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Education, Crime, Social Security Top National Priorities
SPENDING FAVORED OVER TAX CUTS OR DEBT REDUCTION

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Education, Crime, Social Security Top National Priorities

SPENDING FAVORED OVER TAX CUTS OR DEBT REDUCTION

In his sixth State of the Union next week, President Clinton will face an American public that retains a healthy appetite for government activism — fully two-thirds advocate spending any budget surplus this year. But that enthusiasm is tempered by often sharp generational differences on federal spending priorities.

In a clear signal about what *not* to do with any federal surplus, few Americans would use it to help pay off the federal debt more quickly (22%) and even fewer would devote it to a tax cut (11%). But those prepared to spend the excess revenue divide equally over how to do so: 33% favor new spending on such domestic programs as health, education and the environment; 32% support spending to make the Social Security and Medicare programs financially sound.

Reflecting broader generational divisions on many policy issues, Americans under 50, particularly Generation Xers, would increase social spending, while older Americans would fix Social Security and Medicare. A similar generation gap is apparent on Clinton’s proposal to extend Medicare to Americans aged 55-64. Younger Americans heartily favor the idea, while a plurality of seniors oppose the proposal. As a result, public opinion is mixed: 51% favor the Clinton initiative; 41% oppose it.

Generational Divides				
	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-49</u>	<u>50-64</u>	<u>65 +</u>
	%	%	%	%
<i>What to Do with Budget Surplus</i>				
Tax cut	13	13	9	6
Pay off natl. debt	14	22	27	27
Social spending	57	34	17	15
Fix Social Security	15	31	45	46
Don't know/Ref.	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Top Priorities</i>				
Education	79	82	74	76
Crime	66	70	76	76
Social Security	60	66	80	84
Medicare	54	56	75	82
Health Care	60	63	64	62
Help Poor & Needy	57	57	58	58
Help Families				
With Children	61	58	48	46
Job Situation	50	56	56	56
Reduce Federal				
Income Taxes	46	58	60	48
Environment	58	56	47	46
Moral Breakdown	42	42	52	60
National Debt	42	47	48	48
Racial Tensions	38	41	37	45
Campaign Finance	16	30	38	54
Capital Gains Tax	22	25	30	24

While fixing Social Security and improving the educational system are high priorities for Americans of all ages, Social Security is No. 1 for those over age 50, while education tops the list for younger Americans. Older Americans also place a much higher priority than those under age 50 on dealing with the larger moral breakdown in the country and reforming the campaign finance system. Younger Americans are more likely to cite dealing with the problems of families with children and improving the environment. People aged 30-64 are particularly interested in reducing federal incomes taxes for the middle class.

These are among the most important currents in public opinion according to the latest Pew Research Center survey, conducted January 14-18. As the second session of the 105th Congress opens, the public expresses record levels of personal contentment and relatively high levels of satisfaction with the country. President Clinton's approval stood at 61% in a poll conducted in part on the weekend of his deposition in a sexual harassment lawsuit. The poll also found good news for Congress: A lofty 66% of Pew Research Center respondents said that *their* representative deserves reelection.

The President and Congress

Public satisfaction with the state of the nation has lifted out of the doldrums of the early 1990s, with 46% today saying they are satisfied. While this is up 20% points or more from the period 1993 through mid-1996, half of all Americans (50%) still describe themselves as dissatisfied with the way things are going. Evangelical Christians and Clinton detractors are among the least satisfied.

Support for the political establishment in Washington, however, is strong. Clinton's base of support was extremely broad in the days leading up to and including his testimony in the Paula Jones case. No major demographic group fell below the 58% mark in presidential approval. Moreover, even among those who identify themselves as Republican loyalists, 36% approved of the job he was doing, up 13% points from January 1996. Over the last two years, Clinton has gained the most ground among high income Americans, white males, college graduates and suburbanites. (See table page 12.)

The president's popularity may be contributing to an uptick in support for Democratic candidates on a generic congressional ballot. Today, the public prefers Democrats over Republicans by a 10% point margin — 51% vs. 41%. In August, the two parties were in a statistical dead heat — 48% Democrat vs. 45% Republican.

Trend in Congressional Voting Intentions		
	August <u>1997</u>	January <u>1998</u>
	%	%
Republican	45	41
Democrat	48	51
Undecided	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100

Democrats continue to benefit from a wide gender gap. Women prefer Democratic congressional candidates over Republicans by a margin of 54% to 38%. Men divide evenly between the two — 47% Democrat, 45% Republican. Democrats also lead by comfortable margins among other traditional party constituencies such as non-whites and those with low incomes and low levels of education. Republicans lead Democrats only among young people and those in the highest income bracket.

This Democratic strength, however, must be weighed against the public's even stronger inclination toward reelecting incumbents, most of whom are Republican. Two-thirds of the public (66%) say they would like to see their own representative reelected in 1998 — a higher margin than observed in Center and Gallup surveys in 1996, 1994 and 1990. Republicans at present hold a 227-203 majority in the House of Representatives.

Underlying the widespread support for the current political establishment is evidence that the public has grown comfortable with divided government in Washington. The strong relationship that existed just two years ago between presidential approval and disapproval of Republican congressional leaders has diminished. Today, fans of the GOP leadership in Congress are no different than average

Americans when it comes to support for Clinton, and his supporters are no different than the public at-large in their evaluations of Republican leaders. A quarter of the public (26%) approve of both Clinton *and* the GOP leaders in Congress.

