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The View of Congress
MORE RANCOROUS, BUT NOT “DO NOTHING”

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- * Social Security over Tax Cuts.
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- * Who’s George W. Bush?

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The View of Congress

MORE RANCOROUS, BUT NOT “DO NOTHING”

As Congress heads home for the summer campaign season, both parties face tough sells for their election themes. Despite Democratic charges of a Republican-led do-nothing Congress, Americans see the 105th Congress as no different than others in recent memory. But the GOP will have to shore up its image on issues, as the public lines up with Democrats on the issue of health care reform.

The dominant perception of this Congress is that it has been more rancorous than usual: 51% of the public says members have been bickering and opposing one another more than usual. Asked about Congress' productivity, only 15% of Americans say that it has accomplished less than most — 18% think it has accomplished more. Even among those who disapprove of the Republican leadership, 55% think that this Congress has been as active as previous ones.

These are the principal findings of a Pew Research Center telephone survey of 1,189 adults, conducted July 29-August 2, 1998. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.5%.

Public Wants Action on HMOs

Americans' perception of an active Congress may reflect public support for several proposals to regulate health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and expand patient rights. Early this summer, the public ranked HMO regulation as very important to them personally and for the country.¹ This month, even when presented with arguments against new restrictions, most Americans back federal involvement.

Fully 53% of Americans support the creation of national standards for patients in HMOs and managed care plans; only 35% say that such regulation would “get the government too involved in health care.” Similarly, 53% of the public supports changing the law to allow patients to sue insurance companies that deny or delay medical benefits. Only 35% say that such changes would “increase the costs of insurance too much.”

¹ Pew Research Center, “Voters Not So Angry, Not So Interested,” June 15, 1998.

Not surprisingly, the Democratic rank and file support both proposals: 65% favor national standards and 57% favor granting patients the right to sue their insurance companies.

Republicans are divided in their attitudes toward national standards (42% support vs. 44% oppose). A plurality favors legislation to allow lawsuits (46% vs. 40% oppose). Majorities of Independents support both proposals.

Partisanship and HMO Reform			
	<u>Reps</u>	<u>Dems</u>	<u>Inds</u>
<i>Create national standards?</i>	%	%	%
Yes, patients rights	42	65	54
No, too much gov't	44	26	36
Don't know	<u>14</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Allow patients to sue?</i>			
Yes, change laws	46	57	56
No, increase costs too much	40	32	35
Don't know	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100	100

Americans' preference for government regulation of managed care aligns them with the Democratic Party on this issue. A plurality of the public (39%) expresses more confidence in congressional Democrats "to do the right thing regarding the regulation of HMOs"; only 29% say the same of the Republicans on the Hill. The remainder are undecided.

A Back Seat for a Tax Cut

In another top issue on the congressional agenda — the allocation of a potential budget surplus — the public supports President Clinton's call to use a surplus to stabilize Social Security and Medicare. A clear plurality (39%) choose this option over increased spending on domestic programs (29%), paying off the national debt (19%) or providing a tax cut (10%).

Saving Social Security			
	<u>Jan</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>
<i>Use budget surplus...</i>	%	%	%
For a tax cut	11	9	10
To pay off national debt	22	17	19
For increased domestic spending	33	28	29
To secure Social Security & Medicare	32	44	39
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

When the choice is simply between a tax cut and making the Social Security system financially sound, Americans overwhelmingly opt for shoring up the retirement program by a margin of more than three-to-one: 76% favor focusing on Social Security; 22% favor a tax cut. Even a 68% majority of Republicans prefer dealing with these entitlements over cutting taxes.

Like their elder counterparts, Generation Xers choose spending over taxes by a wide margin (65% vs. 33%, respectively). However, those between the ages of 18 and 29 are the least supportive of any age group. When given the option, they overwhelmingly select increased spending on domestic programs over stabilizing Social Security (48% vs. 19%, respectively).

Congressional Horse Race

Partisan preferences in congressional voting intentions have fluctuated throughout the year, with the two parties in a statistical dead heat as recently as June. Today, Democrats hold a 49%-to-42% advantage over Republicans among registered voters. The unsettled opinion on this question may reflect a lack of conviction and engagement. Just 13% of the public reports paying very close attention to news about the campaign.

