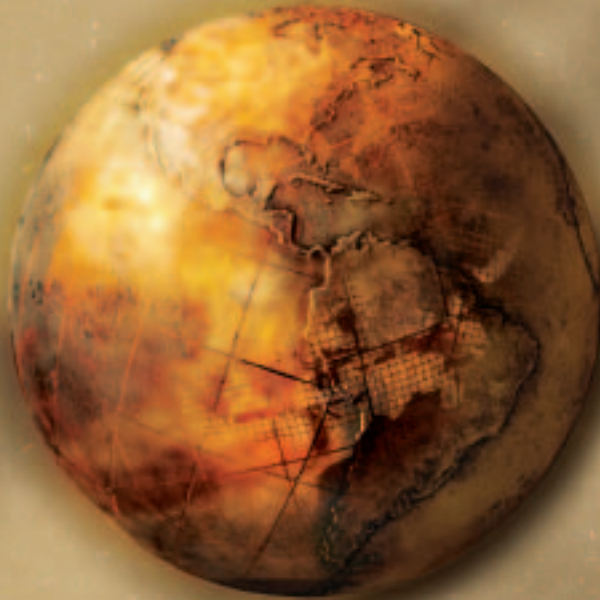


TROUBLE BEHIND, TROUBLE AHEAD?



**A Year of Contention at Home and Abroad**

**2003 YEAR-END REPORT**

THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS

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# 2003

**IN 2003, AMERICANS FOUND THEMSELVES INCREASINGLY AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER** — and the rest of the world. The title of our major survey of the nation's political landscape captured the public mood: "Evenly Divided and Increasingly Polarized."

That survey, based on more than 4,000 interviews and drawing on trends dating back to 1987, found an electorate that once again is viewing issues and events mostly through a partisan prism. The spirit of national unity that followed the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks is now a distant memory, swept away amid rising polarization. Republicans and Democrats are now further apart on basic attitudes toward government, national security, business and other issues than at any point since 1994, when voter anger propelled the GOP into control of Capitol Hill.

America's international image, already in decline, went into free fall as a consequence of the war in Iraq. The second major installment of the Pew Global Attitudes project showed that the war widened the rift between the U.S. and its Western European allies and inflamed the Muslim world. Yet that survey also showed that throughout much of the world, American-promoted values — free markets, the rule of law, and democracy — are broadly accepted.

At home, the war in Iraq and a slow economy cast a shadow over President Bush's 2004 prospects. However, Bush's approval ratings remained in the mid-50% range and the Democratic field had a long way to go to sort itself out — and to pose a serious threat to unseat the president.

Americans also were increasingly divided along religious lines, a trend underscored by the religious backlash against gay marriage. A survey cosponsored with the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life showed that churchgoers who hear critical messages about homosexuality from the pulpit are far more likely than others to express negative views of gays.

This report summarizes what we learned from nearly 50,000 interviews in the U.S. and worldwide, as published in 31 research reports and 14 commentaries during the course of the year.

For more information contact us by telephone (202 293 3126), by fax (202 293 2569) or on the Web at <http://www.people-press.org>.



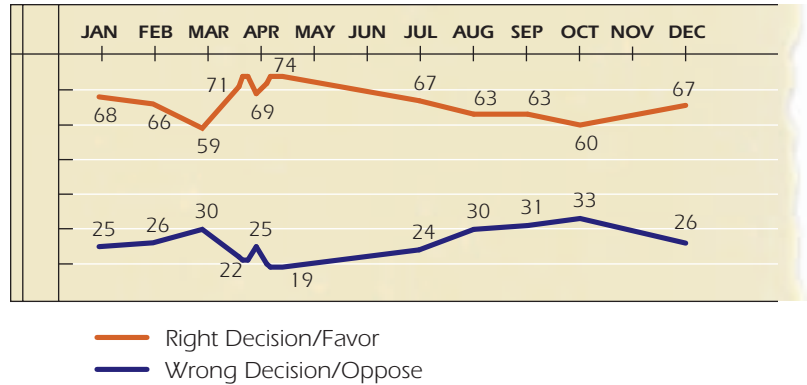
Andrew Kohut  
Director

## I. THE WAR AT HOME

The war in Iraq dominated the public's attention and concerns in 2003, and this was reflected in Pew Research Center surveys. During the buildup to war, the public was generally supportive but wary, insistent that the administration line up international backing for military action. Americans reacted to the start of hostilities on March 19 in traditional fashion, by rallying around the troops and the president.

After some early setbacks, the military swept to victory with remarkable speed and suffered fewer casualties than expected. The public was relieved, yet cautious. Following Baghdad's fall in early April, roughly seven-in-ten said the U.S. had made the right decision to go to war and about the same number favored a major postwar operation to rebuild and stabilize the country, including a 59% majority of those who thought going to war was the wrong decision. Still, Americans were realistic about that challenge: fully 73% believed installing a stable, democratic government would be a difficult job.

USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN IRAQ



US MILITARY EFFORT IN IRAQ



**USE OF FORCE IN IRAQ**

OCT, 2003	RIGHT DECISION %	WRONG DECISION %
Men	66	29
Women	54	37
18-29	65	30
30-49	61	31
50-65	63	35
65+	47	40
Republican	85	10
Democrat	38	54
Independent	59	35

**WHAT TO DO IN IRAQ?**

SEPTEMBER, 2003	TOTAL %	REP %	DEM %	IND %
Keep troops in	64	81	52	64
Bring troops home	32	16	44	33
Don't know	4	3	4	3
	100	100	100	100
OCTOBER, 2003				
Keep troops in	58	78	42	56
Bring troops home	39	20	56	40
Don't know	3	2	2	4
	100	100	100	100

That view proved prescient by summer, as the increasing pace of insurgent attacks and rising death toll among U.S. forces eroded public perceptions of progress and, to a lesser extent, support for the war. By early July, just 23% thought things were going very well — down from 61% in mid-April. By September, just 15% were highly optimistic about the pace of progress. The capture of Saddam Hussein in December boosted perceptions of the military effort — however, even after that dramatic event, only 28% offered a highly upbeat assessment.

Still, a majority of Americans continued to believe the war was the right decision, even as casualties mounted. Yet there were clear signs of growing public unease, including broad-based opposition to the administration's \$87 billion to underwrite the military and rebuilding efforts. And Bush faced growing criticism of his handling of Iraq. In September, 58% of Americans — and even a sizable minority of Republicans (35%) — felt he did not have a clear plan to bring the war to a successful conclusion.

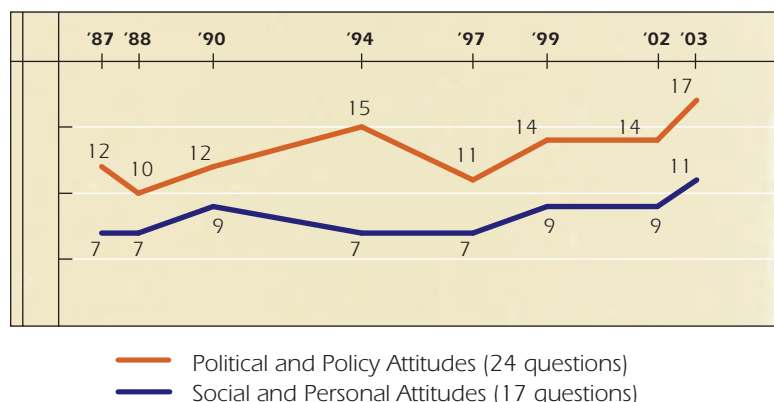
Partisanship remained the dominant factor in attitudes toward the war, and especially its aftermath. This was seen in the large and growing gap over whether U.S. troops should remain in Iraq until a stable government is established there. In October, more than three-quarters of Republicans favored staying for the duration, compared with fewer than half of Democrats.

## II. THE 2004 POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

On one level, the American public's basic attitudes toward government, religion, and the U.S. role in the world seem impressively stable. Look beneath that calm surface, however, and the polarized state of American politics becomes evident.

Indeed, the partisan gap has never been larger over several core issues, ranging from national security to business. For years, Republicans have been more likely than Democrats to agree that the best way to ensure peace is through military strength. But differences on this question — which had narrowed to as few as nine points in the late 1990s — have ballooned to 25 points. These divisions, fueled by the deep split over Iraq, extend to contemporary issues like preemptive war. Fully 82% of Republicans believe the use of force against potential enemies is often or sometimes justified, compared with just 52% of Democrats and 62% of independents.

**AVERAGE DIFFERENCE IN REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC ATTITUDES, 1987-2003**

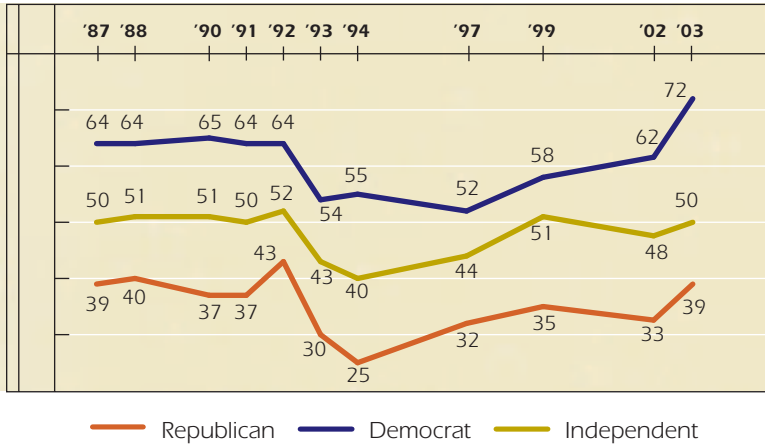


### REPUBLICANS FAVOR ASSERTIVE FOREIGN POLICY

	TOTAL %	REP %	DEM %	IND %
<b>PRE-EMPTIVE WAR JUSTIFIED?</b>				
Often/Sometimes	63	82	52	62
Rarely/Never	32	15	44	35
Don't know/Refused	5	3	4	3
	100	100	100	100
<b>HOLD CITIZENS SUSPECTED OF TERRORISM WITHOUT TRIAL</b>				
Favor	55	72	46	51
Oppose	38	23	47	42
Don't know/Refused	7	5	7	7
	100	100	100	100
<b>MUST GIVE UP SOME CIVIL LIBERTIES TO CURB TERRORISM</b>				
Yes	44	54	39	42
No	50	43	55	53
Don't know/Refused	6	3	6	5
	100	100	100	100
<b>IRAQ WAR WAS...*</b>				
Right decision	60	85	39	59
Wrong decision	33	10	54	35
Don't know/Refused	7	5	7	6
	100	100	100	100
<b>AGREE: THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE PEACE IS THROUGH MILITARY STRENGTH</b>				
2003	53	69	44	51
2002	62	72	55	62
1999	55	70	53	50
1997	57	65	56	53