Clinton Wins Over GOP Supporters

<i>Opinion of Clinton</i>	<i>Approve of GOP Congress</i>		
	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>
	%	%	%
Approve	29	49	61
Disapprove	65	47	36
DK/Ref.	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

Education, Crime, Social Security Top Agenda

Improving the educational system, reducing crime and fixing Social Security remain at the top of the public's agenda for President Clinton and Congress in 1998. For the second year in a row, at least 70% of Americans list each of these areas as a "top priority." The strong economy has apparently eased concern about the job situation, which fell off the public's top five list and was replaced by health care reform. Fully 62% of Americans now rank health care as a top policy priority.

Top 5 Priorities for the President and Congress

January 1997 vs. January 1998

	<i>Total</i>		<i>Rep</i>		<i>Dems</i>	
	<u>'97</u>	<u>'98</u>	<u>'97</u>	<u>'98</u>	<u>'97</u>	<u>'98</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Education	75	78	62	74	79	82
Crime	70	71	64	68	70	74
Soc. Security	75	70	77	67	76	75
Medicare	64	64	60	57	70	67
Health care	56	62	40	50	69	70

The increase in support for reforming health care was greater among Republicans than Democrats. Fully 50% list health care reform as a top priority today, up 10% points from a year ago. Similarly, nearly three-in-four Republicans (74%) listed education as a priority, a 12% point increase in the last year.

Democrats continue to express even more support for government action in each of these areas. Fully 70% of Democrats rate health care reform as a top priority, outdistancing GOP support by 20% points. Similarly, three-in-four Democrats say making the Social Security system financially sound should be a priority, compared to 67% of Republicans. In fact, Republicans significantly outnumber Democrats in their support for only two of 15 issues included in the poll — paying off the national debt and cutting the capital gains tax.

Improving the educational system, the public's top priority for 1998, also draws substantially more support from women than from men (82% vs. 74%) and greater support from blacks than whites (90% vs. 76%). Women and blacks place a higher priority on most other issues as well and are substantially more likely to say a budget surplus should be used for increased spending on domestic programs.

Crime, Rates Notwithstanding

Crime continues to be near the top of the public's priority list. While overall crime statistics show a downward trend, the public is tuned in to crime news. Asked to name the "first news story that comes to mind," 17% of Americans mentioned stories involving drugs, murders or other crimes — as many as mentioned the situation in Iraq and more than mentioned the weather or Paula Jones.

Despite the attention to campaign finance scandals generated by several congressional investigations last year, the public remains ambivalent about reforming the system. Less than one-third of Americans (32%) listed campaign finance reform as a "top priority," while nearly as many (29%) said the issue is "not too important" or "should not" be dealt with this year.

As President Clinton seeks to lead a national discussion about race relations in the U.S., white and black Americans are becoming even more polarized in their level of concern about racial issues. More than two-thirds of blacks (68%) listed reducing racial tensions as a top priority for Clinton and Congress this year, about the same as a year ago. But only 36% of whites said addressing race relations should be a top priority — a drop of 12% points in the last year.

Surplus Spending

Women are far more likely than men to support spending any federal budget surplus. Nearly three-quarters of women (73%) support using any excess revenue for increased spending on domestic programs and entitlements, compared to 57% of men. Less than one-in-five women (18%) would pay off the debt more quickly; a quarter of men would do so (26%). Only 7% of women back a tax cut, twice as many men favor that approach (15%).

Tax cuts and reducing the national debt are more attractive to Republicans than to Democrats, if there is a federal budget surplus this year. Nearly half of those who describe themselves as Republicans would prefer a tax cut or national debt reduction to increased spending (47%), compared to less than a quarter of Democrats who feel that way (23%). In contrast, three-in-four Democrats would spend a budget surplus on domestic programs or Social Security, while just a bare majority of Republicans (52%) would do so.

	<u>All</u>	<u>Reps</u>	<u>Dem</u>
<i>What to Do with Budget Surplus</i>	%	%	%
Tax cut	11	15	9
Pay off natl. debt	22	31	14
Social spending	33	25	35
Fix Social Security	32	27	40
Don't know/Ref.	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100

There are also large differences between older and younger Americans over how to use a possible budget surplus. Nearly half of those 50 and older (46%) would use the surplus to make Social Security and Medicare financially sound, while most of those under 30 (57%) favor increased spending on domestic programs. Americans between the ages of 30 and 49 are more evenly divided, with 34% favoring increased spending, 31% for entitlement reform and 22% for paying off the national debt more quickly.

Support for Clinton Child Care Initiatives

The child care initiative proposed this month by President Clinton draws high marks. Seven-in-ten Americans favor *tax credits* to help working parents defray the costs of child care, including 68% of Republicans and 74% of Democrats. But another piece of Clinton's initiative, *increased spending* for child care, fails to draw the same bipartisan support. While 75% of Democrats favor more spending for child care programs, Republicans oppose

	<u>All</u>	<u>Reps</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
<i>Tax credits for child care...</i>	%	%	%	%
Favor	71	68	75	70
Oppose	26	29	24	27
<i>Increase spending for child care...</i>				
Favor	63	46	75	63
Oppose	34	51	22	33

the idea by a 51%-46% margin. Both child care proposals also draw less support from seniors than from younger Americans. Even the popular tax credit initiative draws just 49% support among those 65 or older.

The public is less enthusiastic about a Clinton proposal that would expand Medicare by allowing Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 to buy into the federal health insurance program. A majority of Democrats (56%) favor the proposal, while Republicans split 48%-46% against the expansion. The initiative draws slightly more support from those in the 50 to 64 age-group (55%) and from those under 30 (58%).