	Rep./ <u>Lean Rep</u> %	Dem./ <u>Lean Dem</u> %	Other/ <u>Undecided</u> %
August 1998	42	49	9=100
June 1998	44	46	10=100
March 1998	40	52	8=100
January 1998	41	51	8=100
August 1997	45	48	7=100

* Based on registered voters

Previous Pew Research Center surveys have shown greater indications of Republican strength. There is stronger support for incumbents this year than four years ago and an expected lower-than-usual turnout may also help GOP chances.²

China’s Image

Though few Americans paid very close attention to President Clinton’s trip to China, significantly more Americans see China moving in the direction of democracy and capitalism today than did so before Clinton’s June visit. Fully 35% of the public thinks that China’s government is “becoming more democratic” and “allowing more freedoms”; only 26% thought so in an October 1997 Gallup poll. An even greater number (41%) think that the Chinese economy is becoming more like the “free-market system found in the United States,” up from 34% in the earlier survey.

President Clinton’s trip attracted the attention of only a small group of Americans; just 14% followed the story very closely. Of those, almost half (47%) believe China’s government is becoming more democratic; 50% think its economy is moving toward a free-market system.

² Pew Research Center, “Voters Not So Angry, Not So Interested,” June 15, 1998.

However, Americans' overall opinion about China stayed in its post-Tiananmen Square slump. Only 32% of the public gives China a "very" or "mostly" favorable rating. This is roughly comparable to public opinion since the demonstrations but significantly less than the 72% who rated China favorably prior to the government crackdown.

Attitudes toward Mexico and Russia have also soured over the past several years. Less than half (46%) of the public has a favorable impression of Mexico, a dip of 11 percentage points since March 1996. Opinion toward Russia has taken an even greater fall: Only 37% of Americans give it a favorable rating, down from 56% last November.

The public is even more critical of the two nations that conducted nuclear tests in May. India is given a favorable rating by 29% of Americans; Pakistan is viewed positively by only 16%. Indeed, Pakistan is almost as unpopular as Iran, which receives favorable ratings from only 11% of the public. With 36% of the public highly attentive to news of the nuclear explosions this spring, it was the most closely followed international story of the decade that did not involve U.S. troops.

Americans' Opinions of Foreign Nations †				
		<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Can't Rate*</u>
		%	%	%
<i>Mexico</i>				
	August 1998	46	40	14=100
	March 1996		57	32
				11=100
<i>Russia</i>				
	August 1998	37	46	17=100
	March 1996		52	39
				9=100
<i>China</i>				
	August 1998	32	53	15=100
	March 1996		39	51
	March 1989		72	13
				15=100
<i>India</i>				
	August 1998	29	42	29=100
<i>Pakistan</i>				
	August 1998	16	53	31=100
<i>Iran</i>				
	August 1998	11	75	14=100
	March 1996		6	84
				10=100

* Combination of "never heard of" and "can't rate"
† All trends from Gallup

News Interest Index

News about the shooting deaths of two police officers at the United States Capitol riveted the American public last month. With 45% saying they followed the news very closely, it was the third most closely followed story of the year. Only the school shootings in Arkansas and Oregon drew larger audiences.

The searing heat wave is of considerably more interest to ordinary Americans than are allegations about President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky: 38% followed the weather very closely compared to just 29% who followed the scandal last month. During the time the poll was in the

field, the headlines were dominated by news that both Clinton and Lewinsky would provide testimony in the case, but interest in the story showed no increase over June, when it was off the front pages.

News about the end of the United Auto Workers' strike drew the very close attention of 20% of the general public and 31% of union members. The cloning of mice in Hawaii was followed closely by only 6% of Americans, far less than the 17% who tracked news about the cloned sheep, Dolly.

The media itself was in the news last month, with CNN and Time magazine admitting that their story about possible nerve-gas use during the Vietnam War was inaccurate. Half (49%) of the public is aware of this admission, and 55% think the story is part of a larger trend, saying the media as a whole is generally less accurate these days.