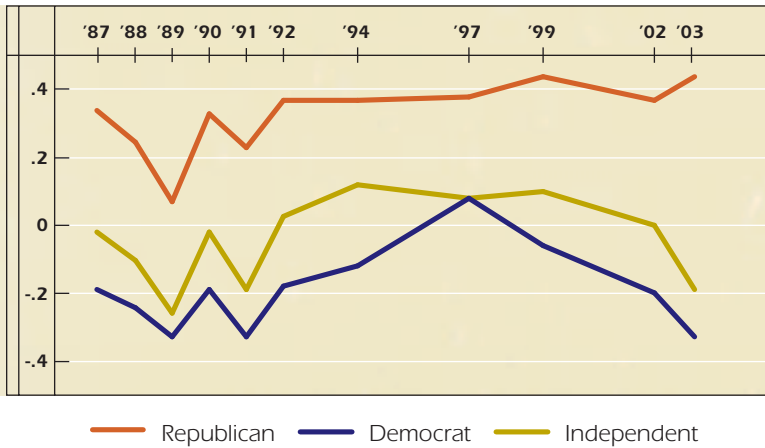
\* Figures from October 15-19, 2003.

**GOVERNMENT SHOULD HELP MORE NEEDY PEOPLE**



For their part, Democrats have become much more supportive of stepped-up government assistance for the poor, even if it means adding to the deficit. More than seven-in-ten Democrats (72%) now believe government should help more needy people even if it means going deeper into debt — up from 58% four years ago and by far the highest level of support for that idea in any Pew values survey since 1987. And Democrats also have become much more critical of business, particularly its power.

**PRO-BUSINESS ATTITUDES**



Based on 3 questions about business power and profits.

One area where the parties are *not* moving further apart is social issues. There has been a decided shift across the political spectrum in favor of tolerance in personal attitudes relating to homosexuality and race. Policy matters are a different story, however, and there is considerable evidence that gay marriage, in particular, could open a new chapter in the nation's culture wars.

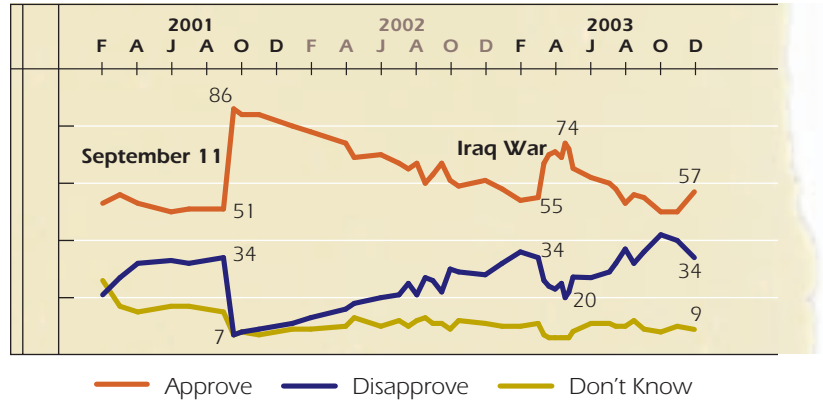
The political landscape, famously divided in the last presidential election, is now evenly split in party affiliation as well. Drawing on a database of 80,000 interviews conducted over the past three years, the report documents the gains made by Republicans since Sept. 11, which has enabled them to pull even with Democrats.

### III. 2004: THE BATTLE AHEAD

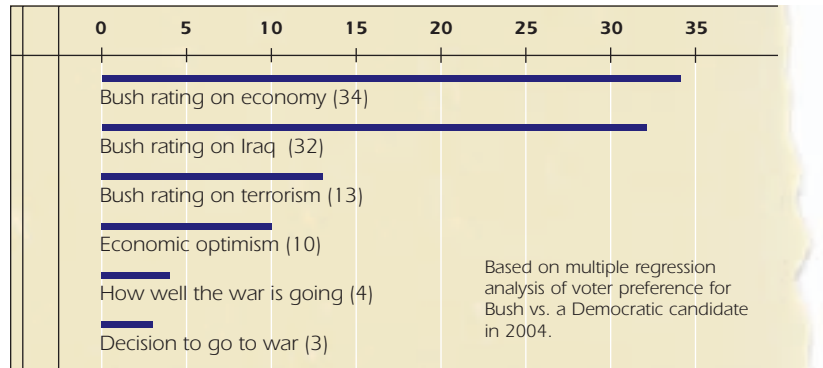
War in Iraq never provided the political boost for President Bush that it did for his father (maybe not a bad thing for the younger Bush, given his father's defeat in 1992). After the fall of Baghdad in mid-April, Bush's approval rating stood at 74%. But amid rising economic unease and growing concern over the rising American death toll in Iraq, his rating fell to 50% by fall. The president ended the year on a high note, however, as the capture of Saddam Hussein boosted his approval mark to 57%.

Until that late surge, Bush was running dead-even with an unnamed Democrat in the race for the 2004 election. In fact, an analysis of the electorate showed it was split pretty much along the same lines as it had been in 2000. But the key term here is "unnamed" — the president ran consistently better against the actual Democratic candidates than he did against a generic challenger.