	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-49</u>	<u>50-64</u>	<u>65+</u>
	%	%	%	%
<i>Extending Medicare To Include Those Ages 55 - 64</i>				
Favor	58	51	55	40
Oppose	37	43	36	49
Don't know/Refused	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100	100

Americans' wariness of international trade agreements is evidenced in across-the-board opposition to legislation that would give the President expanded "fast-track" authority to negotiate free trade agreements. While Republicans oppose the legislation by a nearly four-to-one margin (78% to 21%), those in the President's own party are also strongly against giving Clinton "fast-track" authority (61% to 33%).

Meanwhile, the public also disapproves of Clinton's decision to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia beyond the original deadline by a 50%- 43% margin. Democrats and Independents are evenly divided on Clinton's extension of the deadline, while Republicans oppose the decision by a wide margin (60% vs. 36% disapprove).

News Interest Index

Despite several national criminal trials and new Clinton Administration proposals, interest in the news remained low this month. Of the 10 items on the News Interest Index, only two — the conflict in Iraq (32%) and the sentencing of Terry Nichols (24%) — were followed “very closely” by a quarter of the public, the average for most major news stories in past years. Last November, when the United States and Iraq were embroiled in a similar dispute over the U.S. role in international weapons inspection teams, a significantly larger proportion of the public (44%) followed the story “very closely.”

Similarly, the big criminal cases of early 1998 are capturing less interest than earlier trials. Although 39% very closely followed the sentencing of Timothy McVeigh in the Oklahoma bombing

case last June, only a quarter of the public (24%) followed the sentencing of fellow defendant Nichols that closely. An even smaller number (18%) very closely followed the pre-trial activity in the case against Theodore Kaczynski, the accused “Unabomber.”

Fewer than one-in-five Americans paid very close attention to Clinton’s plan to expand Medicare benefits (18%), his child care initiatives (16%) or even the broader debate about reforming the Social Security system (18%). Less than half of the public said they paid at least fairly close attention to these stories.

Major news stories about public health or medical issues were only slightly more popular. Half of the public paid some attention to news stories about the Chicago scientist who plans to open a clinic for cloning people (50%) and the outbreak of an Asian flu caused by birds or chickens (55%). Again, however, interest was lackluster; both stories were followed “very closely” by only one-in-five people.

Among these top stories, men paid closer attention than women to the situation in Iraq (38% vs. 27% following very closely), fluctuations in the U.S. stock market (26% vs. 16%) and the financial crisis in Asia (20% vs. 11%). Older Americans paid more attention than their younger counterparts to *all* of the News Interest Index items, but the differences between those 50 and up and the under 30 crowd were especially sharp for stories about Iraq (14% point difference between those following very closely), Medicare (16% point difference) and the debate over Social Security reform (21% point difference).

Most Americans say Washington based news stories are hard to follow. Fully 61% of the public find stories about what is going on in Washington to be “confusing and unclear.” Predictably, people who find Washington-based stories clear pay more attention to most major news than the majority who find these news accounts confusing.

Talk of Weird Weather

Despite the relative lack of interest in the top news stories this month, a full two-thirds of the public (67%) attest to following the news closely “most of the time, whether or not something important or interesting is happening.” And they stop to talk about the news.

The most popular news items for discussion among friends and family were the unusual winter weather (discussed by 85% of the public) and the skiing accidents of Michael Kennedy and Sonny Bono (discussed by 80%). Recent movies such as “Titanic” and “Amistad” placed third, a topic of conversation among two-thirds of the public (64%), followed by the Terry Nichols trial (discussed by 60%).

The range of items discussed varies greatly from sports to health and medical news to international crises. Slightly over half of the American public has talked about the Asian bird flu (56%), the NFL playoffs (54%), the situation in Iraq (53%), the Chicago scientist’s plan to open a clinic for cloning people (51%) and the trial of Theodore Kaczynski (51%).

News Americans Discussed Recently	
	<u>%</u>
Unusual winter weather	85
Skiing deaths of Kennedy/Bono	80
Recent movies	64
Sentencing of Terry Nichols	60
Asian bird flu	56
NFL Playoffs	54
The conflict in Iraq	53
Plans to open a clinic for cloning	51
Trial of Theodore Kaczynski	51
Death of Chris Farley	48
U.S. Stock Market	47
Clinton’s proposal for Medicare	43
John Glenn’s return to space	42
Debate over Social Security reform	39
Latrell Spreewell’s attack on coach	39
Clinton’s proposals for child care	37
End of “Seinfeld”	32
Efforts to rein in Microsoft	31

Conversely, despite the media attention accorded Jerry Seinfeld’s decision to end his popular television show after this season, less than one-third of the public (32%) discussed it with family or friends. People were more likely to discuss Clinton’s proposals for Medicare (43%) and child care (37%).

Women were more apt to talk about the Asian bird flu than men (62% vs. 48%) and the cloning clinic (58% vs. 44%). Men talked sports more than women. Almost half of men (47%) but less than a third of women (31%) discussed basketball player Latrell Spreewell’s attack on his coach. Fully 62% of men discussed the NFL playoffs vs. 48% of women. But, the differences between the genders was less than that between generations: 65% of the 18-29 age group talked about the football playoffs; only 37% of those 65 and older did so.

Forty percent of computer users discussed efforts to rein in the power of Microsoft, compared to only 15% of non-computer users. Younger Americans also talked about Microsoft more than their elders: 38% of those under 30 discussed the software giant, compared to 20% of those 65 and older.