Possible Republican presidential contender George W. Bush has also been in the news lately. Fully 56% of the public can correctly identify him as the governor of Texas or the son of the former president. Republicans are no more likely to know Bush than are Democrats (61%-to-57%). Even half (52%) of Independents can correctly identify the Texas governor. Only 17% of the public confused him with his famous father, former President George Bush.

Will the Real George Bush Please Stand Up?	
<i>Who is George W. Bush?</i>	<u>%</u>
Correct answer:	56
Governor of Texas	24
Son of former President	32
Incorrect answer	22
Former President	17
All other mentions	5
Don't know	<u>22</u>
	100

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

	U.S. Capitol Shooting	Heat Wave	Allegations Of Clinton's Misconduct	Clinton's Decision To Testify ♦	(N)
<i>Total</i>	45	38	29	25	(1189)
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	41	34	30	28	(588)
Female	49	41	28	24	(601)
<i>Race</i>					
White	45	36	27	26	(955)
*Hispanic	32	38	26	16	(80)
Black	50	46	39	28	(127)
<i>Age</i>					
Under 30	38	27	24	19	(263)
30-49	40	38	26	24	(501)
50+	57	44	36	32	(413)
<i>Education</i>					
College Grad.	40	30	26	25	(424)
Some College	44	40	32	33	(276)
High School Grad	47	41	27	22	(386)
< H. S. Grad.	50	38	36	26	(95)
<i>Region</i>					
East	50	34	28	29	(208)
Midwest	41	34	24	20	(295)
South	50	44	30	23	(426)
West	37	34	35	33	(260)
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	46	34	33	33	(320)
Democrat	49	44	31	22	(390)
Independent	44	36	25	24	(403)

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.

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

♦ Asked of respondents from 7/30-8/2/98 (N=877).

CONTINUED...

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

	Lewinsky's Agreement To Testify	End Of UAW Strike	Clinton's Trip To China	State & Local Elections	Mice Cloning	(N)
<i>Total</i>	24	20	14	13	6	(1189)
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	26	22	16	14	7	(588)
Female	23	19	13	12	6	(601)
<i>Race</i>						
White	23	20	14	13	6	(955)
*Hispanic	22	12	8	6	7	(80)
Black	33	28	19	15	7	(127)
<i>Age</i>						
Under 30	18	14	8	10	8	(263)
30-49	24	17	11	12	7	(501)
50+	30	28	23	16	5	(413)
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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 1,189 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period July 29 - August 2, 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=595) or Form 2 (N=594), 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.

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
AUGUST 1998 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
— FINAL TOPLINE —
July 29 - August 2, 1998
N = 1,189

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.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>
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

NO QUESTION 3

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? **[READ AND ROTATE LIST]**

NOTE: ALWAYS ASK "C" IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING "B"; ALWAYS ASK "C2" IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING "C". ROTATE ALL OTHER ITEMS

	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	13	30	28	28	1=100
June, 1998	9	27	33	30	1=100
April, 1998 ³	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 ⁴	38	34	17	11	*=100
October, 1990	18	32	28	22	*=100
b. The investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct against Bill Clinton	29	34	22	14	1=100
June, 1998 ⁵	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. Monica Lewinsky's agreement to testify in this matter in return for immunity from prosecution	24	33	22	19	2=100
[ITEM ASKED JULY 30 TO AUGUST 2; N=877]					
c.2 Bill Clinton's decision to testify by videotape in the Lewinsky investigation	25	28	23	22	2=100
d. The heat wave and its impact throughout the country	38	39	14	8	1=100
e. The cloning of mice by scientists in Hawaii	6	15	24	52	3=100
April, 1997 ⁷	17	33	26	23	1=100

³ In April 1998, September 1994 and October 1990, story was listed as "Candidates and election campaigns in your state."

⁴ In November 1990, story was listed as "Candidates and elections in your state."

⁵ In June, April and March 1998 story was listed as "Allegations of sexual misconduct against Bill Clinton."

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

⁷ In April 1997, story was listed as "The cloning of a sheep by a Scottish biologist."

