

AEI STUDIES IN PUBLIC OPINION

ATTITUDES ABOUT WELFARE REFORM (updated March 6, 2003)

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President Bill Clinton’s 1992 campaign pledge to “end welfare as we know it” and the momentous change in the control of Congress in 1994 were the catalysts for passage of welfare reform, a subject that had rankled Washington for decades. When the legislation passed in 1996, both parties took credit for it. The law’s passage settled the issue for a time, and little was said about it by George W. Bush or Al Gore in the 2000 campaign.

With the battle over welfare reform concluded, the pollsters moved on to other subjects, and they have spent little time since 1996 assessing public reaction. Only now, as Congress debates reauthorization of the legislation, have a few pollsters returned to the subject. We know from their polls that most Americans haven’t followed the progress of the legislation closely. In a survey taken by the Kaiser Family Foundation, NPR, and Harvard School of Public Health in 2001, 50 percent of a national sample were aware that there had been a major change in the welfare law in the past five years. Fifty-six percent of current or former welfare recipients in the poll were aware of the change. Given this level of awareness, it is unlikely that many Americans will be deeply engaged in the debate in Washington about reauthorization.

What role did public opinion play in the debate over welfare reform? Americans brought a clear set of convictions concerning the government’s role in this area, and they never wavered on those convictions. The first articulation of those core beliefs about the persistence of poverty, the responsibility of the federal government, the importance of a work requirement, and the suspicion of direct cash outlays can be seen in questions asked in the earliest days of public opinion polling. What’s more, the poor and those receiving government assistance, generally shared those convictions.

Eighty-three percent in 1937, for example, did not believe poverty would ever be done away with. A 1939 Gallup poll found that 69 percent thought the government should provide for all people with no other means of subsistence. Another poll that year found that 81 percent favored a law “requiring all able-bodied people on relief to accept any job offered by a local government, no matter what kind of job it is. If they refuse to take the job, their relief is cut off.” Ninety percent in a 1937 poll said relief should be given as “work relief” as opposed to direct cash relief. Sixty-nine percent in 1939 said that people in their communities could get jobs in private industry if they tried. In another question, however, many thought finding work wouldn’t be easy. Sixty-eight percent in 1939 opposed giving “needy foreigners living in this country who have not applied for citizenship” relief. The stability of opinion on the central issues in this debate is nothing short of astonishing.

This report brings together a substantial collection of polls on welfare reform. Where possible, we have included the views of the poor and welfare recipients. It also includes a bibliography of work done by public opinion experts on the subject.

I. HISTORICAL COMPARISONS: *The data below show the stability of core values about issues in the welfare debate.*

- Do you think our government should or should not: Provide for all people who have no other means of subsistence?

			Should	Should Not
Mar. 1939	Roper/Fortune Magazine		69	23

- It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can’t take care of themselves. Do you agree or disagree with that?

			Agree	Disagree
Dec. 2001	Greenberg/Quinlan		66	32

- Do you think poverty will ever be done away with in this country?

Aug. 1937	Gallup	Yes 13	No 80
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- Do you think poverty will ever be done away with in this country?

Apr.-May 1998	Gallup/GM	Yes 8	No 91
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- Pennsylvania has a law requiring all able-bodied people on relief (including W.P.A. – Works Progress Administration) to accept any job offered by a local government, no matter what kind of job it is. If they refuse to take the job their relief is cut off. Do you favor this law?

Jul.-Aug. 1939	Gallup	Yes 81	No 19
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- One proposal that's being discussed would require all able-bodied people on welfare, including women with preschool children, to do work for their welfare checks. Do you favor or oppose this requirement?

Jul. – Aug. 1993	ICR/AP	Favor 84	Oppose 11
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- Which way do you think relief should be given – in the form of work relief (such as W.P.A.) or as direct cash relief?

Dec. 1937	Gallup	Work Relief 90	Cash 10
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- I'm going to read you some specific welfare proposals being considered by Congress. For each one, please tell me if you favor or oppose this proposal...Require welfare recipients to work in exchange for their benefits?

Apr. 1995	NBC News/WSJ	Favor 95	Oppose 3
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- Do you think there are any persons on relief in your community who could get jobs in private industry if they tried?

Apr. 1939	Gallup	Yes 69	No 31
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- Do you think there are jobs available for most welfare recipients who really want to work, or not?

May 1992	N.Y. Times	Yes 64	No 33
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- Do you think the persons taken off relief jobs will have a hard or an easy time finding work?

		Easy Time	Hard Time
Dec. 1936	Gallup	22	67

- Do you think there are jobs available for most welfare recipients who really want to work, or not? (If Yes) Do you think most of these jobs pay enough to support a family, or not?

		Yes	No
Jan.-Feb. 2001	Kaiser/Harvard	35	59

- Do you think relief should be given to needy foreigners living in this country who have not applied for citizenship?

		Yes	No
Jan. 1939	Gallup	30	68

- I'd like your opinion of some programs and proposals being discussed in this country today. Please tell me if you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose each one...Changing policy so illegal immigrants are not eligible for welfare, Medicaid and other government benefits?

		Oppose	Favor
Jul. 1994	PSRA/Times Mirror	28	69

Note: Responses are combined. The full figures are 41% strongly favor, 28% favor, 18% oppose, and 10% strongly oppose.

II. CAUSES OF POVERTY: For nearly forty years, pollsters have been asking respondents about the causes of poverty. In a 1964 survey, 34 percent said lack of effort on a poor person's part was to blame if a person is poor, and 29 percent said it was circumstances beyond his control. Polls taken in the past few years find that more people have opinions on the subject than in 1964, but they are still divided. Lower-income respondents were somewhat more likely to blame circumstances, but the answers are not significantly different from those of the national samples.

When a 1995 and 2001 survey asked poor people themselves about poverty's causes, drug abuse, cited by roughly 70 percent, was thought to be the most responsible. More than four in ten in both surveys blamed the welfare system itself.

- In your opinion, which is more often to blame if a person is poor – lack of effort on his part, or circumstances beyond his control?

		----All Respondents----		-----The Poor-----	
		Lack of Effort	Circumstances	Lack of Effort	Circumstances
Mar. 1964	Gallup	34	29	--	--
Sep. 1964	Gallup	34	25	--	--
Nov. 1964	Gallup	31	31	--	--
Oct. 1965	Gallup	40	27	--	--
Dec. 1965	Gallup	40	29	--	--
May 1967	Gallup	42	19	--	--
Mar. 1982	CBS News/N.Y. Times	37	39	--	--
Dec. 1984	Gallup	33	34	--	--
Jul. 1988	Gallup	40	37	--	--
Aug. 1989	Gallup	38	42	--	--
May 1990	Gallup	35	45	--	--

Dec. 1990	CBS News/N.Y. Times	30	48	--	--
Jan. 1992	L.A. Times	27	52	22a	55
Nov. 1993*	Hart	48	33	--	--
Dec. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	44	34	42b	39
May 1995+	Hart/Joint Center	--	--	41c	44
Dec. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	35	42	26	54
Oct. 1997	PSRA/Pew Research Center	39	44	25d	53
May 1998	Gallup/GM	43	41	--	--
Feb. 2000	CBS News	40	38	--	--
Jan.-Feb. 2001+	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	48	45	39e	57

Notes: a. Results for those earning less than \$20,000 a year. b. Results for those earning less than \$15,000 a year. c. Results for those under 55 years of age and with a household income of less than \$16,000. d. Results for those with a household income of less than \$10,000 a year. e. Results for those earning less than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001 the poverty line for a four-person family was \$17,650.

*Question wording was, "In your opinion, which is the bigger cause of poverty and people being poor today – people not doing enough to help themselves out of poverty, or circumstances beyond people's control that cause them to be poor?"
+Question wording was, "In your opinion, which is the bigger cause of poverty today—that people are not doing enough to help themselves out of poverty, or that circumstances beyond their control cause them to be poor?"

- Do you think most poor people are lazy or are most hard-working?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Hard-Working	Lazy	Hard-Working	Lazy
Apr. 1985	L.A. Times	50	25	58	22

Note: * Those who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. In 1985, the poverty line for a family of four was \$10,903.

- In general, do you think that most adults who are poor are mainly to blame themselves or are they poor through no fault of their own?

		No Fault Of Their Own	Poor To Blame
Apr. 2000	Harris Interactive	36	45

- Some say that most poor people are poor because of society's failures. Others say that most poor people are poor because of their own individual failure. Which comes closer to your point of view?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----Former/Current----- ----Welfare Beneficiaries----	
		Society's Failure	Individual Failure	Society's Failure	Individual Failure
Mar. 2002	Pew Research Center	22	61	25	53

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

		Don't Work Hard Enough	Circumstances
Aug. 1998	Wash Post/Harvard/Kaiser	21	66
Sep. 2000	Wash Post/Harvard/Kaiser	16	71

- Now I have some more-detailed questions about poverty in America. Not everyone will have heard about all the issues I'm talking about. Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge, but if you're not sure about an answer, just say so. For each of the following, please tell me of this is a major cause of poverty, a minor cause of poverty, or not a cause at all.

Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Harvard/Kaiser			-----The Poor*-----		
	-----All Respondents-----			Major	Minor	Not a Cause
	Major	Minor	Not a Cause	Major	Minor	Not a Cause
Drug abuse	70	24	5	74	14	11
Decline in moral values	57	29	12	57	29	10
Medical bills	58	32	7	71	21	6
Too many jobs being part time or low wage	54	32	10	70	20	7
Too many single-parent families	54	32	12	64	22	10
Poor people lacking motivation	52	35	9	55	34	8
Poor quality of public schools	47	36	13	45	36	13
The welfare system	46	37	11	46	36	10
A shortage of jobs	34	41	23	62	26	11
Too many immigrants	30	40	26	42	32	21

Note: *Those making less than 100 percent of the poverty line in 2001. In 2001, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty line for a family of four was \$17,650.

- For each of the following, tell me how big a factor it is in causing poverty, on a scale from 1 to 10. A rating of "1" means the item is not a cause at all, a "10" means it is a top cause of poverty and "5" is somewhere in the middle. Remember, you can use any number between 1 and 10, depending on how you feel. First...how big a cause is this on a scale from 1 to 10?

Nov. 1993	Hart	Mean
	The breakdown of families and family values	7.6
	Absent parents not paying child support	7.0
	Poor people receiving inadequate education	6.9
	The welfare system	6.9
	A shortage of jobs	6.7
	Too many jobs being part time or low wage	6.6
	Increased immigration	6.3
	Poor people lacking motivation	6.1

- For each of the following, tell me how big a factor it is in causing poverty today, on a scale from 1 to 10. A rating of '1' means the item is not a cause at all and a '10' means it is a top cause of poverty.

May-Jun. 1995	Hart/Joint Center	Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000 Top Cause*
	Drug abuse	71
	No child support	56
	Low-wage jobs	55
	More single-parent families	52
	Shortage of jobs	45
	Welfare system	45
	Increased immigration	44
	Lack of motivation	42
	Decline in morals	39
	Poor schools	37

Note: *Percentage indicates those who rated the cause at points 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale.

- What do you feel are the causes of poverty in the United States, that is, why are people in the U.S. poor?

ICR/Catholic Campaign for Human Development

	2001	2000
Lack of education	32	30
Personal laziness/lack of initiative/motivation	25	32
Lack of employment opportunities	21	8
Lack of understanding of importance of education	10	9
Personal inadequacy	6	8

Note: Only the top five replies from 2001 - and their trends from 2000 - are shown.

III. GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY: *In 1939, Elmo Roper conducted a poll for Fortune in which he explored what people expected of government. In the commentary accompanying the poll, the editors of the magazine wrote: "In 1929, beneficence would probably not have been accepted as a proper function of government. But today it is emphatically held desirable." Roper argued that people had "thrown tradition overboard on the social front." Sixty-nine percent in the March 1939 Roper survey said the government should "provide for all people who have no other means of subsistence." Twenty-three percent said government should not do this. Although we have no earlier polling data to prove Roper's contention that an earlier era would not have accepted government beneficence, surveys taken in the 1930s show that most people accepted government involvement in social welfare.*

Americans' generosity to the poor has not abated. Today, survey after survey shows that people believe that more should be done to help the poor. In questions asked since the mid-1970s, around six in ten have said that we are spending too little on programs for the poor.

At the same time, however, the view that individuals need to take responsibility for themselves finds considerable support. When asked to place themselves on a scale with government as a provider at one end and individual responsibility on the other, most Americans come down somewhere in between. When asked to choose between the two, as the Los Angeles Times asked people to do in 1985, a strongly individualist nation came down on the side of people taking responsibility for themselves. The responses of the poor on this question were virtually identical to those of the population as a whole. The belief in the role of individual responsibility is one reason Americans have been less generous in their views about government spending on welfare than on the poor.

- Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans; they are at point 1 on this card. Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself; they are at point 5. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?

		Govt. Should Improve Living Standards			Points		People Should Take Care of Themselves	
		1	2	3	4	5		
1983	NORC	17	15	40	14	11		
1984	NORC	17	11	46	14	8		

1986	NORC	18	12	45	11	11
1987	NORC	17	12	44	13	11
1988	NORC	17	13	44	12	11
1989	NORC	16	15	43	14	9
1990	NORC	19	15	43	12	8
1991	NORC	17	16	43	13	8
1993	NORC	12	13	48	14	10
1994	NORC	13	13	44	16	12
1996	NORC	13	12	45	16	11
1998	NORC	13	13	43	17	12
2000	NORC	14	13	42	16	12

Note: In 1973 NORC asked the question using a seven-point scale. The results were 29, 10, 10, 20, 13, 7, and 10 percent, respectively.

- Which statement comes closest to your point of view: Government is responsible for the well-being of all its citizens and has an obligation to take care of them or people are responsible for their own well-being and have an obligation to take care of themselves?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Government	People	Government	People
Apr. 1985	L.A. Times	24	67	23	69

Note: *Those who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. In 1985, the poverty line for a family of four was \$10,903.

- Do you agree or disagree: It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves?

		Agree	Disagree
May 1987	PSRA/Times-Mirror	71	24
May 1988	PSRA/Times-Mirror	74	23
May 1990	PSRA/Times-Mirror	67	29
Jun. 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	69	28
May 1993	PSRA/Times-Mirror	62	35
Jul. 1994	PSRA/Times-Mirror	57	41
Nov. 1994	Greenberg Research	57	41
Dec. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	65	29
Jan. 1995	ABC News	65	34
Feb. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	63	30
Apr. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	61	30
Oct. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	63	30
Dec. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	63	29
Aug. 1996	CBS News/N.Y. Times	57	36
Aug. 1996	CBS News/N.Y. Times	61	32
Sep. 1996	CBS News/N.Y. Times	56	35
Oct. 1996	CBS News/N.Y. Times	64	30
Nov. 1997	PSRA/Pew Research Center	61	37
Sep. 1999	CBS News/N.Y. Times	69	26
Oct. 1999	PSRA/Pew Research Center	62	35
Dec. 2001	Greenberg/Quinlan	66	32

- I am going to read you a series of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. For each statement, please tell me whether you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it...The government should help more needy people even if it means going deeper into debt?

		Completely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Completely Disagree
May 1987	PSRA/Times-Mirror	13	40	33	7
May 1988	PSRA/Times-Mirror	17	35	30	12

May 1990	PSRA/Times-Mirror	15	36	34	10
Nov. 1991	PSRA/Times-Mirror	20	31	31	15
Jan. 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	18	36	28	14
Feb. 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	19	37	28	13
Mar. 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	21	33	28	13
May 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	19	35	29	12
Jun. 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	18	35	31	12
Sep. 1992	PSRA/Times-Mirror	21	32	28	14
May 1993	PSRA/Times-Mirror	9	34	40	12
Jul. 1994	PSRA/Times-Mirror	13	28	37	19
Nov. 1997	PSRA/Pew Research Center	14	30	37	16
Oct. 1999	PSRA/Pew Research Center	15	34	33	14

- I'm going to read you some pairs of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. As I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your views – even if neither is exactly right. The first pair is the government should do more to help needy Americans, even if it means going deeper into debt, or the government today can't afford to do much more to help the needy?

		Should Do More	Govt. Can't Afford It
Jul. 1994	PSRA/Pew Research Center	48	47
Oct. 1994	PSRA/Pew Research Center	50	43
Apr. 1995	PSRA/Pew Research Center	46	47
Jun. 1995	PSRA/Pew Research Center	47	45
Oct. 1995	PSRA/Pew Research Center	47	47
Apr. 1996	PSRA/Pew Research Center	49	44
Jun. 1996	PSRA/Pew Research Center	48	47
Oct. 1996	PSRA/Pew Research Center	46	44
Sep. 1999	PSRA/Pew Research Center	57	35

- We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money on it, or about the right amount. First...are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on...?

NORC	Welfare			Assistance to the poor		
	Too Little	About Right	Too Much	Too Little	About Right	Too Much
1973	20	24	51	NA	NA	NA
1974	22	32	42	NA	NA	NA
1975	23	29	43	NA	NA	NA
1976	13	22	60	NA	NA	NA
1977	12	23	60	NA	NA	NA
1978	13	25	58	NA	NA	NA
1980	13	26	57	NA	NA	NA
1982	20	28	48	NA	NA	NA
1983	21	28	47	NA	NA	NA
1984	24	34	40	62	24	11
1985	19	33	45	63	25	10
1986	22	34	40	61	27	9
1987	21	31	44	66	23	9
1988	23	32	42	68	23	7
1989	23	30	42	66	23	9
1990	22	35	38	66	24	7
1991	22	35	38	65	22	9
1993	16	25	54	63	22	12
1994	13	24	60	57	25	12
1996	15	26	56	55	25	18
1998	16	36	43	60	25	11
2000	20	38	37	62	24	11

- In terms of the amount of money we as a country are spending on assistance to poor people, do you think we are spending too much, too little, or about the right amount?