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

	Conflict In Iraq w/UN Inspectors	Sentencing Of Terry Nichols	Clinic For Cloning People	Stock Market	Asian Bird Flu	(N)
Total	32	24	21	21	19	(1218)
Sex						
Male	38	23	18	26	17	(605)
Female	27	25	22	16	21	(613)
Race						
White	32	23	20	21	17	(1015)
*Hispanic	29	24	24	14	23	(81)
Black	33	35	30	17	38	(126)
Age						
Under 30	25	22	20	13	15	(231)
30-49	29	19	17	20	18	(523)
50+	40	32	25	25	23	(457)
Education						
College Grad.	34	17	20	32	18	(351)
Some College	36	25	21	24	19	(315)
High School Grad	31	26	22	14	19	(420)
< H. S. Grad.	26	28	17	15	22	(129)
Region						
East	34	21	19	21	18	(241)
Midwest	34	26	21	20	20	(302)
South	30	25	21	20	20	(421)
West	32	25	21	22	18	(254)
Party ID						
Republican	36	19	18	25	14	(354)
Democrat	31	30	23	17	24	(410)
Independent	33	25	23	21	20	(374)

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.

CONTINUED...

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

	Clinton's Medicare Proposal	Social Security Reform Debate	Trial Of Theodore Kaczynski	Child Care Tax Credit Proposal	Asian Financial Crisis	(N)
Total	18	18	18	16	15	(1218)
Sex						
Male	18	17	17	14	20	(605)
Female	19	19	19	19	11	(613)
Race						
White	18	16	16	15	15	(1015)
*Hispanic	13	11	19	25	7	(81)
Black	26	29	31	27	13	(126)
Age						
Under 30	10	8	15	13	9	(231)
30-49	16	14	16	17	14	(523)
50+	27	29	22	18	21	(457)
Education						
College Grad.	17	14	15	17	24	(351)
Some College	18	18	18	17	18	(315)
High School Grad	19	20	18	16	11	(420)
< H. S. Grad.	20	19	21	17	10	(129)
Region						
East	16	16	15	14	15	(241)
Midwest	18	20	18	12	18	(302)
South	19	19	18	18	11	(421)
West	21	17	20	19	20	(254)
Party ID						
Republican	16	15	16	13	18	(354)
Democrat	21	21	22	22	14	(410)
Independent	19	19	17	14	16	(374)

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

TABLES

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

January 1996 vs. January 1998

	--- January 1996 ---			--- January 1998 ---			Change in Approval
	Approve %	Disapprove %	DK %	Approve %	Disapprove %	DK %	
Total	50	43	7=100	61	30	9=100	+11
Sex							
Male	48	46	6	60	33	7	+12
Female	51	40	9	62	28	10	+11
Race							
White	47	46	7	59	33	8	+12
Non-white	72	22	6	76	14	10	+4
Black	77	17	6	78	12	10	+1
Hispanic	54	43	3	68	23	9	+14
Race and Sex							
White Men	44	50	6	59	35	6	+15
White Women	49	42	9	59	31	10	+10
Age							
Under 30	51	42	7	61	29	10	+10
30-49	51	44	5	63	29	8	+12
50-64	47	44	9	59	30	11	+12
65+	51	39	10	61	37	2	+10
Education							
College Grad.	47	48	5	61	31	8	+14
Some College	51	42	7	62	32	6	+11
High School Grad.	49	43	8	60	32	8	+11
<H.S. Grad	57	34	9	63	25	12	+6
Family Income							
\$75,000+	43	54	3	61	34	5	+18
\$50,000-\$74,999	43	52	5	66	27	7	+23
\$30,000-\$49,999	53	41	6	60	33	7	+7
\$20,000-\$29,999	51	44	5	66	29	5	+15
<\$20,000	53	36	11	61	30	9	+8

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

CONTINUED...

	--- January 1996 ---			--- January 1998 ---			Change in <u>Approval</u>
	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	
<i>Total</i>	50	43	7=100	61	30	9=100	+11
<i>Region</i>							
East	58	35	7	63	27	10	+5
Midwest	49	43	8	63	31	6	+14
South	45	47	8	58	34	8	+13
West	52	41	7	63	26	11	+11
<i>Community Size</i>							
Large City	53	37	10	65	26	9	+12
Suburb	49	44	7	63	29	8	+14
Small City/Town	52	42	6	61	29	10	+9
Rural Area	46	46	8	56	40	4	+10
<i>Party ID</i>							
Republican	23	72	5	36	55	9	+13
Democrat	78	15	7	86	10	4	+8
Independent	50	43	7	62	30	8	+12
<i>GOP Congress Approval</i>							
Republican	29	65	6	61	36	3	+32
Democrat	66	29	5	67	31	2	+1

CONGRESSIONAL TRIAL HEAT *

August 1997 vs. January 1998

Based on Registered Voters

	--- August 1997 ---			--- January 1998 ---			Change in Rep Support
	Republican	Democrat	Undecided	Republican	Democrat	Undecided	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	45	48	7=100	41	51	8=100	-4
Sex							
Male	48	44	8	45	47	8	-3
Female	42	52	6	38	54	8	-4
Race							
White	49	44	7	46	46	8	-3
Non-white	19	75	6	17	78	5	-2
Black	18	78	4	12	83	5	-6
Race and Sex							
White Men	54	38	8	48	45	7	-6
White Women	46	49	5	44	48	8	-2
Age							
Under 30	50	45	5	54	41	5	+4
30-49	45	47	8	39	53	8	-6
50-64	48	46	6	40	50	10	-8
65+	36	59	5	40	53	7	+4
Education							
College Grad.	44	50	6	43	48	9	-1
Some College	54	39	7	49	45	6	-5
High School Grad	42	51	7	41	52	7	-1
<H.S. Grad	35	56	9	30	61	9	-5
Family Income							
\$75,000+	57	36	7	52	42	6	-5
\$50,000-\$74,999	55	41	4	43	49	8	-12
\$30,000-\$49,999	47	49	4	43	51	6	-4
\$20,000-\$29,999	44	50	6	35	58	7	-9
<\$20,000	30	64	6	32	58	10	+2

*Includes Leaners

Question: If the elections for U.S. Congress were being held TODAY, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for congress in your district?
 [IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '3' OR '9' IN Q.7, ASK:] As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

CONTINUED...

