

BLACKS AND WHITES HAND DOWN

The nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court has cast the spotlight on the opinions of black Americans. On pages 82-87, we examine black and white opinion on a range of issues. The two groups largely agree that blacks are better off than they were a decade ago, but they are divided over means of furthering these gains.

Question: **Compared to 10 years ago, do you think blacks in America are a lot better off, a little better off, about the same, a little worse off, or a lot worse off?**

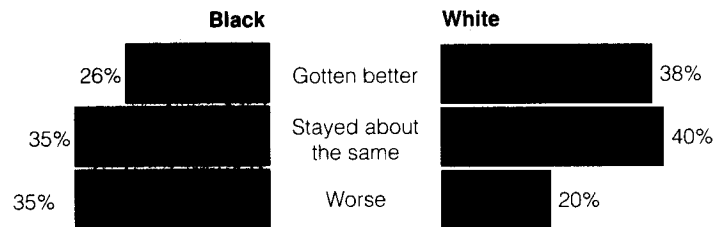
Compared to ten years ago, think blacks in America are...



Source: Survey by Peter Hart and Robert Teeter for NBC News/Wall Street Journal, July 6-10, 1990.

Question: **Over the course of the past five years, do you feel that race relations between blacks and whites have gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same?**

Over the past five years, race relations have...



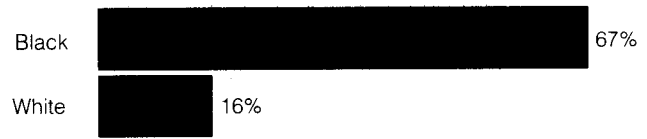
Question: **Do you think the United States currently has enough federal laws and regulations aimed at reducing race, religion, and sex discrimination, or does the Congress need to pass additional laws and regulations aimed at reducing this type of discrimination?**

United States currently has enough laws and regulations aimed at reducing race, religion, and sex discrimination



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, June 13-16, 1991.

We should make every possible effort to improve the position of blacks and other minorities, even if it means giving them preferential treatment (b—see below for question wording)



Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates, Inc., for the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press, May 1-31, 1990.

Question: **All in all, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs in business for blacks and other minority groups?**

Favor affirmative action programs in business for blacks and other minorities

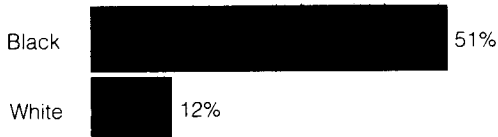


Source: Survey by Peter Hart and Robert Teeter for NBC News/Wall Street Journal, June 22-25, 1991.

Note for pp. 84-87: Question wordings (a) = Here are some statements on a different topic. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements. (b) = Now 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. (c) = The following is a list of some programs and proposals that are being discussed in this country today. For each one, please tell me whether you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose it.

Question: **Do you think blacks and other minorities should or should not receive hiring preference to make up for past discrimination against them?**

Blacks and minorities should receive hiring preference to make up for past discrimination



OPINIONS

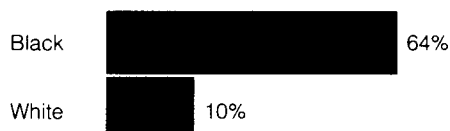
Blacks are more willing than whites to expand the role of government to deal with the country's problems. Majorities of both groups support government intervention to provide for basic needs, but black support in these areas is especially strong.

Question: **Do you think blacks and other minorities should receive preference in hiring to make up for past inequalities, or not?**

Question: **Do you think blacks and other minorities should receive preference in college admissions to make up for past inequalities, or not?**

Blacks and other minorities should receive preference

In hiring to make up for past inequalities

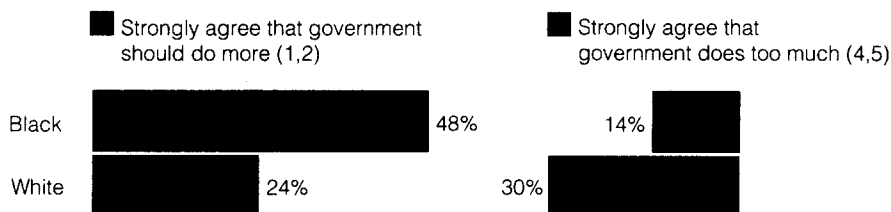


In college admissions to make up for past inequalities



Source: Survey by ABC News/Washington Post, May 30-June 2, 1991.