		-----All Respondents-----			-----The Poor*-----		
		Too Little	About Right	Too Much	Too Little	About Right	Too Much
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/ Harvard	38	36	18	47	32	12

Note: *Those making less than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty line for a family of four was \$17,650.

- Overall, do you agree or disagree with the following statement...Most of the people on welfare would suffer very seriously if they did not get their welfare payment?

		Agree	Disagree
Apr. 2000	Harris Interactive	65	28

- Here is a list of things the government could do that some people say would reduce poverty in America. Do you support or oppose the government doing each? How about...?

				-----The Poor*-----	
		Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard				
	Improving public schools in low-income areas	94	5	93	5
	Expanding job training programs	94	5	95	3
	Expanding subsidized daycare	85	12	90	7
	Increasing the minimum wage	85	14	93	7
	Spending more for medical care for poor people	83	14	88	11
	Requiring public schools teach about moral values and work ethic	83	15	87	10
	Expanding public employment programs	82	14	88	7
	Increasing tax credits for low-income workers	80	17	80	17
	Spending more for housing for poor people	75	23	84	16
	Putting more police in low-income areas	72	25	78	17
	Making food stamps more available to poor people	61	35	78	18
	Guaranteeing everyone a minimum income	57	39	71	26
	Increasing cash assistance for families	54	40	75	22
	Making it harder to get divorced	38	55	42	44

Note: *Those making less than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty line for a family of four was \$17,650.

- Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Here is a card with a scale from 1 to 7. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the government ought to reduce the income differences between rich and poor, and a score of 7 meaning that the government should not concern itself with reducing income differences. What score between 1 and 7 comes closest to the way you feel?

		Govt. Should Reduce Income Differences			Govt. Shouldn't Reduce Income Differences			
		-----Points-----						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1973	NORC	36	12	10	11	6	7	15
1978	NORC	19	11	17	21	11	8	12

1980	NORC	17	9	16	20	12	7	16
1983	NORC	20	11	16	17	11	8	14
1984	NORC	21	12	15	17	13	8	12
1986	NORC	23	9	17	21	11	6	12
1987	NORC	19	9	17	21	13	6	14
1988	NORC	20	10	18	20	12	8	11
1989	NORC	18	13	19	20	11	7	10
1990	NORC	21	12	18	21	9	6	10
1991	NORC	20	12	17	20	12	7	9
1993	NORC	17	12	19	18	12	8	12
1994	NORC	14	9	16	21	15	8	15
1996	NORC	17	10	16	21	12	8	12
1998	NORC	15	10	17	21	11	8	16
2000	NORC	16	12	16	20	14	9	13

IV. GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY: *People are skeptical about whether the federal government knows enough to eliminate poverty. A question asked by the Kaiser Family Foundation, NPR, and Harvard University in 2001 finds that 47 percent felt poverty could be eliminated “if the government were willing to spend whatever it thought was necessary to eliminate poverty in the United States,” but 49 said this could not be accomplished.*

If given the option in a survey, more people say that poverty programs haven’t had much impact on the lives of the poor one way or the other than those who say that the programs have made their lives better or worse. If the question uses the word “welfare,” people come down decidedly on the harm side. The poor agree.

- Even if the government were willing to spend whatever is necessary to eliminate poverty in the United States, do you think the government knows enough about how to do that, or not?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Apr. 1985	L.A. Times	22	70	28a	56
Aug. 1989	Gallup	24	74	--	--

Note: * Those who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. In 1985, the poverty line for a family of four was \$10,903.

- In your view, is the problem of continuing poverty mostly a result of government not having the right policies or of people not having the right values?

		Govt. Not Having	People Not Having
		Right Policies	Right Values
Nov. 1993	Hart	24	44

- If the government were willing to spend whatever it thought was necessary to eliminate poverty in the United States, do you think this is something that could be accomplished, or not?

		Yes	No
		Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard

- There were many government programs in the 1960s to try and improve the condition of poor people in this country. Do you think these programs generally made things better, made things worse, or do you think they didn't have much impact one way or the other?

		Better	Worse	No Impact
Jan. 1978	CBS News/N.Y. Times	31	14	46
Nov. 1980	CBS News/N.Y. Times	30	20	42
Nov. 1984	CBS News/N.Y. Times	41	20	29
Jan. 1986	CBS News/N.Y. Times	39	18	38
Feb. 1986	ABC News/Wash Post	44	18	34
Feb. 1989	CBS News	30	15	43
May 1992	CBS News/N.Y. Times	26	20	44

- During the presidencies of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, the United States government launched a great effort to help the poor people of this nation called "The War on Poverty." Would you say that the war made things much better for the poor, or somewhat better, or had no impact, or do you think the war on poverty made things worse for the poor?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Better	Worse/ No Impact	Better	Worse/ No Impact
Apr. 1985	L.A. Times	55	28	51	28

Note: * Those who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. In 1985, the poverty line for a family of four was \$10,903.

- Do you think that government programs that try to improve the condition of poor people in this country are generally making things better, are making things worse, or aren't having much impact one way or the other?

		Making Things Better	Making Things Worse	Not Much Impact One Way or the Other
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	34	13	48

- I would like to read you two statements about the welfare system. Please tell me which of these statements about this issue comes closer to your point of view. Statement A: The welfare system does more good than harm because it provides assistance and training for those who are without jobs and live in poverty, or Statement B: The welfare system does more harm than good because it encourages the breakup of the family and discourages the work ethic?

		More Good Than Harm	More Harm Than Good
Jan. 1994	NBC News/WSJ	19	71
Dec. 1994	KRC/Kaiser/Harvard	33	56
Apr. 1995	NBC News/WSJ	23	69

- Which of the following two statements about the welfare system comes closer to your point of view? 1) The welfare system does more good than harm, because it provides assistance to those who are poor and needy; 2) the welfare system does more harm than good, because it encourages the breakup of the family and discourages people from working?

		Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000	
		More Good Than Harm	More Harm Than Good
May-Jun. 1995	Hart/Joint Center	40	46

- Which of the following do you think are significant problems with the welfare system today?

May-Jun. 1995	Hart/Joint Center	Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000 Yes, Problem
	Encourages out-of-wedlock births	69
	Cutting off benefits	63
	Doesn't give skills training	59
	No childcare when work	57
	Fraud and abuse	55
	Abuse by officials	52
	Recipients treated disrespectfully	51
	Insufficient benefits	49
	Doesn't build self-esteem	45
	Benefits too generous	43

V. THE POOR/ WELFARE RECIPIENTS TODAY: *Many of the questions in earlier sections of this report have shown that the views of the nation as a whole and those of people on welfare are remarkably similar. This section includes some recent questions that ask Americans about their personal experience with welfare. It also includes questions that ask people about their economic status.*

- Thinking just about your own financial situation, do you consider yourself to be rich, upper income, middle income, lower income, or poor?

		Rich	Upper Income	Middle Income	Lower Income	Poor
May 1990	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	*	7	59	23	10
Apr. 1996	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	1	8	58	24	9
Apr. 2002	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	2	11	59	19	8

- Do you currently know anyone who is living in poverty?

		Yes	No
Dec. 2000	ICR/Catholic Campaign for Human Development	41	59
Dec. 2001	ICR/Catholic Campaign for Human Development	40	60

- Have you ever lived in poverty?

		Yes	No
Dec. 2000	ICR/Catholic Campaign for Human Development	33	66
Dec. 2001	ICR/Catholic Campaign for Human Development	32	68

- Have you, or has your family ever received welfare benefits? If yes, are you or your family now receiving welfare benefits?

		Yes, Current Recipient	Yes, Past Recipient	No
Mar. 1994	PSRA/Pew Research Center	7	16	76

Mar. 2002	PSRA/Pew Research Center	4	13	82
• Do you personally know someone who is now receiving welfare benefits?				
		Yes, self/family	Yes	No
Mar. 1994	PSRA/Pew Research Center	7	49	43
Mar. 2002	PSRA/Pew Research Center	4	38	56

- Have you or anyone in your immediate family ever received welfare or public assistance benefits?

Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	Yes 38	No 61
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(If Yes) Are you or is anyone in your immediate family receiving such benefits now?

Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	Yes 33	No 65
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- Which is the bigger reason for American children being raised in poverty these days? Is it because of social and economic problems or is it because of the failure of their parents as individuals?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----Former/Current-----	
		Social/Economic Problems	Parents	Social/Economic Problems	Parents
Mar. 2002	PSRA/ Pew Research Center	31	50	36	44

VI. LIVING IN POVERTY: *In response to most poll questions, Americans say jobs are available for the poor. They have never believed that those jobs pay enough to live comfortably.*

- In your opinion, do you think that most people who receive money from welfare could get along without it if they tried, or do you think most of them really need this help?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor-----	
		Get Along Without	Really Need Help	Get Along Without	Really Need Help
Aug. 1976*	CBS News/N.Y. Times	52	38	--	--
Oct. 1976*	CBS News/N.Y. Times	51	36	--	--
Oct. 1976*	CBS News/N.Y. Times	53	40	--	--
Jul. 1977	CBS News/N.Y. Times	54	31	--	--
Nov. 1980	CBS News/N.Y. Times	51	39	--	--
Sep. 1981	NBC News/AP	55	32	--	--
Jan. 1986	CBS News/N.Y. Times	40	35	--	--
May 1992	NBC News/WSJ	44	45	38a	47
May 1992	N.Y. Times	29	50	24b	55
Jan. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	48	35	42b	33
Dec. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	57	36	52b	42
Dec. 1994	Kaiser/Harvard	46	44	48a	48
Apr. 1995	NBC News/WSJ	53	33	48a	36
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	44	47	35c	60

Note: *Registered Voters. a = For the poor, those earning less than \$10,000 per year. b = For the poor, those earning less than \$15,000 per year. c = For the poor, those earning less than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001 the poverty line for a four-person family was \$17,650.

- Do you think poor people find it hard to get work or are there jobs for anyone who is willing to work?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Yes, Jobs Available	No, Jobs Not Available	Yes, Jobs Available	No, Jobs Not Available
Apr. 1985	L.A. Times	54	43	31	59

Note: * Those who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. In 1985, the poverty line for a family of four was \$10,903.

- Overall do you agree or disagree with the following statements...Most people who are on welfare and do not work would find paid work if they were not on welfare?

		Agree	Disagree
Apr. 2000	Harris Interactive	75	20

- Do you think there are jobs available for most welfare recipients who really want to work, or not?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor-----	
		Yes, Jobs Available	No, Jobs Not Available	Yes, Jobs Available	No, Jobs Not Available
May 1992	N.Y. Times	64	33	51a	46
Jan. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	65	31	60a	36
Dec. 1994	Kaiser/Harvard	72	24	64b	27
Dec. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	71	25	63a	30
Dec. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	76	21	73a	24
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	78	18	73c	25

Note: a = For the poor, those earning less than \$15,000 per year. b = For the poor, those earning less than \$10,000 per year. c = For the poor, those earning than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty line for a four-person family was \$17,650.

(If Yes) Do you think most of these jobs pay enough to support a family, or not?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor-----	
		Yes, Pay Enough	No, Don't Pay Enough	Yes, Pay Enough	No, Don't Pay Enough
May 1992	N.Y. Times	32	59	21a	66
Jan. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	28	63	37a	54
Dec. 1994	Kaiser/Harvard	32	52	42b	39
Dec. 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	27	65	33a	56
Dec. 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	23	71	22a	71
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	35	59	35c	60

Note: a = For the poor, those earning less than \$15,000 per year. b = For the poor, those earning less than \$10,000 per year. c = For the poor, those earning than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty line for a four-person family was \$17,650.

- Do you think that poor people find it hard to get work, or do you think there are jobs available for anyone who is willing to work?

		Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000	
		Jobs Available	Jobs Hard To Find
May-Jun.1995	Hart/Joint Center	58	37

- Which of these would you say is the bigger problem where you live: 1) There aren't enough jobs available for people who want to work; 2) the jobs available today do not offer good enough wages and benefits to support a family?

		Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000	
		Not Enough Jobs	Poor Wages And Benefits
May-Jun.1995	Hart/Joint Center	25	61

- Do you think people on welfare generally live fairly comfortably or that they can barely get by?

		Live Comfortably	Barely Get By
Nov. 1993	Hart	34	59

- Do you think people on welfare generally live fairly comfortably or that they can barely get by?

		Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000	
		Live Comfortably	Barely Get By
May-Jun. 1995	Hart/Joint Center	26	65

- Do you think we're coddling the poor – that poor people live well on welfare – or do you think poor people can hardly get by on what the government gives them?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor-----	
		Coddled	Hardly Getting By	Coddled	Hardly Getting By
Apr. 1985	L.A. Times	23	68	26	64

Note: *Those who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. In 1985, the poverty line for a family of four was \$10, 903.

- I'm going to read you some pairs of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. As I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your views – even if neither is exactly right...Poor people today have it easy because they can get government benefits without doing anything in return. Poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently.

		Poor People Have it Easy	Poor People Have it Hard
Jul. 1994	PSRA/Pew Research Center	53	39
Oct. 1994	PSRA/Pew Research Center	48	41
Apr. 1995	PSRA/Pew Research Center	52	39
Oct. 1995	PSRA/Pew Research Center	54	36

Oct. 1996	PSRA/Pew Research Center	46	40
Jun. 1997	PSRA/Pew Research Center	45	42
Sep. 1999	PSRA/Pew Research Center	45	42

- Do you think that poor people find it hard to get work, or do you think there are jobs available for anyone who is willing to work?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Jobs Available	Hard to Get Work	Jobs Available	Hard to Get Work
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	69	27	50	44

Note: * Results for those earning less than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001 the poverty line for a four-person family was \$17,650.

- Which of the following statements come closest to your own views? Poor people today have it easy because they can get government benefits without doing anything in return or poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----The Poor*-----	
		Poor People Have it Easy	Poor People Have it Hard	Poor People Have It Easy	Poor People Have It Hard
Jan.-Feb. 2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	46	43	31	59

Note: *Results for those earning less than 100 percent of the poverty line. In 2001 the poverty line for a four-person family was \$17,650.

VII. WELFARE REFORM: *Getting people into the work force has always been the most important goal of welfare reform. Money has not been the issue in the public's mind. Given the public's objectives in terms of reform, it is not surprising that they have described the new law's success in terms of getting people off the welfare rolls and into the work force. Though the hard economic evidence isn't in yet, most people believe that the legislation's work requirements, and not the strong economy, explain the drop in welfare rolls.*

- Which of the following is the single most important goal for reforming the welfare system...reducing the number of out-of-wedlock births among poor women, getting people now on welfare into the work force, or reducing government spending on welfare programs?

		Reducing Births	Getting People to Work	Reducing Spending
Aug. 1995	NBC News/WSJ	19	62	13

- Here are some possible goals for reforming the welfare system. Which one or two would you say are the most important?

	Most Important
Helping people get off the welfare rolls and into the work force	52
Strengthening families and family values	32
Ending long-term dependence on welfare as a way of life	29
Eliminating fraud and abuse	28
Making sure poor children get the support they need	22
Saving taxpayers money by reducing spending on welfare	7

- Here are some possible goals for reforming the welfare system. Which one or two would you say are the most important?

May-Jun. 1995	Hart/Joint Center	Adults Under Age 55 Living In Households With Income <\$16,000 Most Important
		52
	Helping people enter the workforce	30
	Helping poor children	26
	Eliminating fraud	24
	Ending long-term dependence	19
	Strengthening families	8
	Reducing spending on welfare	

- In your view, which is more important to the success of welfare reform...strictly enforcing time limits to move families off welfare or replacing welfare with a new employment system that connects welfare recipients to private sector jobs?

Jul. 1997	Penn/Schoen/DLC	New Employment System	Enforcing Time Limits
		67	26

- Should the government spend more money to create such a system (that connects welfare recipients to private sector jobs) if that's what it takes to give welfare recipients a real opportunity to work, or should the government leave the welfare system as it is?

Jul. 1997	Penn/Schoen/DLC	Spend More Money	Leave System As Is
		80	14

- What is closest to your view? The poor in this country need to be protected by a safety net and that need is growing, welfare must be replaced with an employment system so that welfare recipients develop an attachment to the workforce and can become independent, or the welfare and workfare system is a drain on the U.S. budget and the economy and should be eliminated period?

Aug. 1998	Penn/Schoen/DLC	Poor Protected	Welfare Replaced	Welfare/Workfare Eliminated
		12	77	9

- Earlier in this survey, you said that, all in all, the new welfare law is working well. There are many reasons people give for why they think the new law is working well. I'm going to read you a few of them. Please tell me whether each is a major reason you think the new law is working well, a minor reason, or not a reason at all.

	Jan.-Feb. 2001			NPR/Kaiser/Harvard		
	-----All Respondents-----			-----The Poor-----		
	Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason	Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason
The law requires people to go to work	87	9	3	75	16	6
The law has substantially cut the welfare rolls	64	27	7	63	19	10
The welfare departments are doing more to help poor people	52	28	14	64	17	12
There is now less stigma attached to receiving welfare	28	40	27	42	30	17

Which one would you say is the most important reason?

Jan.-Feb. 2001 NPR/Kaiser/Harvard

	-----All----- Most Important Reason	-----Poor----- Most Important Reason
The law requires people to go to work	64	49
The welfare departments are doing more to help poor people	13	31
The law has substantially cut the welfare rolls	12	6
There is now less stigma attached to receiving welfare	4	4

- In 1996, welfare reform legislation was passed that made many changes to the welfare system in America. In your view does the current welfare system work better or worse than the system in place before 1996?

		-----All Respondents----		-----Current/Former----- ---Welfare Beneficiaries---	
		Better	Worse	Better	Worse
Mar. 2002	PSRA/ Pew Research Center	46	17	47	27

- On balance, do you think the current welfare system changes things for the better by helping people who are unable to support themselves or changes things for the worse by making able-bodied people too dependent on government aid?