	--- August 1997 ---			--- January 1998 ---			Change in Rep Support
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	45	48	7=100	41	51	8=100	-4
Region							
East	35	60	5	35	59	6	0
Midwest	43	50	7	43	48	9	0
South	49	45	6	43	49	8	-6
West	48	42	10	42	50	8	-6
Community Size							
Large City	35	59	6	30	61	9	-5
Suburb	47	46	7	45	51	4	-2
Small City/Town	46	48	6	42	48	10	-4
Rural Area	49	44	7	49	44	7	0
Party ID							
Republican	91	7	2	90	7	3	-1
Democrat	5	93	2	5	93	2	0
Independent	45	41	14	41	45	14	-4
1996 Presidential Vote							
Clinton	18	77	5	19	76	5	+1
Dole	92	6	2	92	3	5	0
1996 Congressional Vote							
Republican	86	11	3	82	13	5	-4
Democrat	8	89	3	8	89	3	0

OPINION OF NEW CLINTON PROPOSALS

	<i>Medicare Expansion</i>		<i>Childcare Tax Credits</i>		<i>Increased Spending on Childcare</i>	
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	51	41	71	26	63	34
Sex						
Male	50	44	69	29	59	38
Female	52	39	73	24	66	30
Race						
White	52	41	70	27	60	37
Non-white	51	43	77	20	78	18
Black	50	44	77	22	83	15
Hispanic	58	39	75	22	78	21
Race and Sex						
White Men	52	43	69	29	57	40
White Women	51	39	71	25	63	33
Age						
Under 30	58	37	80	17	81	18
30-49	51	43	77	23	65	32
50-64	55	36	68	29	51	46
65+	40	49	49	43	46	46
Education						
College Grad.	52	42	70	29	57	41
Some College	52	41	73	24	61	37
High School Grad	49	42	72	25	64	32
<H.S.Grad	55	39	70	27	70	26
Family Income						
\$75,000+	52	42	70	29	57	41
\$50,000-\$74,999	55	41	77	23	55	45
\$30,000-\$49,999	53	40	69	29	64	32
\$20,000-\$29,999	54	39	75	23	68	28
<\$20,000	53	40	71	24	71	28

Question: Now, I'd like your opinion of some new proposals and decisions that have been made in Washington recently...

It has been proposed to expand Medicare to also include younger retirees and uninsured between the ages of 55 and 64 who would pay higher premiums than people 65 and older now do. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

Do you favor or oppose giving tax credits to families that earn less than \$60,000 to help them pay for childcare costs?

Do you favor or oppose increasing federal spending to provide childcare assistance to working parents?

CONTINUED...

	<i>Medicare Expansion</i>		<i>Childcare Tax Credits</i>		<i>Increased Spending on Childcare</i>	
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	51	41	71	26	63	34
<i>Region</i>						
East	52	41	73	25	67	31
Midwest	51	40	70	26	56	38
South	54	40	71	27	63	34
West	47	45	71	26	65	33
<i>Community Size</i>						
Large City	50	42	72	25	65	32
Suburb	55	39	76	23	63	35
Small City/Town	48	45	68	29	63	34
Rural Area	58	33	71	25	59	37
<i>Party ID</i>						
Republican	46	48	68	29	46	51
Democrat	57	35	75	24	75	22
Independent	53	41	70	27	63	33
<i>1996 Presidential Vote</i>						
Clinton	59	35	74	25	69	28
Dole	45	49	60	38	35	63
<i>1996 Congressional Vote</i>						
Republican	47	48	62	36	39	58
Democrat	56	37	71	27	67	29

WHO'S CONFUSED BY THE NEWS?

Find News About Washington...

	<u>Confusing and Unclear</u> %	<u>Clear and Understandable</u> %	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u> %
Total	61	38	1=100
Sex			
Male	55	43	2
Female	65	33	2
Race			
White	61	38	1
Non-white	62	38	*
Black	59	41	0
Hispanic	61	36	3
Race and Sex			
White Men	55	44	1
White Women	66	32	2
Age			
Under 30	59	39	2
30-49	59	40	1
50-64	61	38	1
65+	69	30	1
Education			
College Grad.	50	48	2
Some College	53	46	1
High School Grad	67	31	2
<H.S. Grad	71	27	2
Family Income			
\$75,000+	46	53	1
\$50,000-\$74,999	63	36	1
\$30,000-\$49,999	59	40	1
\$20,000-\$29,999	69	30	1
<\$20,000	64	35	1

Question: Do you often find stories about what's going on in Washington confusing and unclear, or are these stories generally clear and understandable to you?

CONTINUED...

Find News About Washington...