Q.4 CONTINUED ...

		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	(VOL) DK
f.	The shooting of two police officers at the United States Capitol	45	37	13	4	1=100
g.	President Clinton's trip to China	14	28	28	29	1=100
h.	The end of the United Auto Workers strike against General Motors	20	34	26	19	1=100

On another subject...

Q.5 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.5, ASK:

Q.5a As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=852]

	<u>Republican/ Lean Rep.</u>	<u>Democrat/ Lean Dem.</u>	<u>Other/ Undecided</u>
August, 1998	42	49	9=100
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 ⁸	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

8

Based on likely voters.

ASK ALL:

Q.6 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=852]

	National <u>Issue</u>	State/local <u>Issue</u>	Political <u>Party</u>	Character/ <u>Experience</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>None</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>
August, 1998	20	38	5	31	2	*	4=100
June, 1998	22	37	4	32	1	1	3=100
March, 1998	18	37	6	35	1	1	2=100
November, 1996	23	38	6	25	2	*	6=100
October, 1996	19	45	7	26	1	1	1=100
Late September, 1996	25	38	6	24	2	*	5=100
Early September, 1996	18	42	6	30	1	*	3=100
November, 1994	22	38	5	30	1	*	4=100
Late October, 1994	22	38	3	29	3	1	4=100
Early October, 1994	22	27	5	39	2	1	4=100
<i>CBS/NYT: 10/24-28, 1986</i>	22	25	6	40	1	1	5=100
<i>CBS/NYT: 9/28-10/1, 1986</i>	20	23	9	41	3	*	4=100

ROTATE QUESTIONS 7 AND 8.

Q.7 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=852]

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	Not a <u>Factor</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
August, 1998	21	18	57	4=100
June, 1998	20	18	57	5=100
March, 1998	21	15	59	5=100
September, 1996	24	18	51	7=100
November, 1994	17	21	55	7=100
October, 1994	17	21	57	5=100
Early October, 1994	17	23	54	6=100
<i>CBS/NYT (BUSH): 10/28-31, 1990</i>	19	15	61	6=100
<i>CBS/NYT (REAGAN): 10/24-28, 1986</i>	26	12	55	7=100
<i>CBS/NYT (REAGAN): 9/28-10/1, 1986</i>	26	16	51	7=100
<i>CBS/NYT (REAGAN): 10/23-28, 1982</i>	23	21	51	5=100

Q.8 Thinking about your vote for Congress this fall, will the issue of which party controls Congress, the Republicans or the Democrats, be a factor in your vote, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=852]

	June <u>1996</u>
44 Yes, will be a factor	45
53 No, will not	51
<u>3</u> Don't know/Refused	<u>4</u>
100	100

Now I would like to ask you about some things that have been in the news. Not everyone will have heard about them...

Q.9 There has been some talk about George W. Bush as a possible candidate for president in the year 2000. Do you happen to know who he is? **(DO NOT READ RESPONSES)**

56 Correct Answer
 24 Governor of Texas (*correct*)
 32 George Bush's son; son of former president (*correct*)
 17 Former president
 1 Florida governor; candidate for governor in Florida
 4 All other mentions
22 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q.10 Do you happen to know what country's team won the World Cup soccer tournament this year? **(DO NOT READ RESPONSES)**

38 France/French team (*correct*)
 4 Brazil
 1 Italy
 1 Germany
 * Croatia
 6 All other mentions
50 Don't know/Refused
 100

NOW, ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

Q.10a All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
August, 1998	50	44	6=100
February, 1998	59	37	4=100
January, 1998	46	50	4=100
September, 1997	45	49	6=100
August, 1997	49	46	5=100
January, 1997	38	58	4=100
July, 1996	29	67	4=100
March, 1996	28	70	2=100
October, 1995	23	73	4=100
June, 1995	25	73	2=100
April, 1995	23	74	3=100
July, 1994	24	73	3=100
March, 1994	24	71	5=100
October, 1993	22	73	5=100
September, 1993	20	75	4=100
May, 1993	22	71	7=100
January, 1993	39	50	11=100
January, 1992	28	68	4=100
November, 1991	34	61	5=100
<i>Late February, 1991 (Gallup)</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>3=100</i>
August, 1990	47	48	5=100
May, 1990	41	54	5=100
January, 1989	45	50	5=100
September, 1988	50	45	5=100
May, 1988	41	54	5=100
January, 1988	39	55	6=100