		-----All Respondents-----		-----Current/Former----- ---Welfare Beneficiaries---	
		Better	Worse	Better	Worse
Mar. 1994	PSRA/ Pew Research Center	12	75	20	63
Mar. 2002	PSRA/ Pew Research Center	32	53	37	45

- Please tell me how much, if anything, you think each of the following has done to improve the conditions of black Americans in recent years. First, how about welfare-to-work laws? Have they done a lot, some, only a little, or nothing to improve conditions for black Americans? (Asked of blacks only)

		A Lot	Some	A Little	Nothing
Apr. 16-19, 1999	PSRA/Newsweek	28	29	20	10

- Think now about the welfare-to-work laws that take people off government assistance programs and try to place them in paying jobs. On balance, do you think these jobs have resulted in... (Asked of whites and blacks)?

Apr. 16-19, 1999 PSRA/Newsweek

	Yes	No
More black self-reliance	67	18
More jobs for blacks	65	21
More respect for black people	63	23
More poverty among blacks	20	62

- To the best of your knowledge, has there been any major change in welfare laws in the past five years, or not?

		-----All Respondents-----			-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---		
		Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	50	18	32	56	16	28

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) Just to refresh your memory, the new welfare law, which Congress passed in 1996, ends the federal guarantee of public assistance for the poor. It also requires able-bodied recipients to work within two years. It sets a lifetime limit on federal benefits of five years for most people. And it gives the states a lot of flexibility. All in all, do you think the new welfare law is working well, or not?

				-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---	
		Working Well	Not Working Well	Working Well	Not Working Well
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	61	23	61	25

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) The number of Americans receiving public assistance has dropped significantly in the past five years. Do you think this is mainly because the strong economy has created lots of new jobs in the past few years, or because changes in the welfare laws have forced more people to go to work?

				-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---	
		Strong Economy	Change in Laws	Strong Economy	Changes in Laws
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	23	62	20	70

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) In general, has the new welfare law resulted in more or less respect for people on welfare or has it had no impact on this?

					-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---		
		More Respect	Less Respect	No Impact	More Respect	Less Respect	No Impact
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	33	11	44	35	13	44

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) In general, do you think the new welfare law has given the poor themselves more self-respect, less self-respect, or has it had no impact?

					-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---		
		More Self-Respect	Less Self-Respect	No Impact	More Self-Respect	Less Self-Respect	No Impact
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	57	8	25	56	9	27

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) In general, do you think most people who have left the welfare rolls have gotten out of poverty, or do you think they are still poor, even if they have found jobs?

				-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---	
		Out of Poverty	Still Poor	Out of Poverty	Still Poor
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	19	73	16	77

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) Do you think the new welfare law has led women on welfare to have more children than they would have otherwise, fewer children, or has it made no difference?

					-----You/Family----- ---Ever Received Welfare---		
		More Children	Fewer Children	No Difference	More Children	Fewer Children	No Difference
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	17	26	47	18	29	46

(Asked of Those Who Had Heard of New Law) Do you think the new welfare law has made it easier to get public assistance, harder to get public assistance, or hasn't it made much of a difference at all?

					-----You/Family----- -----Ever Received Welfare-----		
		Easier	Harder	No Difference	Easier	Harder	No Difference
2001	NPR/Kaiser/Harvard	9	56	25	6	60	26

VII. PROMOTING MARRIAGE: *The Bush administration's proposal to allocate \$300 million (of roughly \$20 billion per year total spending) for states to design programs that reduce out-of-wedlock births and increase the proportion of children in married couple families (both goals were included in the 1996 legislation) has prompted a great deal of comment. The data below, particularly those from the Roper ASW/Virginia Slims surveys, show that single parenthood has become more acceptable since the early 1970s. Still, most Americans think that people who want children should get married. In surveys conducted since 1977 by the University of Michigan, no more than 10 percent of high school seniors have ever said single parenthood was a "worthwhile lifestyle." The proportion saying that people are just "doing their own thing" has risen from 32 percent in 1977 to 44 percent in 2000. The proportion that thought they were "living a lifestyle that could be destructive" dropped from 22 to 13 percent over the period. A quarter in 1977, and 19 percent in 2000 said this violated morality.*

Thus far, only a few pollsters have asked questions that touch on this aspect of welfare reform. Two questions that stress government's abilities in this area show public skepticism. Some questions from an ORC survey take a different approach and produce different results.

- Now, I would like to read you a list of statements people sometimes make about public welfare and relief programs. Some people agree with them, other people do not agree. I'd like you to tell me how you feel. As I read each statement, please tell me whether you agree strongly, tend to agree, tend to disagree, or strongly disagree...Many women getting welfare money are having illegitimate babies to increase the money they get?

		Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Mar. 1969	ORC	35	26	14	9
May 1971	ORC/Nixon*	38	25	16	10

Note: *One of a series of surveys conducted for Richard Nixon while he was President.

- Now let me read you some statements. For each please tell me whether you tend to agree or disagree...It should be legal for adults to have children without getting married?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1970	RoperASW/VS	11	85	13	82
1974	RoperASW/VS	24	65	28	62
1979	RoperASW/VS	32	59	35	55
1985	RoperASW/VS	42	48	42	48
1989	RoperASW/VS	42	49	44	46

- Now let me read you some statements. For each please tell me whether you tend to agree or disagree...Society could survive just as well without the institution of marriage?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1970	RoperASW/VS	8	89	10	87
1974	RoperASW/VS	9	87	10	85
1979	RoperASW/VS	11	86	12	83
1985	RoperASW/VS	11	84	14	82
1989	RoperASW/VS	16	78	16	77

- Now let me read you some statements. For each please tell me whether you tend to agree or disagree...A single woman who becomes pregnant but doesn't love the man involved should marry him anyway?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1970	RoperASW/VS	12	78	13	75
1989	RoperASW/VS	9	85	12	75

- Now let me read you some statements. For each please tell me whether you tend to agree or disagree...There is no reason why single women shouldn't have children and raise them if they want to?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1974	RoperASW/VS	32	60	35	57
1979	RoperASW/VS	38	56	41	52
1985	RoperASW/VS	49	43	48	44

Note: In 1971 the results for all respondents were 30 percent "agree" and 63 percent "disagree."

- Now let me read you some statements. For each please tell me whether you tend to agree or disagree...A couple who are having a child out of wedlock should marry for the sake of the child even though they don't want to?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1974	RoperASW/VS	15	73	22	67
1979	RoperASW/VS	20	72	25	67
1985	RoperASW/VS	19	73	22	69

- Now, here is a list of things some young people find acceptable today. Would you read down that list, and for each one, tell me for a (son/daughter) of yours who had just finished her schooling, whether you would find it acceptable, or accept it but be unhappy about it, or not accept it and have the relationship very much strained as a result...Having a child outside of marriage?

For Your Daughter:

		-----Women-----			-----Men-----		
		Acceptable	Acceptable/ Unhappy	Not Accept/ Strained	Acceptable	Acceptable/ Unhappy	Not Accept/ Strained
1974	RoperASW/VS	8	53	35	9	45	43
1979	RoperASW/VS	10	53	35	11	47	40
1985	RoperASW/VS	15	56	26	14	50	34

For Your Son:

1985	RoperASW/VS	16	55	27	18	48	32
------	-------------	----	----	----	----	----	----

- Do you think it is, or is not, morally wrong for a couple to have a baby if they are not married?

		Morally Wrong	Not Morally Wrong
May 6-7, 1997	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	47	50
May 10-14, 2001	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	40	57
May 6-9, 2002*	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	50	45

Note: *Question wording was, "Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong. How about having a baby outside of marriage?"

- A man and a woman who decide to have and raise a child out of wedlock are experimenting with a worthwhile alternative lifestyle, doing their own thing and not affecting anyone else, living in a way that could be destructive to society, violating a basic principle of human morality, or none of the above?

High School Seniors		Worthwhile Lifestyle	Doing Own Thing	Could Be Destructive	Violating Morality	None of These
1977	MTF	9	32	22	24	14
1978	MTF	8	31	25	23	13
1979	MTF	7	28	26	27	13
1980	MTF	7	27	25	29	13
1982	MTF	7	30	22	30	12
1983	MTF	7	30	20	29	14
1984	MTF	8	33	18	27	13
1985	MTF	9	37	17	24	13
1986	MTF	9	38	17	23	13
1987	MTF	9	38	18	24	12
1988	MTF	10	37	17	23	13
1989	MTF	8	40	15	23	14
1990	MTF	9	38	16	22	15
1991	MTF	9	42	14	19	15
1992	MTF	9	40	15	23	14
1993	MTF	9	44	16	18	13
1994	MTF	10	42	16	18	14
1995	MTF	9	42	17	19	13
1996	MTF	9	44	17	17	12
1997	MTF	8	44	16	18	14
1998	MTF	9	41	17	19	14
1999	MTF	6	45	16	18	15
2000	MTF	10	44	13	19	15

Note: Question was not asked in 1981.

