

States and Regions in the US: How Similar? Where Different?

States and regions have always been important foci of American social and political experience. The 13 original colonies, for all their common British roots, were diverse. The first government established after the colonies declared their independence provided for a confederation of sovereign states. The Articles of Confederation declared that: "each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every Power, Jurisdiction and right, which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled. The said states hereby severally enter into a firm league of friendship with each other, for their common defence, the security of their Liberties, and their mutual and general welfare...." In the middle of the 19th century, the country felt the bitterest expression of regional differences,

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As the 20th century comes to a close, we are seeing a host of developments that might be thought to have the potential of eroding if not obliterating regional distinctiveness. But in many ways regional differences are not so much eroding as simply changing form.

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centering around the institution of slavery, culminating in the Civil War. Even after it was firmly established that this would be one nation, economic, cultural, and political differences, organized around contrasting state and sectional experience, remained a prime feature of American life.

Now as the 20th century comes to a close, however, we are seeing a host of developments that might be thought to have the potential of eroding if not obliterating regional distinctiveness. From Portland, Maine to Biloxi, Mississippi to Portland, Oregon, Americans are immersed in a popular culture that's diffused pervasively by electronic media. Transportation technology and widespread prosperity have made inter-regional travel a common experience for a large slice of the public. The dominant position of one or another form of production—e.g., textile manufacturing in New England, cotton farming in the South—once distinguished one region from another. Today, though, various types of economic activity are much more widely dispersed. While the populations of some states (such as Connecticut and New Jersey) enjoy higher incomes than the populaces of others (such as Mississippi and Arkansas), the regions are closer to parity today in economic standing than at any previous point in US history (see pp. 16-17).

Yet, as the articles and data published here demonstrate, sectional differences—from economic life to popular culture—remain substantial and, in some cases,

strikingly large. On many social issues, the Northeastern and Pacific states are more liberal than those of the Midwest and South (pp. 23-26). Americans at large stand out in comparison to the publics of other industrial nations in the extent of their religious commitments—but differences in religiosity and denominational make-up between New England and the deep South are massive (p. 27).

In many ways, it seems, regional differences are not so much eroding as simply changing form. Party loyalties and voting are a case in point. For nearly a century after the Civil War, New England was a Republican heartland while most of the South was overwhelmingly Democratic. New England is still politically distinctive—but now for its liberalism and Democratic support, while the South has become a GOP stronghold (p. 20). The underlying cultural bases that have distinguished various sections of the country historically are notably enduring, even as the ways they get expressed or translated—e.g., voting patterns—have shifted. In one of the articles that follows (pp. 35-39) William H. Frey explores how immigration to the US and migration within it are creating new forms of state and regional distinctiveness. In general, differing clusters of social, cultural, and economic features continue to prop up regionalism and leave it an important dimension analytically for students of American society.

Everett Ladd

Go West, Young Man... and Woman

State Population Change, 1950-1996

	Population in 1950	Population in 1996	Percentage Change 1950-1996
<i>In thousands</i>			
Biggest Gainers			
Nevada	160	1,603	902
Arizona	750	4,428	490
Florida	2,771	14,399	420
Alaska	129	607	371
California	10,586	31,878	201
Utah	689	2,000	190
Colorado	1,325	3,822	188
New Mexico	681	1,713	152
Texas	7,711	19,128	148
Hawaii	500	1,183	137
Washington	2,379	5,532	133
Delaware	318	724	128
New Hampshire	533	1,162	118
Maryland	2,343	5,071	116
Georgia	3,445	7,353	113
Oregon	1,521	3,203	111
Idaho	589	1,189	102
Virginia	3,319	6,675	101
North Carolina	4,062	7,322	80
South Carolina	2,117	3,698	75
New Jersey	4,835	7,987	65
Wyoming	291	481	65
Connecticut	2,007	3,274	63
Tennessee	3,292	5,319	62
Louisiana	2,684	4,350	62
Minnesota	2,982	4,657	56
Vermont	378	588	56
Michigan	6,372	9,594	51
Wisconsin	3,435	5,159	50
Montana	591	879	49
Indiana	3,934	5,840	48
Oklahoma	2,233	3,300	48
Ohio	7,947	11,172	41
Alabama	3,062	4,273	40
Illinois	8,712	11,846	36
Maine	914	1,243	36
Missouri	3,955	5,358	35
Kansas	1,905	2,572	35
Kentucky	2,945	3,883	32
Arkansas	1,910	2,509	31
Laggards			
Massachusetts	4,691	6,092	30
Mississippi	2,179	2,716	25
Nebraska	1,326	1,652	25
Rhode Island	792	990	25
New York	14,830	18,184	23
Pennsylvania	10,498	12,056	15
South Dakota	653	732	12
Iowa	2,621	2,851	9
North Dakota	620	643	4
West Virginia	2,006	1,825	-9
District of Columbia	802	543	-32

Source: US Bureau of the Census.