#### BUSH APPROVAL



#### WHAT'S DRIVING OPINION ABOUT A BUSH SECOND TERM?



#### PARTISAN OPINION OF BUSH APPROACHES CLINTONIAN PROPORTIONS

	BUSH SR. NOV 91*	CLINTON JUL 94	CLINTON SEP 98	GW BUSH SEP 03
<b>PRESIDENT'S PARTY</b>	%	%	%	%
<b>Approve</b>				
Very strongly	52	35	69	66
Not so strongly	29	39	19	21
<b>Disapprove</b>				
Not so strongly	9	10	3	3
Very strongly	5	9	6	5
Don't know	5	7	3	5
	100	100	100	100
<b>OPPOSITION PARTY</b>				
<b>Approve</b>				
Very strongly	15	3	15	13
Not so strongly	17	15	17	17
<b>Disapprove</b>				
Not so strongly	14	21	13	15
Very strongly	44	55	51	48
Don't know	10	6	4	7
	100	100	100	100

\* Survey by Gallup

**THE ELECTORAL LANDSCAPE, 2000 VS. 2003**

	2000 VNS EXIT POLL		SEPT-OCT* REG VOTERS	
	BUSH	GORE	BUSH	DEM
TOTAL	50	50	50	50
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	56	44	58	42
Female	44	56	44	56
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
White	56	44	57	43
Black	9	91	9	91
Hispanic	36	64	34	66
<b>Age</b>				
18-29	49	51	40	60
30-44	51	49	52	48
45-59	51	49	54	46
60+	48	52	50	50
<b>Education</b>				
Less than HS	40	60	41	59
HS Graduate	51	49	53	47
Some college	53	47	52	48
College grad	53	47	54	46
Post graduate	46	54	41	59
<b>Income</b>				
<\$15 / <\$20K	39	61	34	66
\$15-30/\$20-30K	43	57	38	62
\$30-\$50K	49	51	54	46
\$50-\$75K	53	47	59	41
\$75-\$100K	54	46	57	43
\$100+K	56	44	54	46
<b>Employed</b>				
Full time	49	51	59	46
Not	51	49	46	54
<b>Party ID</b>				
Republican	92	8	93	7
Democrat	11	89	12	88
Independent	51	49	48	52
<b>Union House</b>				
Yes	39	61	45	55
No	54	46	52	48
<b>Ideology</b>				
Conservative	83	17	73	27
Moderate	46	54	43	57
Liberal	14	86	18	82
<b>Church Attend</b>				
More than 1/wk	64	36	63	37
1/week	59	41	56	44
1-2/month	47	53	52	48
1-2/year	44	56	46	54
Seldom/Never	34	66	38	62

By year's end, the Democratic field had yet to sort itself out, though former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean had emerged as the frontrunner. A Pew Research Center poll of likely voters in the early Democratic primary states showed Dean with a small lead in Iowa and a sizable advantage in New Hampshire. Yet voter opinion still appeared fluid, and the survey in South Carolina found that the Feb. 3 primary in that state was wide open.

Whoever is the eventual Democratic nominee, it seems clear that, barring a surprise, two main issues will dominate the campaign — the Iraq war and the economy. In September, an analysis showed that those two factors were driving opinion about Bush's reelection. A second political theme to emerge in 2003 is, of course, polarization. Bush possessed several formidable advantages, including more favorable economic data, as the election year began. But the intense opposition he drew from Democrats was reminiscent of another highly divisive political figure — Bill Clinton.

\* For ease of comparison, figures have been repercentaged based on those with a preference between the Democratic and Republican candidates. In the 2000 exit polls, 48% reported voting for Bush and Gore, with 4% choosing another candidate or not voting in the Presidential race. In the Sept-Oct 2003 surveys, 43% favor Bush, 43% favor a Democrat, and 14% favor someone else or are undecided.

## IV. VIEWS OF A CHANGING WORLD

In 2002, the Pew Global Attitudes Project found that the U.S. global image had declined. In 2003, as a consequence of the war in Iraq, that decline turned into a free fall. The war widened the rift between the United States and Western Europe, further inflamed opinion in the Muslim world, and increased anti-American feelings in countries as different as Russia and Brazil.

The Global Attitudes Project conducted two surveys in 2003 — a brief survey in Europe just before the war began, and a much more extensive poll in 20 nations and the Palestinian Authority a few weeks after the conclusion of major combat in Iraq. The postwar survey showed things had improved a bit for the U.S. image — but that favorable ratings remained far below where they stood in 2002 and 2000.

Negative views of the U.S. among Muslims, which had been mostly limited to the Middle East, spread to Muslim populations in Indonesia and Nigeria. In Indonesia, the percentage holding positive views of the U.S. plunged to 15% from 61% in 2002. Just 38% of Muslims in Nigeria expressed a favorable opinion of the U.S., down from 72% a year earlier.

Yet hostility toward the U.S. is hardly limited to Muslim countries. Nearly six-in-ten in South Korea and half of Brazilians said they were “disappointed” the Iraqi military put up so little resistance to U.S. forces. Solid majorities in Western Europe — Great Britain being the only exception — favor a more distant relationship with the U.S.