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement...People who want children ought to get married?

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Mar. 1988	NORC	35	38	11	4
Mar. 1994	NORC	31	42	12	4

- The following are some opinions that have been expressed about raising children. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree...People who want children ought to get married?

		-----Not Poor----- Agree	----Poor*---- Agree
1997	NSAF	74	61

Note: *Those who received AFDC in the past year.

- Here are some opinions that others have expressed about welfare and about working. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you agree or disagree...Welfare encourages young people to have babies before marriage?

		-----Not Poor-----	----Poor----
		Agree	Agree
1997	NSAF	52	30

- You hear a lot today about the changing American family. I'd like to know your opinion on what a "family" is. For each of the following types of living arrangements, please tell me whether you would definitely call it a family, you definitely would not call it a family, or if you aren't sure...An unwed (never married) mother living with her children?

		Family	Not family	Aren't sure
Feb 1992	RoperASW	81	14	5
Feb. 1996	RoperASW	83	15	2
Mar. 1999	RoperASW	82	14	4

- I'd like to know how the following aspects of a candidate's personal life would affect your vote for that person. Think for a moment about a woman running for a state or federal office. For each of the following conditions, please tell me based on that condition alone, if you would definitely not vote for her, possibly not vote for her, or if that issue alone would not make any difference in the way you vote if she...?

		Definitely Not	Possibly Not	Wouldn't Make Any Difference
April 1992	Gallup/Life			
	Does not believe in God	42	19	39
	Is homosexual	33	18	49
	Had questionable financial dealings	28	52	19
	Had used drugs in the past	20	35	44
	Has an alcohol problem in the past	15	36	48
	Had an extramarital affair	14	26	60
	Had an abortion	10	17	72
	Had a child out-of-wedlock	4	13	83
	Is of a different religion than you	1	5	94

- Now I'm going to read you a number of statements on social issues. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with that statement...Women should be able to have children out of wedlock without anyone passing judgment?

		Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Sep. 1993	FRC	34	22	13	21

- Please tell me whether you feel each of the following is morally wrong or not morally wrong. Is it morally wrong to conceive a child out of wedlock if the mother is not a teenager and is able to financially support the baby?

		Morally Wrong	Not Morally Wrong
Jan. 1995	PSRA/Newsweek	41	52

- What do you think about...Do you think it is always wrong, or almost always wrong, or wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

Apr. 1996	L.A. Times	Always Wrong	Almost Always Wrong	Wrong Sometimes	Not Wrong
		78	15	5	2
		60	5	6	28
		33	16	27	17
		24	10	23	44

Note: *Results are from 1996 NORC survey. In 2000, the figures were 59, 5, 8, and 29, respectively.

- Do you think that having children out of wedlock is always wrong, sometimes wrong, rarely wrong, or never wrong?

Mar. 1997	Roper/WMM	Always Wrong	Sometimes Wrong	Rarely Wrong	Never Wrong
		31	53	4	7

- Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...Having children out of wedlock is wrong because it is immoral?

Mar. 1997	Roper/WMM	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		30	16	23	27

- Please tell me whether you think each of the following is a major threat to family values, a minor threat to family values, or not a threat at all...People having children out of wedlock?

Mar. 1997	Roper/WMM	Major Threat	Minor Threat	Not a Threat
		57	27	12

- Which of the following do you find acceptable? (Choose all that apply) (P)

May 2000	Zogby International	Acceptable
		46
	Homosexuality	38
	Abortion	33
	Mercy-killing	29
	Suicide	10
	A married person having another lover	6

- In general, do you think people having children without being married is always okay, okay only some of the time, or always wrong? (Asked of blacks only)

Sep. 2001	CBS/BET	Always Wrong	Okay Some of the Time	Always Okay
		39	45	10

- Some of the social problems affecting African-Americans are more urgent than others. Please tell me whether you think each of the following is a more urgent problem or a less urgent problem? (Asked of blacks only)

Mar. 25-27, 1992	PSRA/Newsweek	More Urgent	Less Urgent
	Crime	91	5
	Quality of public education	87	9
	Unemployment	86	10
	Drugs and alcohol abuse	84	11
	Homelessness	83	11
	AIDS	81	11
	Poverty	79	13
	Teen pregnancy	79	16
	Broken families	72	23
	Setbacks to civil rights and affirmative action programs	63	27

- In general, how much of a problem do you think each of the following is for black families today? ... Is this a big problem for black families today, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem? (Asked of blacks only)

Aug. 12-15, 1993	PSRA/Newsweek	Big Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	Not a Problem
	Drugs and alcoholism	86	12	1
	Too many teen-age girls having children	81	14	4
	Not enough jobs paying decent wages	79	15	5
	People not following moral and religious values	67	22	9
	People depending too much on welfare	62	27	9
	The government not spending enough on social programs	52	30	13

- Next I will read you some possible reasons why so many young black people today don't get married. Please tell me if you think each is a very important reason they don't get married, a somewhat important reason, or not an important reason. First how important is this reason...It's easier to support a child with welfare if the woman stays single? (Asked of blacks only)

Aug. 12-15, 1993	PSRA/Newsweek	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important
		34	21	37

- In general, how much of a problem do you think each of the following is for black families? First, how about too many teen-age girls having children? Is this a big problem for black families today, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem? (Asked of whites and blacks)

Apr. 16-19, 1999	PSRA/Newsweek	Big Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	Not a Problem
		62	29	4

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement...I approve of single women raising children on their own?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Mar. 2002	AmDem/TNS	78	10	71	18

Note: For those in the 18-34 age bracket, 82% agreed and 9% disagreed. For those in the 65 and over age bracket, 62% agreed and 26% disagreed.

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement...I approve of single men raising children on their own?

		-----Women-----		-----Men-----	
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Mar. 2002	AmDem/TNS	71	15	70	20

Note: For those in the 18-34 age bracket, 81% agreed and 8% disagreed. For those in the 65 and over age bracket, 47% agreed and 31% disagreed.

- Do you agree or disagree that marriage education is something that the state or federal government should be involved in?

		Strongly	Somewhat	Somewhat	Strongly
		Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree
Mar. 2002	TIPP/IBD-CSM	19	27	21	30

- In your view, should the government start up programs that encourage people to get married and stay married, or should the government stay out of this?

		Should Start	Stay
		Programs	Out
Mar. 2002	PSRA/Pew Research Center	18	79

- Thinking about children in low-income single parent households, how important do you think it is for their overall well-being that their parents get and stay married?

		Very	Somewhat	Not Too	Not At
		Important	Important	Important	All
May 2002	ORC	67	19	5	4

- Would you favor or oppose pilot programs to help reduce the number of children born outside of marriage by educating teens on the importance of waiting for marriage?

		Strongly	Somewhat	Somewhat	Strongly
		Favor	Favor	Oppose	Oppose
May 2002	ORC	62	23	5	5

- Would you favor or oppose pilot programs to help reduce the number of children born outside of marriage by referring interested couples to marriage education and preparation programs?

		Strongly	Somewhat	Somewhat	Strongly
		Favor	Favor	Oppose	Oppose
May 2002	ORC	55	30	5	5

- Do you favor or oppose permitting states to use surplus welfare funds for programs to strengthen marriage, reduce divorce and out-of-wedlock births?

		Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
May 2002	ORC	34	32	12	14

- Residents of the United States must pass a test to obtain a driver's license before being allowed to drive a motor vehicle. Do you think residents should also be required to pass a test before being allowed to...?

		Yes	No
Jun. 2002	Fox News/Opinion Dynamics		
	Buy a gun	77	18
	Register to vote	47	48
	Become a parent	37	54

- Thinking about your own values and morals, I'd like you to tell me whether you think in general, it is acceptable or unacceptable...How about having a child without being married? (p)

		Acceptable	Unacceptable
Apr.-Jun. 2002	Pew/Kaiser		
	Whites	53	45
	Blacks	56	41
	Latinos	59	39

NOTE: Asked of registered voters.

IX. MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM: *Neither poverty nor welfare has ever been mentioned as the top problem facing the country when people are asked for an off-the-cuff response. During the debate on welfare reform in the mid-1990s, however, in both Gallup and Harris polls, the percentage mentioning it spontaneously rose.*

- What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today? (Gallup)
- What do you think are the two most important issues for the government to address? (Harris Interactive)

Gallup

	"Welfare"	"Poverty"	Top Response
Jan. 1970	1	5	Vietnam (30)
Jul. 1970+	*	2	Vietnam (23)
Feb. 1971+	*	5	Vietnam (28)
Jun. 1971+	*	4	Vietnam (29)
Feb. 1972+	*	5	Vietnam (24)
Jun. 1972+	*	6	Vietnam (32)
Jan. 1973	2	2	Vietnam (34)
May 1973	1	2	Economy (34)
Jan. 1974	*	*	Energy Crisis (46)
Jun. 1974	*	1	Economy (43)
Mar. 1975	1	1	Economy (56)
Jul. 1975	1	1	Economy (44)
Jan. 1976	3	2	Economy (45)

Oct. 1976	3	2	Economy (43)
Mar. 1977	5	2	Economy (52)
Jul. 1977	3	2	Economy (30)
Feb. 1978	2	2	Economy (31)
Jul. 1978	2	1	Economy (56)
Feb. 1979	1	1	Economy (56)
Aug. 1979	1	1	Economy (44)
Jan. 1980	*	*	Economy (36)
Jun. 1980	1	1	Economy (55)
Jan. 1981	*	*	Economy (70)
May 1981	2	1	Economy (57)

Gallup (cont.)