	<u>Confusing and Unclear</u>	<u>Clear and Understandable</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	61	38	1=100
<i>Region</i>			
East	62	37	1
Midwest	61	37	2
South	60	38	2
West	60	39	1
<i>Community Size</i>			
Large City	51	47	2
Suburb	57	42	1
Small City/Town	65	34	1
Rural Area	66	32	2
<i>Party ID</i>			
Republican	58	41	1
Democrat	63	37	*
Independent	60	38	2
<i>1996 Presidential Vote</i>			
Clinton	61	38	1
Dole	57	42	1
<i>1996 Congressional Vote</i>			
Republican	57	42	1
Democrat	57	43	*

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the main survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,218 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period January 14-18, 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 percentage points. For results based on either Form 1 (N=614) or Form 2 (N=604), the sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

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

SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

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

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone numbers in the U.S. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing 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 four 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
JANUARY 1998 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
-- FINAL TOPLINE --
Jan 14 - 18, 1998
N=1,218

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

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

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
January, 1998	61	30	9=100
November, 1997	58	31	11=100
September, 1997	58	29	13=100
August, 1997	59	32	9=100
June, 1997	54	34	12=100
May, 1997	57	34	9=100
April, 1997	55	34	11=100
February, 1997	60	32	8=100
Early February, 1997	57	30	13=100
January, 1997	59	31	10=100
November, 1996	57	34	9=100
July, 1996	54	38	8=100
June, 1996	54	38	8=100
April, 1996	53	39	8=100
March, 1996	55	38	7=100
February, 1996	51	39	10=100
January, 1996	50	43	7=100
October, 1995	48	42	10=100
September, 1995	45	42	13=100
August, 1995	44	44	12=100
June, 1995	50	40	10=100
April, 1995	47	43	10=100
March, 1995	44	44	12=100
February, 1995	44	44	12=100
December, 1994	41	47	12=100
November, 1994	48	40	12=100
October, 1994	41	47	12=100
Early October, 1994	38	47	15=100
September, 1994	41	52	7=100
July, 1994	45	46	9=100
June, 1994	42	44	14=100
May, 1994	46	42	12=100
March, 1994	45	42	13=100
January, 1994	51	35	14=100
Early January, 1994	48	35	17=100

Q.1 CONTINUED ...

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

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

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

Q.3 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>
January, 1998	46	50	4=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>	66	31	3=100
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

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=614]:

Q.4F1 What is the FIRST news story that comes to mind when you think about what's been in the news on television, radio or in the newspapers lately. (**OPEN-END. ACCEPT MULTIPLES RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE.**)

14	Iraq/Situation in Iraq/Saddam Hussein
10	Bad Weather/Storms/Snow/Ice Storms
7	Miscellaneous Crime stories
6	Paula Jones/Sexual harassment suit against Bill Clinton
6	Miscellaneous Murder stories
5	Bill Clinton/The President and all of his problems
4	Miscellaneous domestic stories
4	Terry Nichols trial/Oklahoma city bombing
3	Theodore Kaczynski Trial
3	Fatal ski accidents
3	Asian financial crisis
2	Miscellaneous Middle East conflicts
2	Jon Benet-Ramsey case
2	US Stock Market
2	Drugs
2	Miscellaneous International Stories
2	Kidnapings/Missing children
1	John Glenn
1	Miscellaneous economic stories
1	Medicare reform proposal
1	El Nino and its effects
1	Princess Diana
1	Iran
10	All others
13	Don't Know/Refused

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=604]:

Q.5F2 Can you recall the name of anyone who has been in the news lately? (IF YES: Who was that?) (**OPEN-END. IF "DON'T KNOW," PROBE ONCE. ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE.**)

27	Bill Clinton
8	Sonny Bono
5	Saddam Hussein
5	Paula Jones
4	Newt Gingrich
2	Princess Diana
2	Michael Kennedy
2	Theodore Kaczynski
2	O.J. Simpson
2	John Glenn
2	Terry Nichols
2	Hillary Clinton
1	The Pope
1	Al Gore
1	Madeline Albright
18	OTHER
30	None/Don't know/Refused

ASK ALL:

Q.6 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]

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	(VOL) DK
a. The trial of accused "Unabomber" Theodore Kaczynski	18	37	30	15	*=100
b. The sentencing of Terry Nichols, convicted in the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City December, 1997 ¹	24 19	46 31	21 31	9 18	*=100 1=100
c. The outbreak of an Asian flu spread by birds or chickens	19	36	25	20	*=100
d. President Clinton's proposal to offer Medicare to younger retirees and uninsured Americans between 55 and 64	18	30	27	25	*=100
e. The deepening financial crisis in many Asian countries	15	25	27	33	*=100
f. Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market November, 1997 ² April, 1997 February, 1996	21 25 17 12	25 36 21 20	23 18 22 25	31 20 40 42	*=100 1=100 *=100 1=100
g. President Clinton's child care proposal calling for tax credits and expanded funding	16	29	29	25	1=100
h. Plans by a Chicago scientist to open a clinic for cloning people	21	29	24	26	*=100

¹ This month the story was listed as "The trial of Terry Nichols, accused of bombing the federal building in Oklahoma City."

² In November 1997, April 1997 and February 1996 the story was listed as "Recent major ups and downs in the stock market."

Q.6 CONTINUED ...

		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	(VOL) <u>DK</u>
i.	The debate about how to reform the Social Security system	18	27	29	25	1=100
	February, 1997	23	26	22	28	1=100
	January, 1997 ³	29	35	22	13	1=100
j.	The conflict in Iraq over UN weapons inspectors	32	35	18	15	*=100
	November, 1997 ⁴	44	32	10	13	1=100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT,

Q.7 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.7 , ASK:

Q.8 As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to the Republican or the Democrat?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=922]

		Early		Late Early			Early										
		Aug 1997	Nov 1996 ⁵	Oct 1996	Sept 1996	Sept 1996	July 1996	June 1996	March 1996	Jan 1996	Oct 1995	Aug 1995	Nov 1994	Oct 1994	Oct 1994	Sept 1994	July 1994
41	Rep/Lean Rep	45	44	42	43	43	46	44	44	46	48	50	45	47	52	48	45
51	Dem/Lean Dem	48	48	49	49	51	47	50	49	47	48	43	43	44	40	46	47
<u>8</u> 100	Other/Undecided	<u>7</u> 100	<u>8</u> 100	<u>9</u> 100	<u>8</u> 100	<u>6</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>6</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>4</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>12</u> 100	<u>9</u> 100	<u>8</u> 100	<u>6</u> 100	<u>8</u> 100

³ This month the story was listed as "Proposals to reform the Social Security System"

⁴ This month the story was listed as "Iraq's refusal to let Americans participate in weapons inspections."