Question: **Some people think that the government in Washington is trying to do too many things that should be left to individuals and private businesses. Others disagree and think that the government should do even more to solve our country's problems. Still others have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you make up your mind on this?**



Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, 1987-1990 combined.

It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves (b)



The government should guarantee every citizen enough to eat and a place to sleep (b)



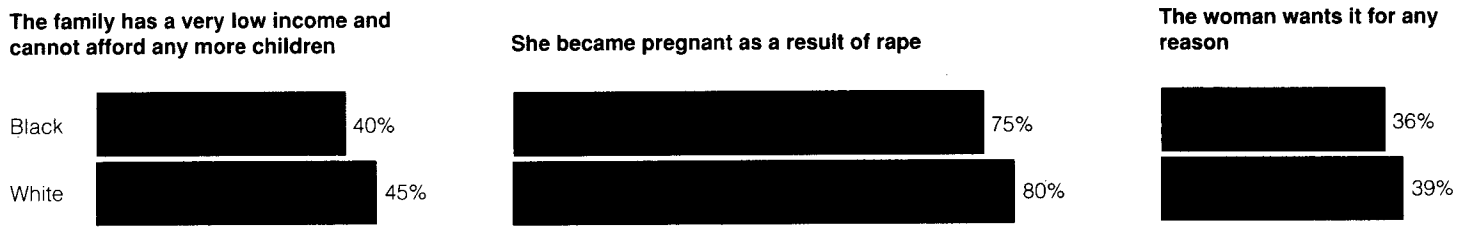
Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates, Inc., for the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press, May 1-31, 1990.

Outlook on Social Issues

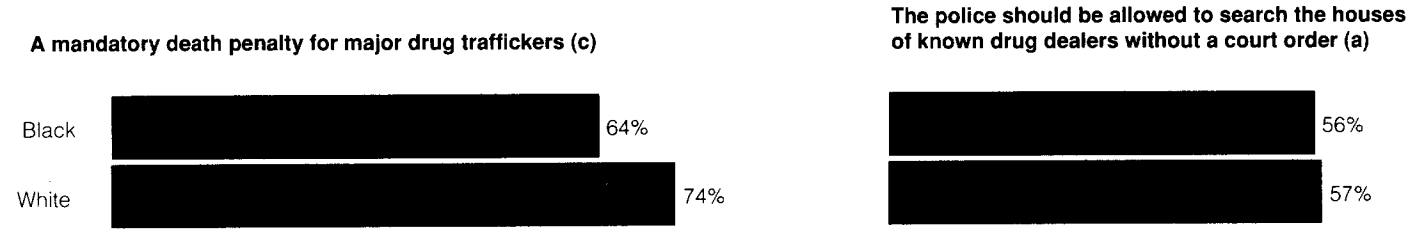
Blacks and whites differ little on many social issues, including abortion and crime. Both groups decry lenient courts, but blacks are less likely than whites to favor capital punishment.

Question: Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if...

Should be possible for woman to obtain a legal abortion if...

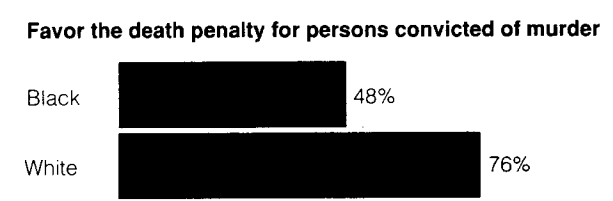


Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, 1987-1990 combined.