### US RATINGS MARKEDLY LOWER THAN IN 2002

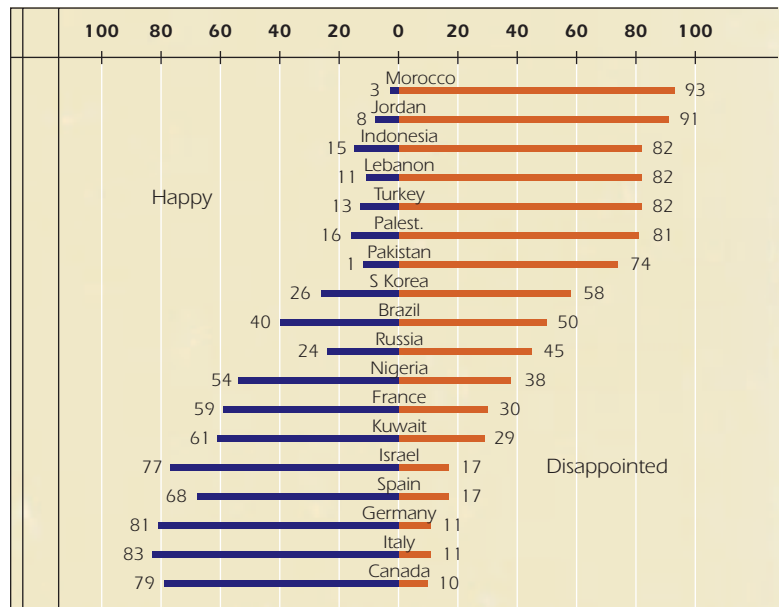
	FAVORABLE OPINION OF US		
	1999/2000 %	SUMMER 2002 %	JUNE 2003 %
Great Britain	83	75	70
Canada	71	72	63
Italy	76	70	60
South Korea	58	53	46
Germany	78	61	45
France	62	63	43
Russia	37	61	36
Brazil	56	52	34

### DISLIKE OF THE US SPREADS AND DEEPENS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

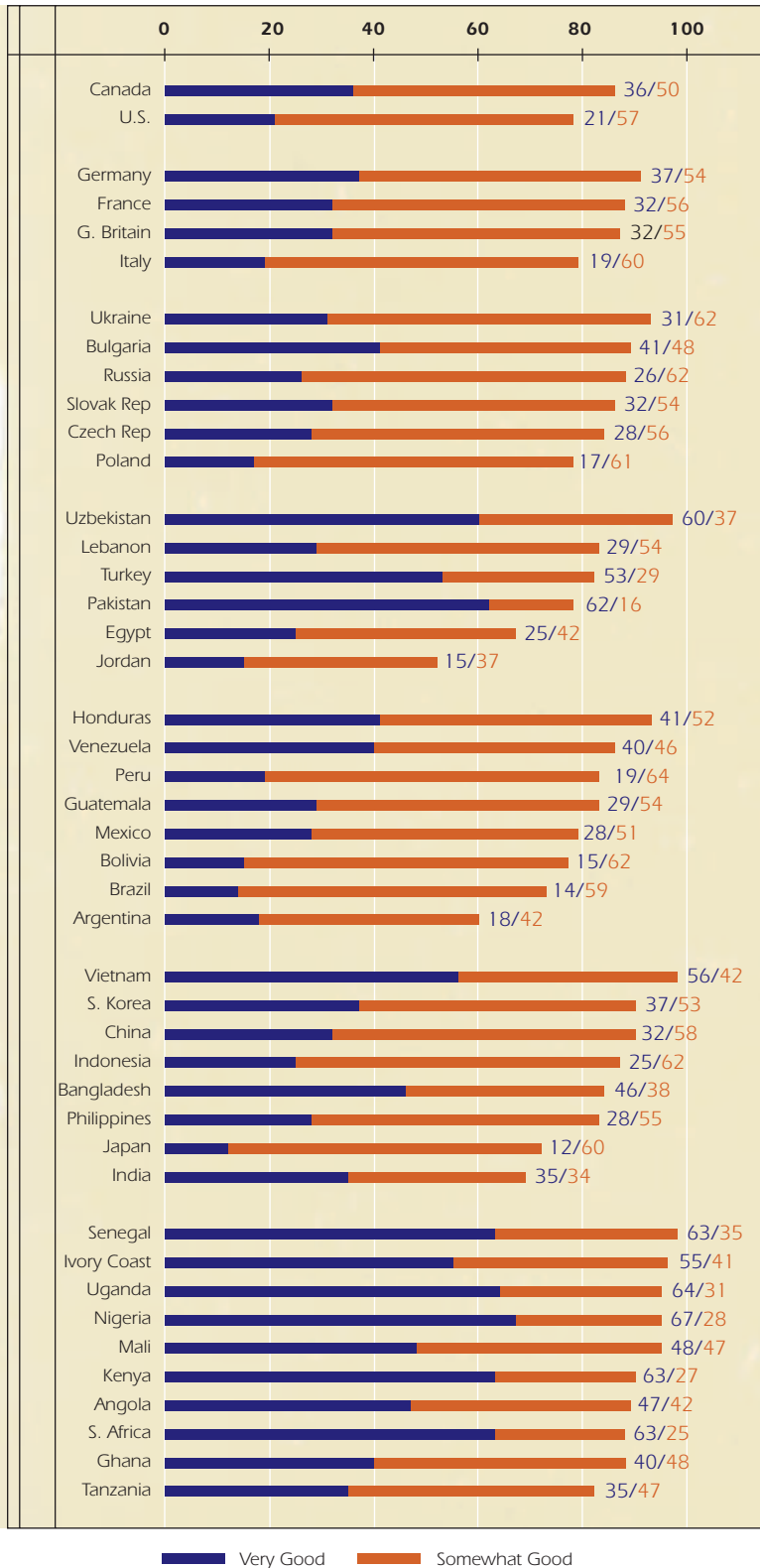
	FAVORABLE OPINION OF US		
	1999/2000 %	SUMMER 2002 %	JUNE 2003 %
Kuwait	—	—	63
Nigeria*	—	72	38
Lebanon*	—	30	15
Turkey	52	30	15
Indonesia	75	61	15
Pakistan	23	10	12
Jordan	—	25	1
Palestinian Auth.	—	—	1
Israeli Arabs	—	—	36