⁵ Based on Likely Voters.

ASK ALL:

Q.9 Now a few questions about priorities for President Clinton and Congress this year. As I read from a list, tell me if you think the item that I read should be a priority. (First,) should (**INSERT ITEM; ROTATE**) be a top priority, important but lower priority, not too important, or should it not be done? (What about (**INSERT ITEM**)?)

		<u>Top Priority</u>	<u>Important But lower Priority</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Should Not be Done</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
FORM 1 [N=614]:						
a.F1	Improving the job situation	54	32	10	3	1=100
	January, 1997	66	26	5	2	1=100
	December, 1994	64	27	5	2	2=100
b. F1	Reforming health care	62	27	6	3	2=100
	January, 1997	56	32	7	4	1=100
	December, 1994	54	27	9	7	3=100
c.F1	Cutting the capital gains tax	25	40	20	7	8=100
	January, 1997	29	38	17	8	8=100
	December, 1994	27	38	16	7	12=100
d.F1	Reducing crime	71	25	2	1	1=100
	January, 1997	70	25	3	2	*=100
	December, 1994	78	17	2	1	2=100
e.F1	Paying off the national debt	46	40	9	3	2=100
f.F1	Reducing federal income taxes for the middle class	54	33	8	3	2=100
	January, 1997	42	38	10	8	2=100
	December, 1994	53	32	9	3	3=100
g.F1	Reforming the campaign finance system	32	34	24	5	5=100
	January, 1997	31	37	23	5	4=100
h.F1	Dealing with the problems of families with children	55	30	9	4	2=100
FORM 2 [N=604]:						
i.F2	Improving the educational system	78	17	3	2	*=100
	January, 1997	75	20	3	2	*=100
j.F2	Taking steps to make the Social Security system financially sound	71	24	4	1	*=100
	January, 1997	75	20	2	2	1=100
k.F2	Taking steps to make the Medicare system financially sound	64	31	3	1	1=100
	January, 1997	64	31	3	1	1=100

Q.9 CONTINUED ...

		<u>Top Priority</u>	<u>Important But lower Priority</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Should Not be Done</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
l.F2	Working to reduce racial tensions	41	38	13	7	1=100
	January, 1997	50	34	9	5	2=100
m.F2	Dealing with the problems of poor	57	34	6	2	1=100
	and needy people	57	35	6	2	*=100
	January, 1997					
n.F2	Protecting the environment	53	37	8	1	1=100
	January, 1997	54	35	8	2	1=100
o.F2	Dealing with the moral breakdown	48	31	13	6	2=100
	in the country	52	29	10	6	3=100
	January, 1997					

Q.10 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**)

- 11 For a tax cut
- 22 To pay off the national debt more quickly
- 33 For increased spending on domestic programs such as health, education, and the environment
- 32 To help make the Social Security and Medicare programs financially sound
- 2 Don't know/Refused (**VOL**)
- 100

Now, I'd like your opinion of some new proposals and decisions that have been made in Washington recently...

Q.11 It has been proposed to expand Medicare to also include younger retirees and uninsured Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 who would pay higher premiums than people 65 and older now do. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 51 Favor
- 41 Oppose
- 8 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Q.12 Do you favor or oppose giving tax credits to families that earn less than \$60,000 to help them pay for child care costs?

71 Favor
 26 Oppose
 $\frac{3}{100}$ Don't know/Refused

Q.13 Do you favor or oppose increasing federal spending to provide child care assistance to working parents?

63 Favor
 34 Oppose
 $\frac{3}{100}$ Don't know/Refused

ASK FORM 1 [N=614]:

Q.14 Do you approve or disapprove of the presence of U.S. troops in Bosnia?

		<i>CNN/USA Today/Gallup</i>				
		<u>Nov</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Dec</u>
		<u>1997</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1995</u>
43	Approve	50	39	42	36	41
50	Disapprove	42	53	51	58	54
$\frac{7}{100}$	Don't know/Refused	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$

ASK FORM 2 [N=604]:

Q.15 As you may know, the U.S. troops currently stationed in Bosnia along with troops from other Western European countries were originally scheduled to be withdrawn from Bosnia by June. President Clinton recently announced that U.S. troops would remain in Bosnia beyond that deadline. Do you approve or disapprove of Clinton's decision to extend their stay?

		<i>CNN/USA Today/Gallup</i>
		<u>Dec 1997</u>
43	Approve	43
50	Disapprove	50
$\frac{7}{100}$	Don't know/Refused	$\frac{7}{100}$

ASK ALL:

Q.16 President Clinton has asked Congress for authority to negotiate trade agreements. This would mean that once negotiations are completed, Congress would vote yes-or-no on the agreement as a whole, but could NOT make any amendments or changes. Do you favor or oppose giving the President this so-called "fast-track" authority to negotiate free trade agreements?