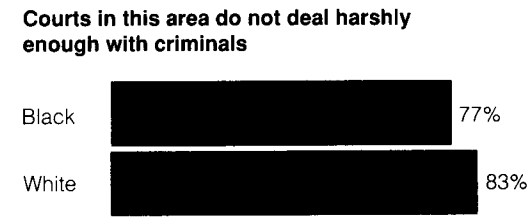


Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates, Inc., for the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press, May 1-31, 1990.

Question: Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?



Question: In general, do you think the courts in this area deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals?



Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, 1987-1990 combined.

Patriotism and belief in God by blacks and whites reflect shared cultural values. Blacks are solidly Democratic, but they consider themselves conservative or liberal in about the same proportions as whites.

There are clear guidelines about what's good or evil that apply to everyone (a)



I am very patriotic (b)

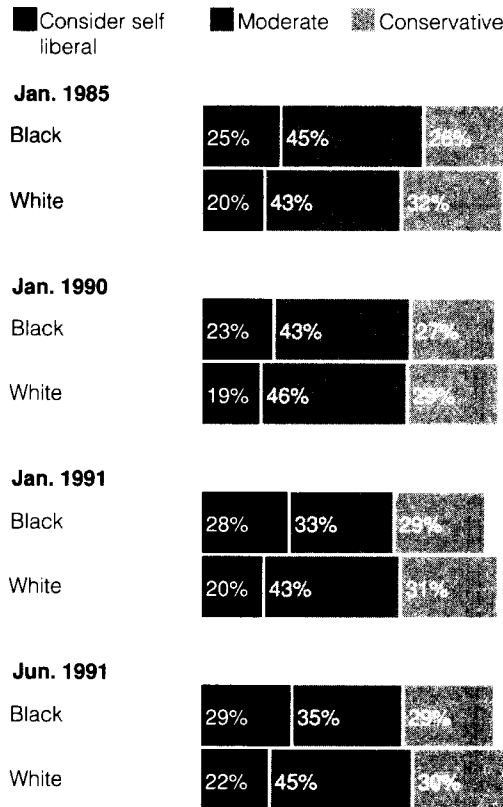


I never doubt the existence of God (a)

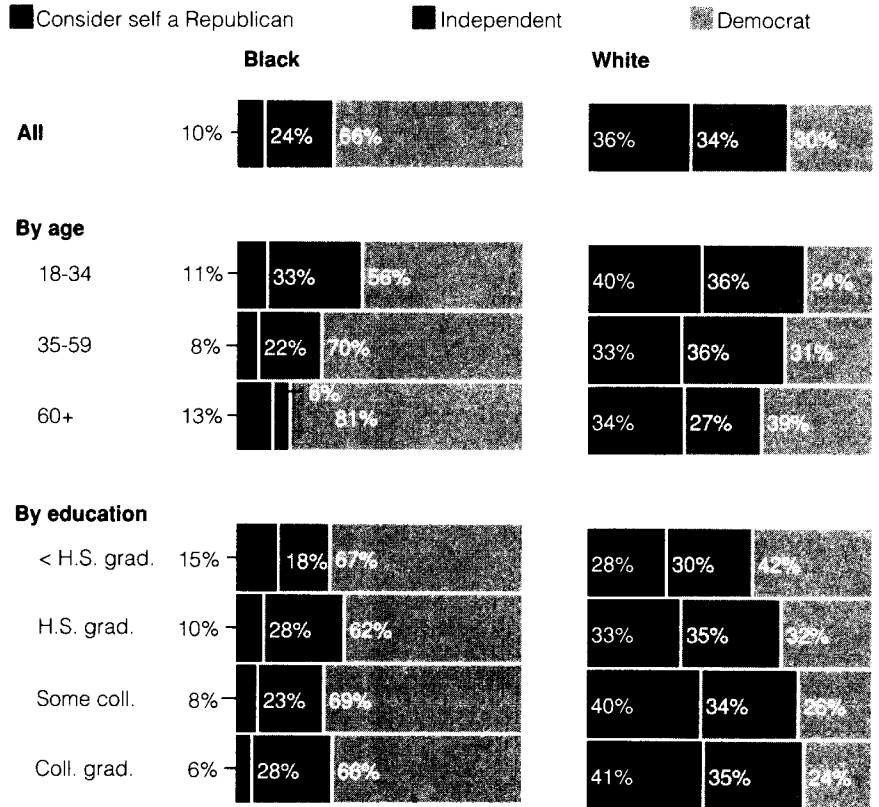


Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates, Inc., for the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press, May 1-31, 1990.