\* Based on Muslims only

### REACTION TO LACK OF IRAQI MILITARY RESISTANCE



**GLOBAL TRADE'S IMPACT ON COUNTRY**



Why has the United States become so unpopular? Our postwar survey showed that most of those who have negative views of the U.S. blame President Bush rather than “America in general.” But it’s clear that these sentiments run more deeply than antipathy toward the president: U.S. *policies* and *power* are fueling anti-Americanism. The United States is perceived as giving other countries’ interests short shrift and its Middle East policies are widely reviled. America’s unrivaled power has bred fear and resentment: Majorities in seven of eight Muslim populations expressed concern the U.S. could become a military threat to their countries.

Yet the same surveys also showed wide international support for the fundamental economic and political values that the U.S. has long promoted: free markets, free trade and democracy. Majorities in 33 of 44 nations feel that people are better off in a free-market economy, even if that leads to disparities in wealth and income. The Global Attitudes Project showed people everywhere united by their desire for honest multiparty elections, freedom of speech and religion and, especially, an impartial judiciary. And majorities among nearly all Muslim populations — with Indonesia a notable exception — believe Western-style democracy can work for them.

## V. RELIGION AND POLITICS: CONTENTION AND CONSENSUS

Americans have long been a religious people and, if anything, the intensity of their religious belief has grown in recent years. In the political landscape survey, fully 71% agreed with three key propositions of faith: the importance of prayer, belief in a Judgment Day and an unquestioned belief in the existence of God. Moreover, a growing number of Americans *completely agree* with these three fundamental principles.

People with a high level of religious commitment are increasingly identifying with the Republican Party. As might be expected, this is the case with white evangelical Protestants but it also is true of highly observant white Catholics as well. Moreover, church attendance continues to be a very important factor in presidential politics. Those who attend church at least weekly, regardless of their denomination, favor Bush's reelection by 63%-37%. Those who seldom or never attend services favor a Democratic candidate by about the same margin (62%-38%).

**PARTY ID WITHIN RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS**

	1987-88		2002-03		CHANGE	
	REP %	DEM %	REP %	DEM %	REP	DEM
Total	26	37	29	31	3	-6
Protestant	29	37	33	32	4	-5
White Evangelical	34	31	44	23	10	-8
White Mainline	33	29	35	26	2	-3
Black	10	69	5	68	-5	-1
White Catholic	26	39	30	30	4	-9
Attend regularly	26	41	33	29	7	-12
Rarely/Never	26	36	25	31	-1	-5
Jewish	22	47	17	54	-5	7
No religion	18	32	14	28	-4	-4

**OPPOSITION TO GAY MARRIAGE GROWS AMONG FAITHFUL**

	RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT		
	HIGH %	AVERAGE %	LOW %
<b>October, 2003</b>			
Favor	12	35	50
Oppose	80	57	39
Don't know	8	8	11
	100	100	100
<b>July, 2003</b>			
Favor	21	40	52
Oppose	71	50	37
Don't know	8	10	11
	100	100	100
Change in Oppose	+9	+7	+2

**CHURCH MESSAGES MATTER\***

	EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTS		OTHER PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS	
	WHO HEAR ABOUT ISSUE %	WHO DO NOT %	WHO HEAR ABOUT ISSUE %	WHO DO NOT %
Very unfavorable view of gay men	55	32	28	18
Sexual orientation can be changed	76	59	34	32
Acceptance of gays is bad for country	63	44	30	18
Number of cases	238	150	140	247

\* Analysis compares regular churchgoers (at least once-per-month) whose clergy do and do not speak out on homosexuality.

**CHANGING VIEWS OF ISLAM**

	MARCH 2002 %	JULY 2003 %
<b>Islam encourages violence?</b>		
Yes	25	44
No	51	41
Neither/Don't know	24	15
	100	100
	MARCH 2002	JUNE 2003
<b>Muslims are anti-American?</b>		
All/Most	18	24
About half	18	25
Some	24	24
Just a few	21	15
Don't know	19	12
	100	100

Religious belief is heavily influencing public attitudes toward what may become the most contentious social issue of the presidential campaign — gay marriage. Our November survey, conducted in association with the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, found a modest rise in opposition to gay marriage following a Supreme Court decision striking down state sodomy laws. And much of the increase in opposition came among those with a high level of religious commitment.

That survey showed that the clergy in evangelical churches focus more attention on gay issues — and address it far more negatively — than do ministers in other denominations. And the congregants who hear those negative messages are far more likely to have unfavorable views of homosexuals.

Religion also is a major factor in the public's changing views of Islam. There has been a sharp rise in the percentage of Americans who say Islam encourages violence; evangelicals and political conservatives are more likely than others to express that view.

## VI. THE NEWS MEDIA: CONTINUING CRITICISM, MORE POLARIZATION

There was a rare bit of good news for the media in 2003. The widely-publicized disclosure that a New York Times reporter consistently made up stories did not significantly lower public esteem for news organizations. The bad news? Public attitudes toward the news media remained as negative as ever.