27 Favor
 67 Oppose
5 Don't know/Refused
 100

AND ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

Q.17 Would you like to see your Representative in Congress be re-elected in the next congressional election, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=922]

		Aug 1997	Early Nov 1996	Oct 1996	Late Sept 1996	Early Sept 1996	Nov 1994	Oct 1994	Early Oct 1994	---Gallup--- Oct 25-28 1990
66	Yes	66	60	62	55	62	58	55	49	62
23	No	22	16	19	17	19	25	30	29	22
0	Congressman is not running (VOL)	0	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
<u>11</u> 100	No opinion	<u>12</u> 100	<u>21</u> 100	<u>17</u> 100	<u>26</u> 100	<u>17</u> 100	<u>16</u> 100	<u>13</u> 100	<u>20</u> 100	<u>14</u> 100

Q.18 Regardless of how you feel about your own Representative, would you like to see most members of Congress re-elected in the next congressional election, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=922]

		Aug 1997	Early Sept 1996	Nov 1994	Late Oct 1994	Early Oct 1994
44	Yes	45	43	31	31	28
43	No	42	43	51	56	56
<u>13</u> 100	Don't know/Refused	<u>13</u> 100	<u>14</u> 100	<u>18</u> 100	<u>13</u> 100	<u>16</u> 100

ON A DIFFERENT SUBJECT...

Q.19 Which of the following two statements about the news media do you agree with more...(READ)

		<u>Feb</u> <u>1997</u>	<u>March</u> <u>1995</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1994</u>
31	The news media helps society to solve its problems	36	33	25
	OR			
63	The news media gets in the way of society solving its problems	54	57	71
$\frac{6}{100}$	Don't know/Refused	$\frac{10}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$	$\frac{4}{100}$

Q.20 Which of the following two statements best describes you... (READ)

31	I follow the news closely ONLY when something important or interesting is happening
	OR
67	I follow the news closely most of the time, whether or not something important or interesting is happening
$\frac{2}{100}$	Don't know/Refused (VOL)

Q.21 Do you often find stories about what's going on in Washington confusing and unclear, OR are these stories generally clear and understandable to you?

61	Confusing and unclear
38	Clear and understandable
$\frac{1}{100}$	Don't know/Refused

Q.22 Do you have a great deal, quite a lot, only some, or very little confidence in the way the jury system works in criminal trials in the courts?

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Oct 95

12	Great deal	15
18	Quite a lot	18
31	Only some	34
36	Very little	29
<u>3</u> 100	Don't know/Refused	<u>5</u> 100

Q.23 We're interested in what things people are talking about with family, friends and co-workers. As I read from a list, tell me if this is something that you've talked about recently, or not? (First,) how about...(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)

		<u>Yes, have talked about</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a.	The NFL playoffs	54	45	1=100
a2.	Senator John Glenn's return trip to space ⁶	42	57	1=100
b.	The skiing deaths of Michael Kennedy and Sonny Bono	80	20	*=100
c.	Jerry Seinfeld's decision to end his show after this season	32	67	1=100
d.	Professional basketball player Latrell Sprewell's attack on his coach	39	61	*=100
e.	Comedian Chris Farley's death	48	52	*=100
f.	Efforts to rein in the power of the computer software company Microsoft	31	68	1=100
g.	Recent movies like "Titanic" and "Amistad"	64	36	*=100
h.	Unusual winter weather	85	15	*=100

⁶ Item only asked of respondents Friday through Sunday, N=510.

Q.23 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Yes, have talked about</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>	
FORM 1 [N=614]:				
i.	The trial of accused "Unabomber" Theodore Kaczynski	51	48	1=100
j.	The sentencing of Terry Nichols, convicted in the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City	60	40	*=100
k.	The outbreak of an Asian flu spread by birds or chickens	56	44	*=100
l.	President Clinton's proposal to offer Medicare to younger retirees between 55 and 64	43	57	*=100
m.	The deepening financial crisis in many Asian countries	38	61	1=100
FORM 2 [N=604]:				
n.	Recent major ups and downs in the stock market	47	52	1=100
o.	President Clinton's child care proposal calling for tax credits and expanded funding	37	63	0=100
p.	Plans by a Chicago scientist to open a clinic for cloning people	51	49	*=100
q.	The debate about how to reform the Social Security system	39	61	*=100
r.	The conflict in Iraq over UN weapons inspectors	53	47	*=100

ON A DIFFERENT SUBJECT...

Q.24 Do you use a computer at your workplace, at school, or at home on at least an occasional basis?

		<u>Nov</u> <u>1997</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>April</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>March</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>Feb</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>Jan</u> <u>1996</u>
65	Uses a PC at home, work or school	66	56	58	61	60	59
35	Does not use PC	34	44	42	39	40	41
<u>*</u> <u>100</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>*</u> <u>100</u>	<u>*</u> <u>100</u>	<u>*</u> <u>100</u>	<u>*</u> <u>100</u>	<u>0</u> <u>100</u>	<u>0</u> <u>100</u>

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN Q.24, ASK:

Q.24a Do you ever use a computer at work, school or home to connect with other computers over the Internet, with the World Wide Web, or with information services such as America Online or Prodigy?

		<u>Nov</u> <u>1997</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>April</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>March</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>Feb</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>Jan</u> <u>1996</u>
BASED ON TOTAL RESPONDENTS:							
37	Goes on-line	36	23	21	22	21	21
28	Does not go on-line	29	33	37	39	39	38
0	Don't know/Refused	1	0	*	0	*	0
<u>35</u> <u>100</u>	Not a computer user	<u>34</u> <u>100</u>	<u>44</u> <u>100</u>	<u>42</u> <u>100</u>	<u>39</u> <u>100</u>	<u>40</u> <u>100</u>	<u>41</u> <u>100</u>