

ABORTION: PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

Voters for whom abortion was a compelling issue were much more likely to vote Republican than Democratic for president in both 1984 and 1988. Indeed, Reagan and Bush did better among voters for whom the abortion issue was important than among voters at large.

ABORTION ON ELECTION DAY (1980, 1984, 1988)

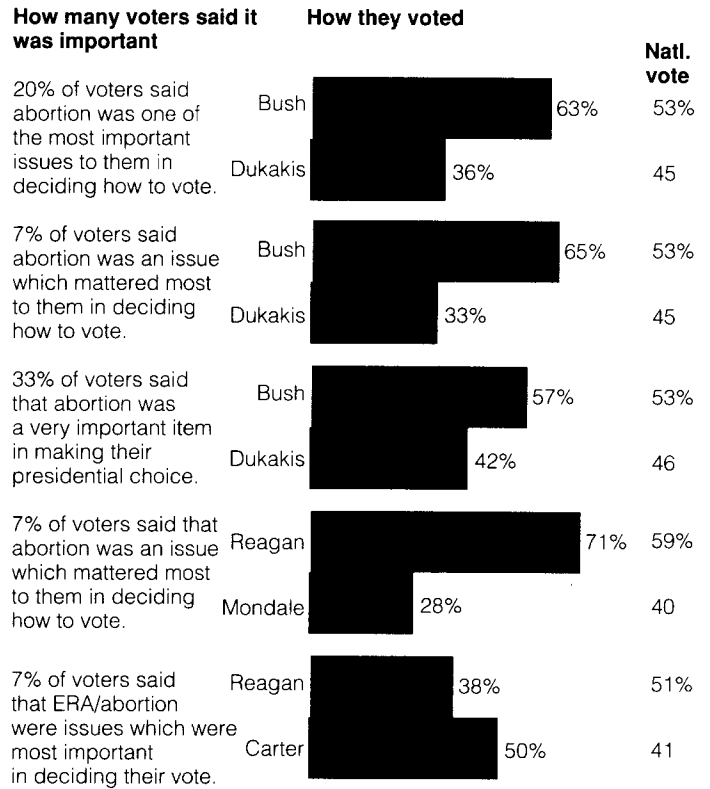
In 1988, the *Los Angeles Times* exit pollsters asked voters "Which issues—if any—were most important to you in deciding how you would vote today?" (Voters could choose up to two responses, including "None," from a list of eleven.)

In 1988, CBS News/*New York Times* exit pollsters asked voters "Which issues mattered most in deciding how you voted?" (Voters could choose zero to two responses from a list of nine.)

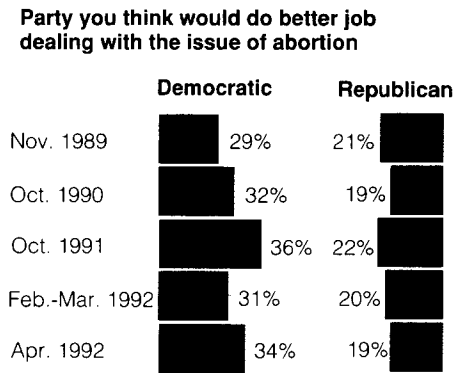
In 1988, ABC News exit pollsters asked voters "Were any of the items...[listed on the survey ballot] very important in making your presidential choice?" "The candidates' stands on abortion" was one of 21 items listed, including "None of the above."

In 1984, CBS News/*New York Times* exit pollsters asked voters "Which issues mattered most in deciding how you voted?" (Voters could choose up to two responses from a list of eight, including "None of these.")

In 1980, CBS News/*New York Times* exit pollsters asked voters "Which issues were most important in deciding how you voted today?" (Voters could choose zero to two responses from a list of eight. "ERA/Abortion" was a single category.)

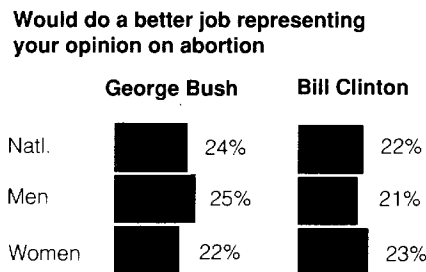


Question: **Now, let me read you a list of some specific issues. When it comes to..., which party do you think would do a better job—the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, neither, or are both about the same?**



Source: Survey by NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, latest that of April 11-14, 1992.

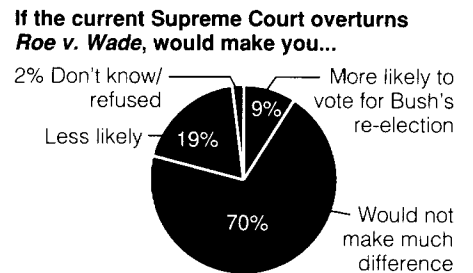
Question: **Regardless of who you would vote for in November, which candidate, George Bush, Bill Clinton, or Ross Perot, would do a better job of ...?**



Note: Nine percent of all respondents (10% of men and 9% of women) thought Perot would do a better job representing their opinion on abortion.

Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for *U.S. News and World Report*, April 14-15, 1992.

Question: **In its 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, the Supreme Court ruled that states cannot place restrictions on a woman's right to an abortion during the first three months of pregnancy. If the current Supreme Court overturns the *Roe v. Wade* decision, would you be more likely to vote for George Bush's re-election in November, less likely, or would it not make much difference?**



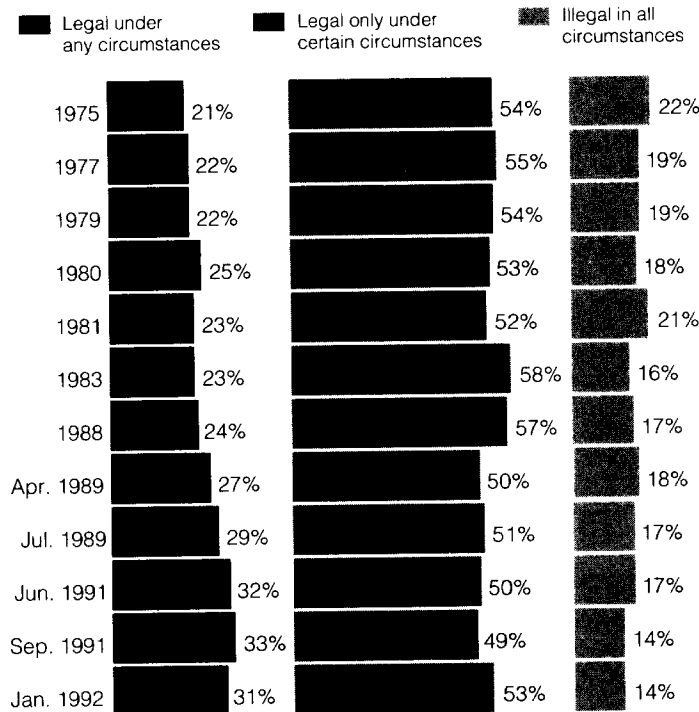
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, December 12-15, 1991.

An Overview of Attitudes

The charts below reflect the tension in Americans' minds between an individual's right to choose and the need to put greater limits on abortion. Sentiment about abortion varies more by age and education than by gender.

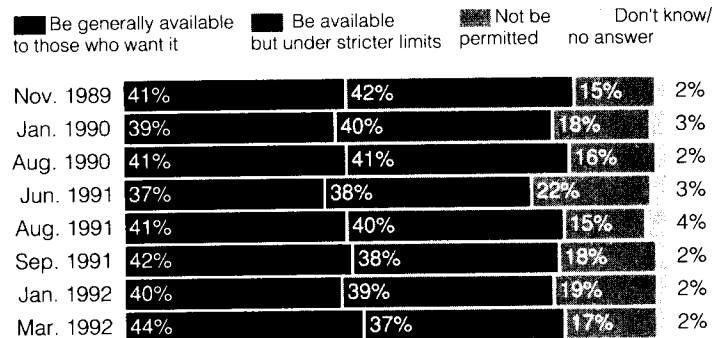
Question: **Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?**

Abortion should be...



Question: **Which of these comes closest to your view? Abortion should be generally available to those who want it; or abortion should be available but under stricter limits than it is now; or abortion should not be permitted?**

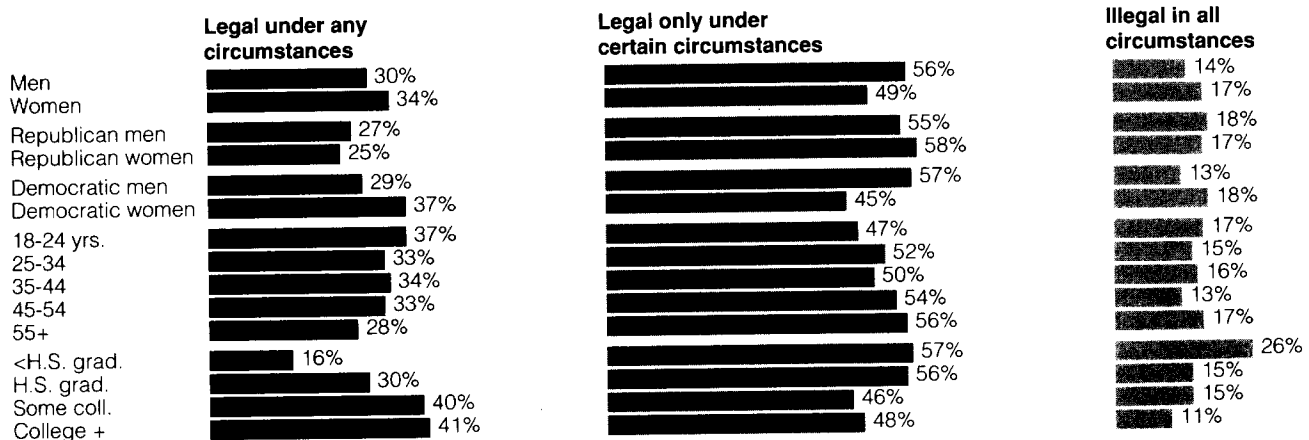
Abortion should...