Q.11 In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

		Feb <u>1998</u>	Feb <u>1997</u>	Jan <u>1992</u>	Aug <u>1989</u>	Aug <u>1988</u>	May <u>1988</u>	Jan <u>1988</u>	June <u>1985</u>
33	Get facts straight	34	37	49	54	40	48	44	55
58	Stories often inaccurate	63	56	44	44	50	43	48	34
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.12 Some journalists and news organizations have been in the news recently because of inaccurate or questionable reporting. Did you see or hear anything recently about CNN and Time magazine's admission that their story about possible nerve-gas use during the Vietnam War was inaccurate?

49	Aware
49	Not aware
<u>2</u>	Don't know
100	

Q.13 Do you think this case of inaccuracy is an isolated incident, OR do you think the news media as a whole is generally less accurate these days?

31	Isolated incidents
55	Media generally less accurate
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT....

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N:595]

Q.14F1 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?

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

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=594]

Q.15F2 Compared to recent Congresses, would you say THIS Congress has accomplished more, accomplished less, or accomplished about the same amount?

		Nov <u>1997</u>	April <u>1997</u>
18	More	23	10
15	Less	12	22
60	Same	59	59
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>
100		100	100

ASK ALL:

Q.16 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**)

		June	Jan
		<u>1998</u>	<u>1998</u>
10	For a tax cut;	9	11
19	To pay off the national debt more quickly;	17	22
29	For increased spending on domestic programs such as health, education, and the environment;	28	33
39	To help make the Social Security and Medicare programs financially sound;	44	32
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL)	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=595]

Q.17F1 Still thinking about the budget surplus, if there were only TWO options which would you prefer — a tax cut, or making Social Security financially sound?

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=594]

Q.18F2 Still thinking about the budget surplus, if there were only TWO options which would you prefer — making Social Security financially sound, or a tax cut?

22	Tax cut
76	Make Social Security financially sound
1	Both/some of each (VOL-- DO NOT READ)
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

(N=1189)

ASK ALL:

Q.19 In your opinion, should the federal government create national standards to protect the rights of patients in HMOs and managed health care plans, OR would this get the government too involved in health care?

53	Government should create national standards
35	Too much government involvement
<u>12</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.20 Do you think the laws should be changed to allow patients to sue insurance companies which deny or delay medical treatments, OR do you think this would increase the costs of insurance too much?

53	Laws should be changed
35	Would increase costs too much
<u>12</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.20a Who do you have the most confidence in to do the right thing regarding the regulation of HMOs and managed care plans — the Republicans in Congress or the Democrats in Congress?

29	Republicans
39	Democrats
<u>32</u>	Don't know
100	

Q.21 Next, I'd like your overall opinion of some foreign countries. First, is your overall opinion of (INSERT ITEM; ROTATE) very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly Unfavorable, or very unfavorable? (INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE")

		Very Favorable	Mostly Favorable	Mostly Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Never Heard Of	Can't Rate
ASK ALL:							
a.	China	5	27	34	19	1	14=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> June 1998	5	34	42	9		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> June 1997	5	28	36	14		17=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	6	33	35	16		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1994	4	37	38	15		7=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> November 1993	5	36	39	12		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1991	5	30	35	18		12=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> August 1989	5	26	35	23		11=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1989	12	60	10	3		15=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> September 1979 ⁹	18	46	18	7		10=100
ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=595]							
b.	India	4	25	27	15	1	28=100
c.	Russia	4	33	32	14	*	17=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> November 1997	7	49	29	7		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	6	46	29	10		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> April 1995	5	44	32	12		7=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1994	8	48	28	11		5=100
d.	Germany	13	52	14	5	*	16=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	17	58	13	3		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> June 1993	10	53	19	9		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1992	17	57	14	6		6=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1991	16	62	11	3		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1991	15	60	13	3		9=100
e.	Great Britain	23	50	6	5	1	15=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	30	51	8	2		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1991	49	40	4	1		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1991	45	45	3	1		6=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1989	29	57	4	3		7=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=594]							
f.	Japan	9	53	15	8	1	14=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	12	53	18	7		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> November 1995	4	42	34	11		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> Early June 1994	6	40	32	12		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> Mid June 1994	7	53	20	9		11=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> Early February 1994	8	62	19	8		4=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> Late February 1994	7	47	28	14		4=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> June 1993	7	41	30	16		6=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1992	9	38	28	22		3=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> November 1991	7	41	29	12		11=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1991	10	55	19	7		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1991	11	51	21	9		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> August 1989	10	48	23	10		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1989	12	57	16	7		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> December 1987	21	51	15	6		7=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> September 1979	32	50	8	4		7=100