	“Welfare”	“Reagan Budget Cuts”*	
Jan. 1982	*	7	Economy (49)
Jun. 1982	*	5	Unemployment (41)
Apr. 1983	*	3	Unemployment (53)
Jul. 1983	*	5	Unemployment (48)
Jan. 1984	*	3	Unemployment (24)
Jun. 1984	*	5	Unemployment (25)

		“Poverty”	
Jan. 1985	*	6	Fear of War (27)
May 1985	*	6	Fear of War (23)
Jan. 1986	*	7	Fear of War (30)
Jul. 1986	*	6	Unemployment (23)
Jan. 1987	1	6	Unemployment (16)
May 1987	*	6	Unemployment (13)
Sep. 1988	*	7	Deficit (12)
May 1989	*	10	Drug Abuse (27)
Jun 1989	*	8	Drug Abuse (27)
Apr. 1990	*	11	Drug Abuse (30)
Jul. 1990	*	7	Deficit (21)
Jan. 1991	*	6	Gulf Crisis (25)
Jul. 1991	*	10	Economy (16)
Mar. 1992	*	15	Economy (42)
May 1992	*	7	Economy (20)

Harris Interactive

	“Welfare”	“Poverty”	Top Response	“Welfare”	“Programs For The Poor”	Top Response
Jan. 1993	*	7	Economy (29)	2	7	Health Care (31)
Jun. 1993				2	5	Health Care (29)
Sep. 1993	*	7	Health Care (28)			
Jan. 1994	6	9	Crime (49)			
Feb. 1994				7	8	Health Care (45)
May 1994				5	6	Health Care (42)
Jul. 1994	1	5	Crime (21)			
Jan. 1995	7	6	Crime (19)			
Feb. 1995				16	10	Health Care (25)
Jun. 1995				14	8	Crime (22)
Jul. 1995	7	5	Crime (15)			
Jan. 1996	3	5	Deficit (19)			
Apr. 1996				13	2	Deficit (22)
Jul. 1996	8	3	Crime (16)			
Jan. 1997	4	6	Crime (15)	15	2	Crime (16)
Jun. 1997				12	2	Deficit (19)
Aug. 1997	8	8	Crime (20)			
Jan. 1998				8	2	Taxes (16)
Apr. 1998	8	10	Crime (20)	9	3	Education (20)

Sep. 1998	2	6	Morality (15)			
Jan. 1999	3	11	Morality (13)	2	1	Impeachment (30)
May 1999	2	7	Morality (18)			
Jun. 1999				3	3	Education (17)
Jan. 2000				3	4	Education (20)
Mar., 2000	3	5	Education (16)			
Jun. 2000	2	6	Morality (14)	3	2	Health Care (18)
Jan. 2001	2	4	Morality (13)			
Feb. 2001				1	1	Education (30)
Jun. 2001	1	8	Education (12)	2	2	Education (20)
Jan. 2002	1	3	Terrorism (23)	1	1	Economy (32)
Jun. 2002	1	4	Terrorism (33)	2	2	Terrorism (31)
Jan. 2003	*	3	Fear of War (31)			
Feb. 2003				1	1	The war (38)

Note: This is not a full chart of “most important problem” results. What are shown are the results from the first time the question was asked each year and at the midway point of each year. *Responses coded by Gallup as “Reagan Budget Cuts.”

- In your opinion, what should be the top priority for Congress right now?

		Percent Saying “Welfare” *	Percent Saying “Poverty” 2	Top Response Terrorism (15)
Apr. 2002	Gallup/CNN/USA Today			

- Now I want to read you some things some people have told us they have felt from time to time. Do you feel or not feel the rich get richer and the poor get poorer?

		Yes		Yes
1972	Harris Interactive	67	1995	Harris Interactive
1977	Harris Interactive	77	1996	Harris Interactive
1985	Harris Interactive	79	1997	Harris Interactive
1990	Harris Interactive	82	1998	Harris Interactive
1991	Harris Interactive	83	1999	Harris Interactive
1992	Harris Interactive	83	2000	Harris Interactive
1993	Harris Interactive	81	2001	Harris Interactive
1994	Harris Interactive	78	2002	Harris Interactive

X. POLITICS OF WELFARE REFORM: *Democrats have long been seen as the party that is best able to protect the poor. The parties' positions are closer when the pollsters ask about welfare. The Democrats' standing on handling welfare improved during Bill Clinton's presidency. The political potency of the issue can be seen in the results to two questions in this section. When Clinton voters were asked by Penn Schoen & Berland in November 1996 to assess 20 reasons for voting for Bill Clinton, his support for the welfare reform bill "that moved one million people from welfare to work" was the top response, cited by 83 percent as a very important reason for supporting him. Another indication comes from a November 1999 Los Angeles Times poll in which pollsters asked about seven reasons to support or oppose a presidential candidate. A potential candidate's opposition to the welfare reform bill produced a stronger reaction than any other issue except his support for a \$65 billion health care plan for children and uninsured adults.*

- For each specific issue I name, please tell me who do you trust to do a better job handling the issue – President Bill Clinton or the Republicans in Congress...Helping the poor?

		Bill Clinton	Republicans in Congress
Jan. 3-4, 1995	ABC News	54	35
Mar. 16-19, 1995	ABC News/Wash Post	61	27

- Which party is better on the issue of...welfare and other government programs for the poor...the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

		Democrats	Republicans
Aug. 8-9, 1996	PSRA/Newsweek	47	35

- Which political party – the Republicans or the Democrats – can do the best job helping the poor and elderly?

		Democrats	Republicans
Jul. 13-14, 1981	NBC/AP	45	26

- Regardless of how you vote, do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is...more likely to help poor people?

		Democratic	Republican
Apr. 22-26, 1981	CBS News/N.Y. Times	62	18
Jul. 31-Aug. 3, 1988	CBS News/N.Y. Times	74	12

- If you had to choose, which do you think would do a better job on...helping the elderly and the poor get a better break...the Democrats or the Republicans?

		Democrats	Republicans
Sep. 19-24, 1981	Harris Interactive	67	23
Jul. 17-22, 1987	Harris Interactive	67	25

- Do you think the Democratic Party or the Republican Party can do a better job in...helping the poor...or don't you think there's any difference between them?

		Democratic	Republican	No Difference
Sep. 17-19, 1985	Yankelovich/Time	54	14	28
Dec. 17-22, 1991	Yankelovich/Time/CNN	47	12	36

- Regardless of who controls Congress, do you think a Democratic or a Republican President would do a better job helping the poor?

		Democratic	Republican
Jan. 17-23, 1988	ABC News/Wash Post	73	20

- Which political party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you trust to do a better job helping the poor?

		Democrats	Republicans
Jan. 11-16, 1990	ABC News/Wash Post	62	25
Mar. 1-4, 1991	ABC News/Wash Post	64	22
Dec. 11-15, 1991	ABC News/Wash Post	63	21
Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 1992	ABC News/Wash Post	66	24
Feb. 24-27, 1994	ABC News/Wash Post	62	20
Sep. 8-11, 1994	ABC News	62	25
Jan. 1998	ABC News/Wash Post	61	27

- When it comes to looking out for the poor, which party do you think would do a better job – the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, both about the same, or neither?

		Democratic	Republican	Both	Neither
Oct. 19-21, 1990	NBC News/WSJ	60	10	15	11

- Do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party would do a better job of dealing with each of the following issues and problems?...Poverty and homelessness?

		Democrats	Republicans
Sep. 5-8, 1991	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	57	25
Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 1991	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	60	26
Jan. 3-6, 1992	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	62	24

- When it comes to reforming the welfare system, which party do you think would do a better job – the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, both about the same, or neither?

		Democratic	Republican	Both	Neither
Feb. 28-					
Mar. 2, 1992	NBC News/WSJ	36	24	16	16
Jul. 23-26, 1994	NBC News/WSJ	30	29	17	19
Oct. 14-18, 1994	NBC News/WSJ	28	31	12	21
Jun. 2-6, 1995	NBC News/WSJ	21	39	15	19
Dec. 1-5, 1995	NBC News/WSJ	31	35	13	16
May 10-14, 1996	NBC News/WSJ	31	35	13	14
Oct. 19-22, 1996	NBC News/WSJ	37	30	13	13
Sep. 11-15, 1997	NBC News/WSJ	32	30	15	17

- Do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to reform the welfare system so that waste and cheating are reduced, but people who really need welfare still get it?

		Democratic	Republican
May 27, 1992	N.Y. Times	34	31

- Which party, Republican or Democrat, do you think can do a better job of...reforming the welfare system?