Question: How would you describe your views on most political matters? Generally, do you think of yourself as liberal, moderate, or conservative?



Question: As of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?



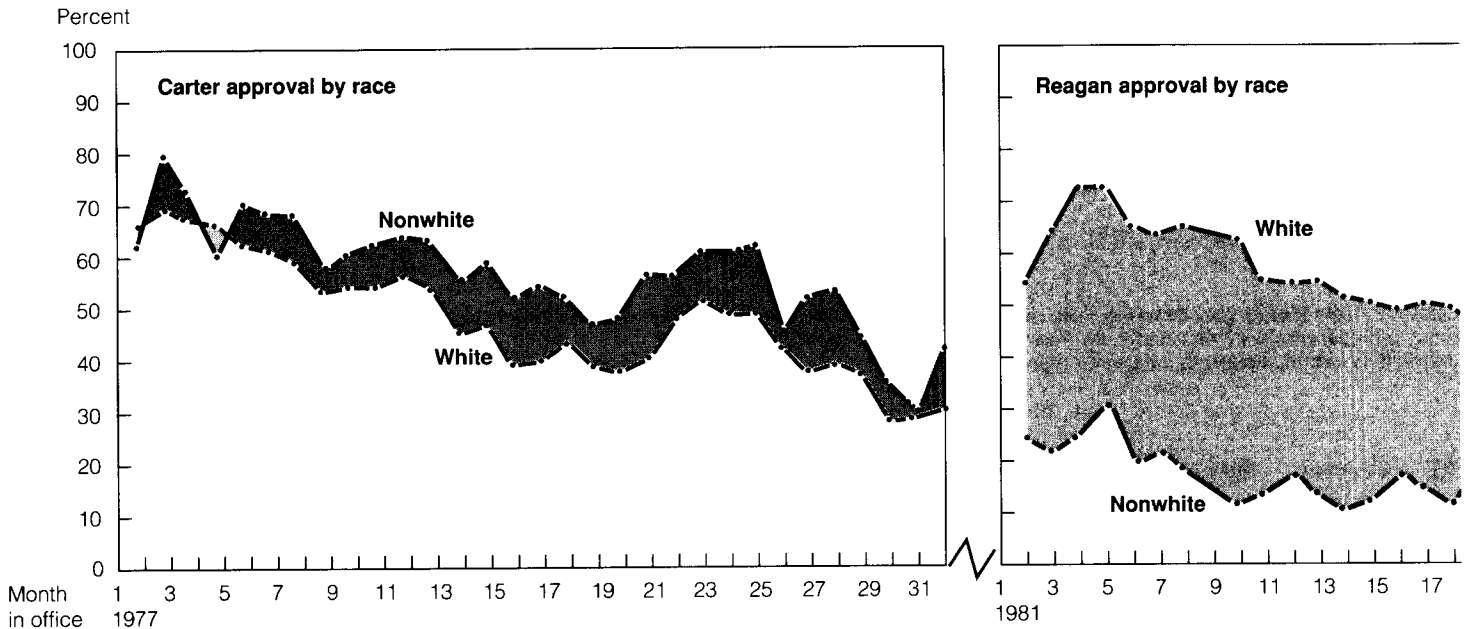
Source: Surveys by CBS News/New York Times, latest that of June 3-6, 1991.

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization for Newsweek, 1989-1991 data combined.

Racial Polarization and the Presidents

One of the special features of the Bush presidency is how little it polarizes groups in the electorate. The Reagan presidency polarized much more. The average difference between nonwhite* and white approval of Reagan in his first 32 months in office was 37 percentage points; for Bush it is half that.