9

In September 1979 question referred to "Mainland China"; categories were "somewhat" instead of "mostly."

Q.21 CONTINUED ...

		Very Favorable	Mostly Favorable	Mostly Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Never Heard Of	Can't Rate
g.	Mexico	8	38	27	13	1	13=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	11	46	23	9		11=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> June 1993	7	36	35	14		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1991	12	53	18	4		13=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1989	7	55	21	6		11=100
h.	Iran	1	10	35	40	1	13=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	1	5	38	46		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> August 1991	1	12	44	35		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1991	3	11	41	35		10=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> February 1991	2	11	39	40		8=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> August 1989	1	4	27	62		6=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1989	1	4	27	62		6=100
i.	Pakistan	1	15	32	21	2	29=100
j.	Cuba	3	18	36	26	1	16=100
	<i>CBS:</i> January 1998 ¹⁰	3	20	35	24		18=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> March 1996	2	8	40	41		9=100
	<i>Gallup:</i> April 1977	3	30	31	21		15=100

ASK ALL:

Q.22 From what you know or have read, do you think that China's government is becoming more democratic and is allowing more freedoms for Chinese citizens, or do you think this is not happening?

		<i>Gallup</i> <u>Oct 1997</u>
35	Becoming more democratic	26
51	Not happening	64
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>10</u>
100		100

Q.23 Do you think that China's economy is becoming more like the kind of free-market system found in the United States and other Western countries, or do you think this is not happening?

		<i>Gallup</i> <u>Oct 1997</u>
41	More free-market	34
44	Not happening	55
<u>15</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>11</u>
100		100

¹⁰

In January 1998 and April 1977 categories were "somewhat" instead of "mostly."

ASK ALL:

FINALLY, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES ONLY.

Q.33 Do you use a computer at your workplace, at school, or at home on at least an occasional basis?

		April 1998	Jan 1998	Nov 1997	June 1997	Late Sept 96 ¹¹	Early Sept 96	July 1996	April 1996	March 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996
66	Yes	61	65	66	60	59	56	56	58	61	60	59
34	No	39	35	34	40	41	44	44	42	39	40	41
*	Don't know/Refused	*	*	*	0	*	*	*	*	*	0	0
		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

IF YES (USE A COMPUTER) IN Q.33 AND FORM 1, ASK: [N=595]

Q.34F1 Do you ever use a computer at work, school or home to connect with computers over the Internet, the World Wide Web, or with information services such as America Online or Prodigy?

IF YES (USE A COMPUTER) IN Q.33 AND FORM 2, ASK: [N=594]

Q.35F2 Do you ever go online to send or receive email or to access the Internet or World Wide Web?

NOTE: Trend numbers are for Q.34F1 only.

		April 1998	Jan 1998	Nov 1997	July 1996	April 1996	March 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	June 1995 ¹²
BASED ON TOTAL RESPONDENTS:										
41	Goes online	36	37	36	23	21	22	21	21	14
25	Does not go online	25	28	29	33	37	39	39	38	86
*	Don't know/Refused	0	0	1	0	*	0	*	0	*
34	Not a computer user	39	35	34	44	42	39	40	41	n/a
		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

(N=1189)

¹¹ Based on registered voters only.

¹² 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?