2001	71	29	*=100
July, 2000	68	31	1=100
June, 2000	68	31	1=100
April, 2000	68	32	*=100
March, 2000 ⁶	72	28	0=100
February, 2000	67	33	*=100
January, 2000	68	32	*=100
December, 1999	67	33	*=100
October, 1999	67	33	*=100
Late September, 1999	68	32	*=100
September, 1999	70	30	*=100
August, 1999	67	33	*=100
July, 1999	68	32	*=100
June, 1999	64	35	1=100
May, 1999	66	33	1=100
April, 1999	71	29	*=100
March, 1999	68	32	*=100
February, 1999	68	32	*=100
January, 1999	69	31	*=100
Early December, 1998	64	36	*=100
Early September, 1998	64	36	*=100
Late August, 1998	66	34	0=100
Early August, 1998	66	34	*=100
April, 1998	61	39	*=100
January, 1998	65	35	*=100
November, 1997	66	34	*=100
June, 1997	60	40	0=100
Early September, 1996	56	44	*=100
July, 1996	56	44	*=100
April, 1996	58	42	*=100
March, 1996	61	39	*=100
February, 1996	60	40	0=100
January, 1996	59	41	0=100

⁶

In March 2000, "or anywhere else" was added to the question wording.

IF "1, YES" (USE A COMPUTER) IN Q.41, ASK:

Q.42 Do you ever go online to access the Internet or World Wide Web or to send and receive email?

BASED ON TOTAL RESPONDENTS:

	<u>Goes Online</u>	<u>Doesn't Go Online</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
May, 2001	64	36	0=100
April, 2001	62	38	0=100
February, 2001	60	40	*=100
January, 2001	61	39	0=100
July, 2000	55	45	*=100
June, 2000	56	44	*=100
April, 2000	54	46	*=100
March, 2000	61	39	0=100
February, 2000	52	48	0=100
January, 2000	52	48	*=100
December, 1999	53	47	0=100
October, 1999	50	50	0=100
Late September, 1999	52	48	*=100
September, 1999	53	47	0=100
August, 1999	52	48	0=100
July, 1999	49	51	0=100
June, 1999	50	50	*=100
May, 1999	48	52	0=100
April, 1999	51	49	*=100
March, 1999	49	51	*=100
February, 1999	49	51	*=100
January, 1999	47	53	*=100
Early December, 1998	42	58	0=100
November, 1998	37	63	*=100
Early September, 1998	42	58	*=100
Late August, 1998	43	57	*=100
Early August, 1998	41	59	*=100
April, 1998	36	64	0=100
January, 1998	37	63	0=100
November, 1997	36	63	1=100
July, 1996	23	77	0=100
April, 1996	21	79	*=100
March, 1996	22	78	0=100
February, 1996	21	79	*=100
January, 1996	21	79	0=100
June, 1995 ⁷	14	86	*=100

7

The 1995 figure combines responses from two separate questions:

(1) Do you or anyone in your household ever use a modem to connect to any computer bulletin boards, information services such as CompuServe or Prodigy, or other computers at other locations? (IF YES, PROBE: Is that you, someone else or both?)

(2) Do you, yourself, ever use a computer at (work) (school) (work or school) to connect with computer bulletin boards, information services such as America Online or Prodigy, or other computers over the Internet?