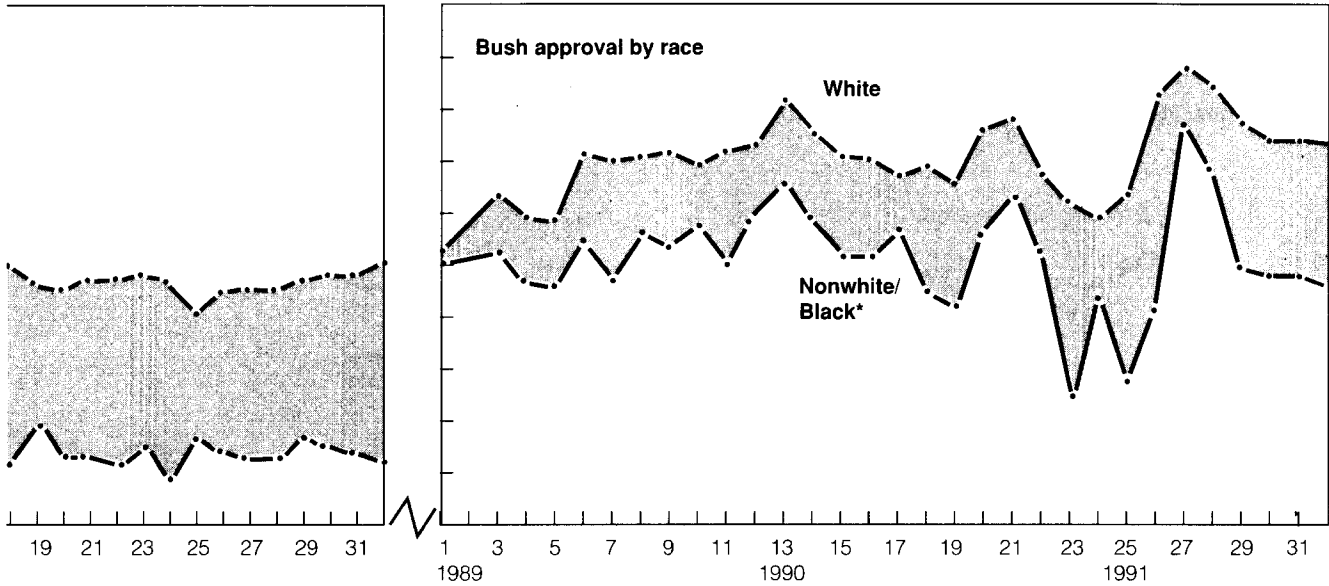
Question: **Do you approve or disapprove of the way (president's name) is handling his job as president?**



Note: * = Nonwhite for 1977-January 1990; Black, February 1990, 1991. Ratings taken from first survey of each month.
Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of August 8-11, 1991.