Source: Surveys by CBS News/New York Times, latest that of March 26-29, 1992.

Selected groups (Gallup)

Abortion should be...



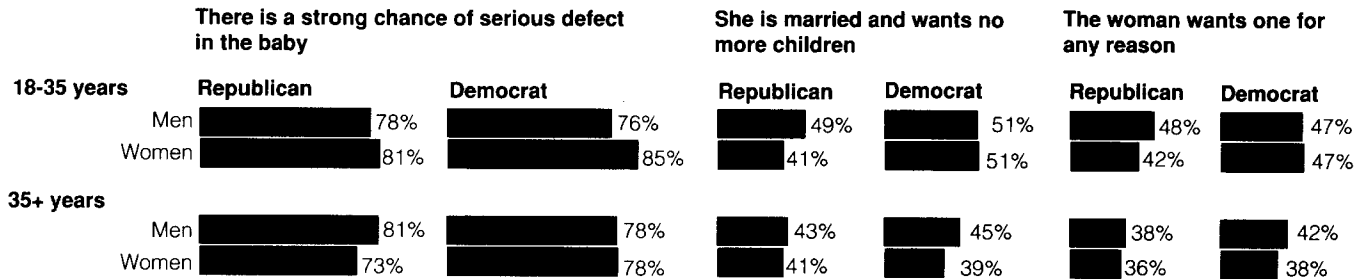
Note: June 1991 and January 1992 surveys combined for bottom chart.
Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of January 16-19, 1992.

Restrictions Americans Support

Younger women, in both parties, but particularly in the Democratic Party, are more supportive of abortion than their older counterparts. Overall, there is strong backing for some restrictions on abortion, such as parental consent and spousal notification.

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

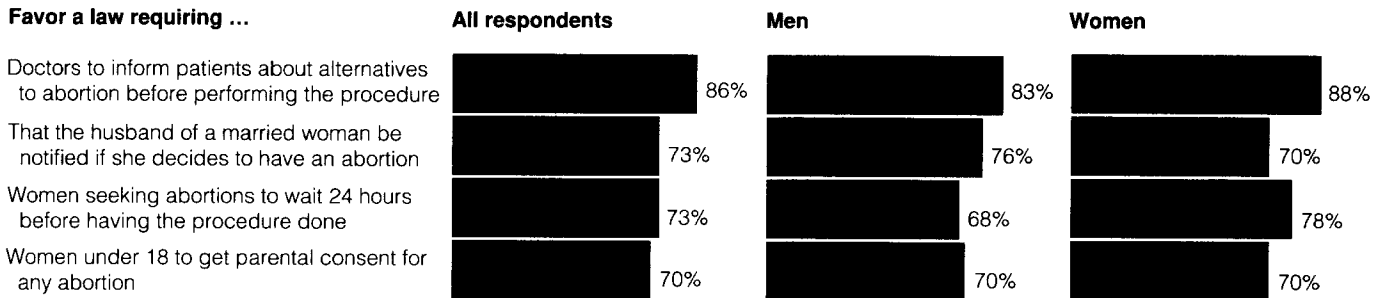
Should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if ...



Note: Data from 1990 and 1991 surveys combined.

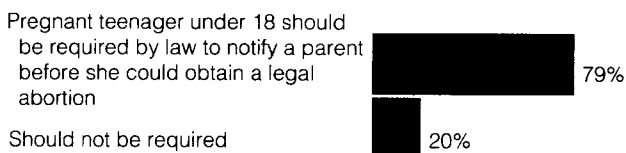
Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, latest that of February-April, 1991.

Question: **Do you favor or oppose each of the following? A law requiring ...?**



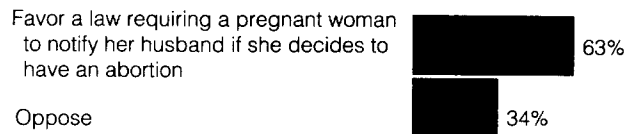
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, January 16-19, 1992.

Question: **Do you think that a pregnant teenager under the age of 18 should be required by law to notify a parent before she could obtain a legal abortion?**



Source: Survey by ABC News/Washington Post, July 19-23, 1990.

Question: **Do you favor or oppose a law requiring a pregnant woman to notify her husband if she decides to have an abortion?**



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, December 12-15, 1991.