		Democrat	Republican
Dec. 2-3, 1993	PSRA/Times-Mirror	40	30

- Do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party would do a better job of dealing with each of the following issues and problems...welfare reform?

		Democratic	Republican
Dec. 17-19, 1993	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	47	36
Nov. 28-29, 1994	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	35	55
Oct. 26-29, 1996*	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	52	37

Note: *The issue was referred to as "welfare policy."

- Do you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more likely to reform the welfare system?

		Democratic	Republican
Jan. 15-17, 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	45	35
Sep. 8-11, 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	40	38

- I would like to read you a list of issues that some people from this part of the country have said are important for government to deal with. Please tell me, for each one, whether you have more confidence in the Democratic Party or the Republican Party to deal with this issue...Reforming welfare... Please tell me, for each one, whether you have more confidence in President Bill Clinton and the Democrats in Congress or the Republicans in Congress to deal with this issue...Reforming welfare?

		Democratic Party	Republican Party	Clinton/Democrats	Republicans in Congress
Aug. 16-18, 1994	Battleground	34	37	35	38
Apr. 2-4, 1995	Battleground	29	50	32	53
Jan. 27-29, 1996	Battleground	41	42	--	--
Dec. 7-9, 1997	Battleground	--	--	39	40
Aug. 24-26, 1998	Battleground	--	--	40	40

- Now I am going to read you a list of issues. This time I want you to concentrate on the two major political parties, and as I read each one, please tell me whether you think the Republican Party or the Democratic Party can best handle that problem...Reforming the welfare system.

		Democratic	Republican
Nov. 9, 1994	Wirthlin Group	36	45

- Who do you trust more to make decisions about reforming welfare...the Republicans in Congress or Bill Clinton?

		Bill Clinton	Republicans in Congress
Dec. 6-9, 1994	CBS News/N.Y. Times	27	62
Jan. 10-20, 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	35	46
Apr. 1-4, 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	33	50
Oct. 22-24, 1995	CBS News/N.Y. Times	45	44

- As I read a list of issues, please tell me who you think has the best ideas. On the issue of reforming the welfare system, who has the best ideas...Republican congressional leaders or Bill Clinton?

		Bill Clinton	Congressional Republicans
Dec. 27-28, 1994	PSRA/Newsweek	35	46
Sep. 28-Oct. 1, 1995	PSRA/Times-Mirror	38	43

- As I read a list of issues please tell me who you think has the best ideas. On the issue of reforming the welfare system, who has the best ideas...Republican congressional leaders, Democratic congressional leaders, or Bill Clinton?

		Democratic Congressional Leaders	Republican Congressional Leaders	Bill Clinton
Feb. 9-12, 1995	PSRA/Times-Mirror	12	40	26

- Who do you have more confidence in when it comes to handling the following problems – President Bill Clinton or Republican leaders...Welfare?

		Clinton	Republican Leaders
Feb. 24-26, 1995	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	39	51
Mar. 27-29, 1995	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	44	46
Aug. 28-30, 1995	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	43	42
Mar. 15-17, 1996	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	46	44
Apr. 9-10, 1996	Gallup/CNN/USA Today	50	37

- For each specific issue I name, please tell me who you trust to do a better job handling that issue – Bill Clinton or the Republicans in Congress....Reforming the welfare system?

		Bill Clinton	Republicans in Congress
Mar. 16-19, 1995	ABC News/Wash Post	38	51
Jul. 14-17, 1995	ABC News/Wash Post	42	48
Sep. 28-Oct. 1, 1995	ABC News/Wash Post	42	51
Oct. 27-30, 1995	Wash Post	42	49

- Who do you think would do the best job reforming the welfare system – President Bill Clinton or the Republicans in Congress?

		Clinton	Republicans in Congress
Jan. 25, 1994	Blum-Weprin/NBC	44	34
Apr. 16-19, 1994	LA Times	42	33
Oct. 17-19, 1994	LA Times	35	41
Sep. 16-18, 1995	LA Times	36	40

- Thinking about the two major political parties, I am now going to read you a list of issues. I want you to think about the two major political parties, and as I read each issue, please tell me whether you think the Democratic Party or the Republican Party can best handle that issue...Changing welfare for the better?

		Democratic	Republican
Jan. 17-19, 1997	Wirthlin Worldwide	40	43

- Thinking about each of the following policies, do you, in general, prefer the Republican Party's position on each of these issues, the Democratic Party's position on each of these issues, or a middle ground between the Republican and Democratic Party's positions...Welfare programs?

		Democratic Position	Middle Ground	Republican Position
Jan. 8-9, 1997	Yankelovich/CNN/Time	33	30	30

- Which political party, the Democrats or the Republicans, do you trust to do a better job reducing poverty in this country?

Aug. 10-27, 1998	Wash Post/Kaiser/Harvard	Democrats 48	Republicans 25
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- Who do you trust to handle this issue...moving people from welfare to work?

Nov. 19-21, 2001	Penn/Schoen/DLC	Democratic Party 41	Republican Party 44	Democrats In Congress 41	President Bush 47
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- Now I'm going to read you a list of accomplishments in President Clinton's first term. For each, please tell me whether it was very important in your decision to vote for Clinton, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all. President Clinton... **(Asked of Clinton voters only)**

Nov. 1996	Penn/Schoen/DLC				
		Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important
	Helped move one million people from welfare to work	83	11	3	1
	Signed the Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation, allowing people to keep their health insurance when they change jobs	81	12	2	3
	Signed the crime bill, adding 100,000 local police	80	14	2	3
	Defended education and the environment from the proposed cuts of the Republican Congress	78	16	3	1
	Signed the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban	74	17	3	5
	Signed the Family and Medical Leave Act	73	21	3	2
	Cleaned up toxic waste sites and increased safeguards for meat and poultry	73	21	3	1
	We have 10 million new jobs, we make more autos than Japan, and unemployment is at its lowest level in 7 1/2 years	73	21	2	3
	Signed into law an increase in the minimum wage	72	20	5	3
	Defended Medicare and Medicaid from the proposed cuts of the Republican Congress	72	21	3	2
	Called for regulations that ban advertising of tobacco aimed at children	72	15	9	4
	Expanded Head Start, reformed student loans, and increased the minimum Pell Grant	70	27	2	1
	Budget plan resulted in a 60% decrease in the deficit	65	26	6	1
	Increased funding for breast cancer research	65	25	4	3
	Expanded the death penalty to drug kingpins and made "three strikes and you're out" the law of the land	62	21	10	5
	Signed major welfare reform legislation	60	25	7	4
	Stepped up efforts to bar illegal immigration	57	26	11	4
	Presided over the creation of a record number of new small businesses	52	33	9	2
	Exports have risen and a million export-related jobs have been created	51	30	10	5
	Helped enhance peace efforts in Ireland, Bosnia, and the Middle East	48	37	8	5

- Let's say a presidential candidate supports ... Would that make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate for president or would that have no effect on your vote one way or the other?

Nov. 13-18, 1999

L.A. Times

	More Likely	Less Likely	No Effect
Health care expansion*	59	12	25
School voucher programs*	41	22	34
A flat tax *	35	31	25
A ban on soft money*	30	16	48
Ban on legal abortions	27	42	29
Concealed weapons permits	20	48	29
Repealing welfare reforms*	13	57	24

Note: *Full wordings are "Spending sixty-five billion dollars a year to expand health care for all children and many working adults who are uninsured;" "School voucher programs that would allow parents to use tax funds to send their children to the school of their choice even if it is a private or religious school;" "Replacing the existing income tax, which imposes higher tax rates on families with higher income, with a single tax rate of seventeen percent for all taxpayers, and would also eliminate all deductions, including mortgage and charitable donations;" "A ban on soft money – this is big money contributed by corporations, unions, and wealthy individuals – which is spent by political parties on behalf of the candidates, and also wants to limit the use of issue advertising by special interest groups for or against specific candidates;" "The 1996 Welfare Reform Bill requires welfare recipients to accept work within two years of applying for benefits, and imposes a five-year lifetime limit on welfare assistance."

Key:

AmDem = American Demographics

Battleground = Tarrance Group/Lake-Snell-Perry

BET = Black Entertainment Television

CSM = Christian Science Monitor

DLC = Democratic Leadership Council

FRC = Family Research Council

GM = General Motors

Hart = Hart Research

IBD = Investor's Business Daily

ICR = International Communications Research

NORC = National Opinion Research Center/General Social Survey. Surveys are usually conducted in the spring.

NSAF = National Survey of America's Families, Urban Institute

ORC = Opinion Research Corporation

Penn/Schoen = Penn, Schoen, Berland, & Associates

Pew Research Center = Pew Research Center for the People and the Press

PSRA = Princeton Survey Research Associates

RoperASW/VS = RoperASW/Virginia Slims

TIPP = TechnoMetrica Institute of Policy and Politics

TNS = Taylor Nelson Sofres

WMM = Women, Men, & Media

NA = Not Asked

Suggested Readings:

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