Most Americans said news organizations report inaccurately and try to cover up their mistakes. The Times debacle was not an isolated case, in the view of the public: 58% said reporters at news organizations at least occasionally fabricate stories. There was no indication, however, that those who followed the Times' story closely were any more cynical than the rest of the public.

Two years after the 9/11 attacks, the public continued to struggle with difficult questions relating to patriotism and neutrality in news coverage. Americans favor news organizations taking "a strong pro-American point of view" — 70% think that is a good thing. Yet the public draws a clear line against news organizations disseminating pro-government propaganda: 64% said war coverage should be neutral.

### PRESS RATINGS CONSISTENTLY NEGATIVE

	FEB 1999 %	EARLY SEPT 2001 %	NOV 2001 %	JULY 2002 %	JULY 2003 %
<b>News organizations...</b>					
Usually get facts straight	37	35	46	35	36
Often report inaccurately	58	57	45	56	56
Don't know	5	8	9	9	8
	100	100	100	100	100
Willing to admit mistakes	26	24	35	23	27
Try to cover up mistakes	66	67	52	67	62
Neither/Don't know	8	9	13	10	11
	100	100	100	100	100
Are politically biased	56	59	47	59	53
Are careful to not be biased	31	26	35	26	29
Neither/Don't know	13	15	18	15	18
	100	100	100	100	100

### BE 'PRO-AMERICAN,' BUT DON'T SACRIFICE NEUTRALITY

	%		
<b>Pro-American point of view is</b>			
Good	70		
Bad	20		
Neither/Don't know	10		
	100		
	<b>PRO-AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW IS</b>		
		<b>GOOD</b>	<b>BAD</b>
	%	%	%
War coverage should be...			
Neutral	64	62	75
Pro-American	29	33	19
Don't know	7	5	6
	100	100	100

**DEMOGRAPHIC AND IDEOLOGICAL PROFILE OF NEWS AUDIENCES**

SAMPLE SIZE	TOTAL 1201 %	TELEVISION			NEWS- PAPER 554 %	RADIO 198 %	INTERNET 230 %
		NET- WORK 370 %	CNN 314 %	FOX 267 %			
<b>Party ID</b>							
Republican	30	32	29	41	32	37	24
Democrat	32	32	37	24	33	30	25
Independent	32	31	28	30	28	28	44
<b>Ideology</b>							
Conservative	36	38	36	47	38	44	26
Moderate	40	43	43	35	42	36	40
Liberal	18	16	15	12	17	16	29
<b>Bush Approval</b>							
Approve	60	61	63	74	60	64	57
Disapprove	29	31	31	19	30	26	34

**ASSESSING IRAQ COVERAGE**

	NEWS REPORTS ARE MAKING THE SITUATION IN IRAQ SEEM...			
	WORSE THAN REALLY IS %	BETTER THAN REALLY IS %	ABOUT RIGHT %	DK %
Total	38	14	36	12=100
<b>Party ID</b>				
Republican	55	7	30	8=100
Democrat	28	16	45	11=100
Independent	34	19	34	13=100
<b>Main source</b>				
Newspaper	36	12	41	11=100
Radio	42	12	32	14=100
Network news	36	12	40	12=100
CNN	32	18	41	9=100
Fox News Channel	55	10	28	7=100
<b>War was...</b>				
Right decision	45	11	35	9=100
Wrong decision	26	22	39	13=100

Our July media survey found that the nation's political divisions are reflected in the ideological leanings of news audiences. Fox News viewers stand out for their conservatism and their broad perceptions of a liberal bias in the news media. Nearly two-thirds of Fox viewers see the media as "liberal" compared with just 47% of the viewers of cable news rival CNN. Overall, almost half of Fox viewers (47%) describe themselves as conservative compared with 36% of CNN viewers.

As Iraq turned more violent in the summer and fall, it was perhaps inevitable that political partisans — and different news audiences — would view news coverage through distinctly different prisms. Overall, Americans were divided over whether news organizations were presenting too bleak a picture of the situation in Iraq. More than half of Republicans (and Fox viewers) said the coverage was too negative; Democrats (and non-Fox news audiences) generally disagreed.

## VII. NEWS INTEREST

The situation in Iraq dominated the public's news interests. In May, 63% of Americans said they were following reports on the situation in Iraq very closely, and another 29% paid fairly close attention. That was the highest news interest for any story measured this year.

The war and its aftermath drew strong interest from across the demographic spectrum. But other stories did not — the controversy over the removal of a monument to the Ten Commandments from an Alabama courthouse drew considerable attention from white evangelical Christians, but far less interest from members of other religious groups.

The Laci Peterson murder case and the safe recovery of Elizabeth Smart, the kidnapped Utah girl, drew more attention from women than men. And African Americans were much more likely than whites to tune into reports on criminal allegations against basketball star Kobe Bryant and singer Michael Jackson.