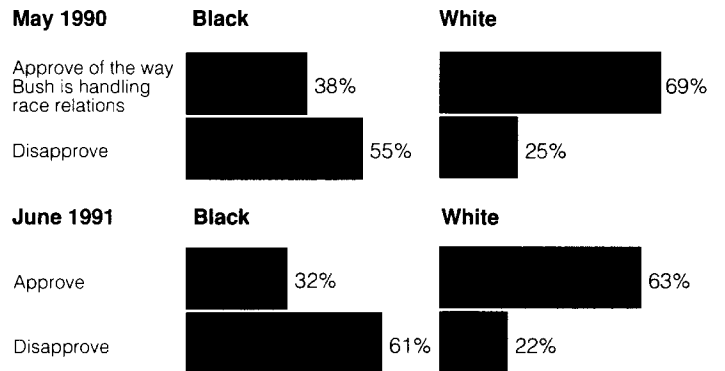
CARTER APPROVAL					REAGAN APPROVAL						
Month in office	1977	All	White	Non-White	Gap	Month in office	1981	All	White	Non-White	Gap
1	Jan.	—	—	—	—	1	Jan.	—	—	—	—
2	Feb.	66%	66%	62%	4%	2	Feb.	51%	54%	25%	29%
3	Mar.	70	69	79	10	3	Mar.	60	65	22	43
4	Apr.	67	67	71	4	4	Apr.	67	73	25	48
5	May	66	66	60	6	5	May	68	73	31	42
6	Jun.	63	62	70	8	6	Jun.	59	65	20	45
7	Jul.	62	61	68	7	7	Jul.	60	64	22	42
8	Aug.	60	59	68	9	8	Aug.	60	66	18	48
9	Sep.	54	53	58	5	9	Sep.	—	—	—	—
10	Oct.	55	54	61	7	10	Oct.	56	62	12	50
11	Nov.	55	54	63	9	11	Nov.	49	55	15	40
12	Dec.	57	56	64	8	12	Dec.	49	55	17	38
13	1978					13	1982				
13	Jan.	55	53	63	10	13	Jan.	49	55	13	42
14	Feb.	47	45	55	10	14	Feb.	47	52	11	41
15	Mar.	49	47	59	12	15	Mar.	46	51	13	38
16	Apr.	40	39	52	13	16	Apr.	45	50	17	33
17	May	41	40	54	14	17	May	45	51	14	37
18	Jun.	44	43	52	9	18	Jun.	45	50	12	38
19	Jul.	40	39	47	8	19	Jul.	42	46	20	26
20	Aug.	39	38	48	10	20	Aug.	41	45	13	32
21	Sep.	42	40	56	16	21	Sep.	42	47	13	34
22	Oct.	49	48	56	8	22	Oct.	42	47	12	35
23	Nov.	52	51	61	10	23	Nov.	43	48	15	33
24	Dec.	50	49	61	12	24	Dec.	41	46	9	37
25	1979					25	1983				
25	Jan.	50	49	62	13	25	Jan.	37	41	17	24
26	Feb.	42	42	45	3	26	Feb.	40	45	14	31
27	Mar.	39	38	52	14	27	Mar.	41	45	13	32
28	Apr.	40	39	53	14	28	Apr.	41	45	13	32
29	May	37	37	43	6	29	May	43	47	17	30
30	Jun.	29	28	35	7	30	Jun.	43	48	15	33
31	Jul.	29	29	30	1	31	Jul.	42	48	14	34
32	Aug.	32	30	43	13	32	Aug.	44	50	12	38

George Bush's approval rating among black Americans hovered between 45-50 percent in recent months, an impressive standing for a Republican. Only about one third of blacks, however, approve of his handling of race relations, compared to two-thirds of whites.



BUSH APPROVAL		All	White	Non-White/ Black*	Gap
Month in office	1989				
1	Jan.	51%	52%	51%	1%
2	Feb.-				
3	Mar.	63	64	53	11
4	Apr.	58	59	47	12
5	May	56	58	46	12
6	Jun.	70	72	55	17
7	Jul.	66	70	47	23
8	Aug.	69	71	57	14
9	Sep.	70	72	54	18
10	Oct.	68	69	58	11
11	Nov.	70	72	51	21
12	Dec.	71	73	61	12
1990					
13	Jan.	80	82	66	16
14	Feb.	73	75	58	17
15	Mar.	68	71	52	19
16	Apr.	68	70	52	18
17	May	65	67	57	10
18	Jun.	67	69	45	24
19	Jul.	63	66	42	24
20	Aug.	74	76	58	18
21	Sep.	76	78	63	15
22	Oct.	66	67	51	16
23	Nov.	58	62	25	37
24	Dec.	58	59	44	15
1991					
25	Jan.	59	63	28	35
26	Feb.	79	82	43	39
27	Mar.	87	88	77	11
28	Apr.	83	84	67	17
29	May	74	77	49	28
30	Jun.	71	74	48	26
31	Jul.	72	75	49	26
32	Aug.	71	73	46	27

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bush is handling race relations?



Note: Sixty-five percent of whites and 34% of blacks approved of the way Bush is handling civil rights in June ABC/WP poll.
Source: Surveys by ABC News/Washington Post, latest that of May 30-June 2, 1991.