TOP NEWS INTEREST STORIES OF 2003

	FOLLOWING STORY...	VERY CLOSELY %
1	News about situation in Iraq* (May)	63
2	High gasoline prices* (Feb)	53
3	Hurricane Isabel (Sept)	47
4	Space shuttle Columbia disaster (Feb)	46
5	Killing of Uday and Qusay Hussein (Aug)	45
6	The capture of Saddam Hussein (Dec)	44
7	UN weapons inspectors in Iraq* (Feb)	43
8	Condition of US economy* (Feb)	42
9	Flu outbreak and shortage of vaccine (Dec)	41
10	SARS spread from Asia (May)	39
11	Code Orange alerts about terrorism (Feb)	39
12	Wild fires in California (Nov)	38
13	Pres. Bush's State of the Union address (Jan)	36
14	N. Korea's nuclear weapons program* (March)	34
15	Utah girl discovered after kidnaping (March)	34
16	Power blackout in Northeast (Sept)	33
17	Ten Commandments controversy in AL (Sept)	32
18	Continued violence in Mid-East* (Sept)	31
19	Murder of Laci Peterson (May)	31
20	Capture of Al Qaeda leader in Pakistan (March)	31

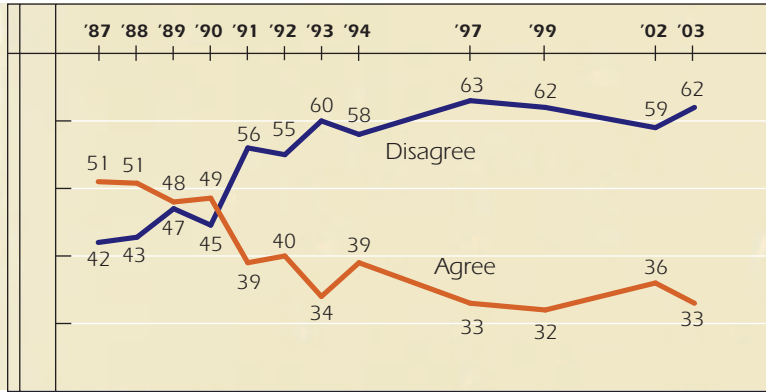
\* Interest in these stories was tracked over many months — highest reported interest shown here.

DIFFERENT STORIES, DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

	FOLLOW NEWS ABOUT...	VERY CLOSELY %
<b>Ten Commandments controversy (Sept)</b>		
	White Evangelical Protestant	51
	White Mainline Protestant	26
	White Catholic	28
	Secular	17
<b>Laci Peterson case (May)</b>		
	Men	22
	Women	40
<b>Kobe Bryant case (Aug)</b>		
	White	13
	Black	47
<b>Michael Jackson child molestation charges (Nov)</b>		
	White	26
	Black	42
<b>Debate on Medicare in Washington (Dec)</b>		
	18-29	10
	30-49	17
	50-64	38
	65+	45
<b>High gas prices (March)</b>		
	College Graduate	42
	Some College	53
	High School or less	57

## VIII. MORE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

**SCHOOL BOARDS OUGHT TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO FIRE TEACHERS WHO ARE KNOWN HOMOSEXUALS**



■ **More Tolerance.** It was overlooked amid the rising opposition to gay marriage, but Americans have grown more tolerant on several social issues over the past generation. In the late 1980s, the public was divided over whether school board should have the right to fire gay teachers. Now a solid majority believes schools should not have that right — and the shift has come across the demographic spectrum.

■ **And More Fear.** Two years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, fully three — quarters of Americans saw the world as a more dangerous place than a decade ago, up from 53% just prior to the attacks. A similar majority said that occasional acts of terrorism will be part of life in the future.

■ **General Nuisance?** During major combat operations in Iraq, more than a third (36%) said the media was giving too much attention to the views of “armchair generals” and other retired military officers — and too little to the personal experience of ordinary soldiers (30%) and Iraqi civilian casualties (28%).

- **Technophobia.** Americans generally reject the idea that technology is making life too complicated. There is a notable exception, however. Older women — age 65 and older — believe technology is making things too complicated. White evangelical Protestants also are far more likely than non-evangelicals to see technology's downside (43% vs. 22%).

- **Gladness Gap.** Canada and the United States have the highest percentage of men and women happy with their lives, Eastern Europe and parts of Africa the lowest. But women are at least somewhat happier with their lives than men in 29 of 44 countries surveyed by the Pew Global Attitudes Project.

- **TV or Not TV.** The global survey also found that TV is the dominant medium for news not only in the developed world, but in many developing nations as well. In fact, reliance on TV news exceeds that of the United States (67%) in many developing nations, including Turkey (93%), Indonesia (92%), Lebanon (88%), Uzbekistan (86%), Vietnam (84%), Russia (84%), Egypt (80%), and China (78%).

**TECHNOLOGY MAKING LIFE TOO COMPLICATED?**

	AGREE %	DISAGREE %	DK %
Men, 18-64	21	78	1=100
Men, 65+	26	69	5=100
Women, 18-64	27	71	2=100
Women, 65+	58	38	4=100

**WHERE WOMEN ARE SIGNIFICANTLY HAPPIER**

	MEN %	WOMEN %
Pakistan	18	34
Japan	31	46
Philippines	25	36
Argentina	40	50
Vietnam	38	48
India	13	21
Peru	33	41
Guatemala	68	76
Indonesia	28	35
Uzbekistan	32	39
Senegal	20	27
Poland	25	32
Turkey	15	21
China	20	26
Lebanon	19	24
Nigeria	34	39
United States	64	68
Mexico	57	61
Venezuela	49	53
Honduras	57	61
South Korea	50	54

% rate their lives on the highest rung of the ladder of life

## WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS

If you would like more information about what the Pew Research Center has done or what we are planning, or if you have comments or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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