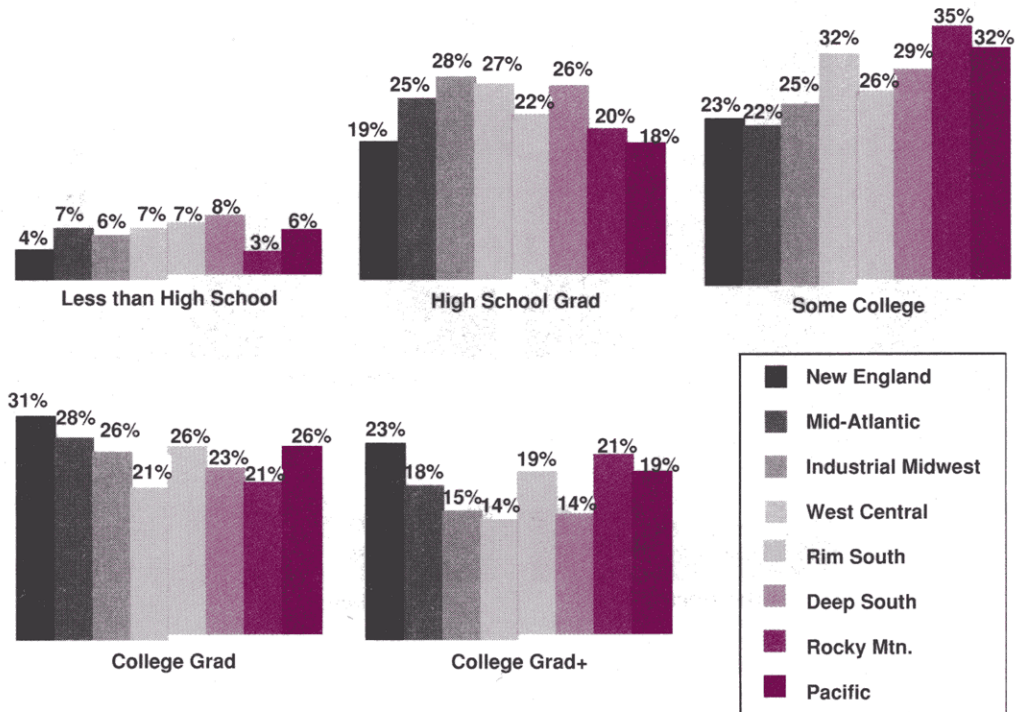
The Black Population is 20 Percent or Higher in 7 Southern States, Maryland, and DC; the Hispanic Population Exceeds 20 Percent in 4 Western States

	Percent of State Population Black, 1996	Percentage Change 1980-1996	Percent of State Population Hispanic, 1996	Percentage Change 1980-1996
New England				
Maine	*	**	1	**
New Hampshire	1	**	1	**
Vermont	1	**	1	**
Massachusetts	6	71	6	147
Rhode Island	5	68	6	195
Connecticut	9	37	8	104
Mid-Atlantic				
New York	18	33	14	53
New Jersey	15	25	12	87
Pennsylvania	10	11	2	**
Delaware	19	42	3	**
Maryland	27	43	3	**
District of Columbia	63	-24	7	105
Industrial Midwest				
Ohio	11	17	2	**
Indiana	8	15	2	**
Illinois	15	8	10	79
Michigan	14	14	4	49
Wisconsin	6	55	2	**
West Central				
Minnesota	3	**	2	**
Iowa	2	**	2	**
Missouri	11	16	1	**
North Dakota	1	**	1	**
South Dakota	1	**	1	**
Nebraska	4	33	4	125
Kansas	6	21	5	97
South/Atlantic				
Virginia	20	31	3	**
West Virginia	3	**	*	**
North Carolina	22	23	2	**
South Carolina	30	17	1	**
Georgia	28	42	3	**
Florida	15	62	14	136
South/central				
Kentucky	7	8	1	**
Tennessee	16	20	1	**
Alabama	26	11	1	**
Mississippi	36	11	1	**
South/west				
Arkansas	16	8	2	**
Louisiana	32	13	3	**
Oklahoma	8	23	4	**
Texas	12	37	29	84
Mountain				
Montana	*	**	2	**
Idaho	1	**	7	116
Wyoming	1	**	6	13
Colorado	4	61	14	57
New Mexico	3	**	40	42
Arizona	3	**	21	113
Utah	1	**	6	101
Nevada	7	131	14	319
Pacific				
Washington	3	**	6	168
Oregon	2	**	6	168
California	7	30	30	112
Alaska	4	64	4	120
Hawaii	3	**	8	**

* Less than 1%. **When the state's minority population is 3% or less we have elected not to show the percentage increase on the grounds that it can be especially misleading. **Source:** US Bureau of the Census.

New England Voters (1996) Had the Highest Educational Levels; West Central and Southern Voters the Lowest

Question: What was the last grade of school you completed?



Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November 1996.

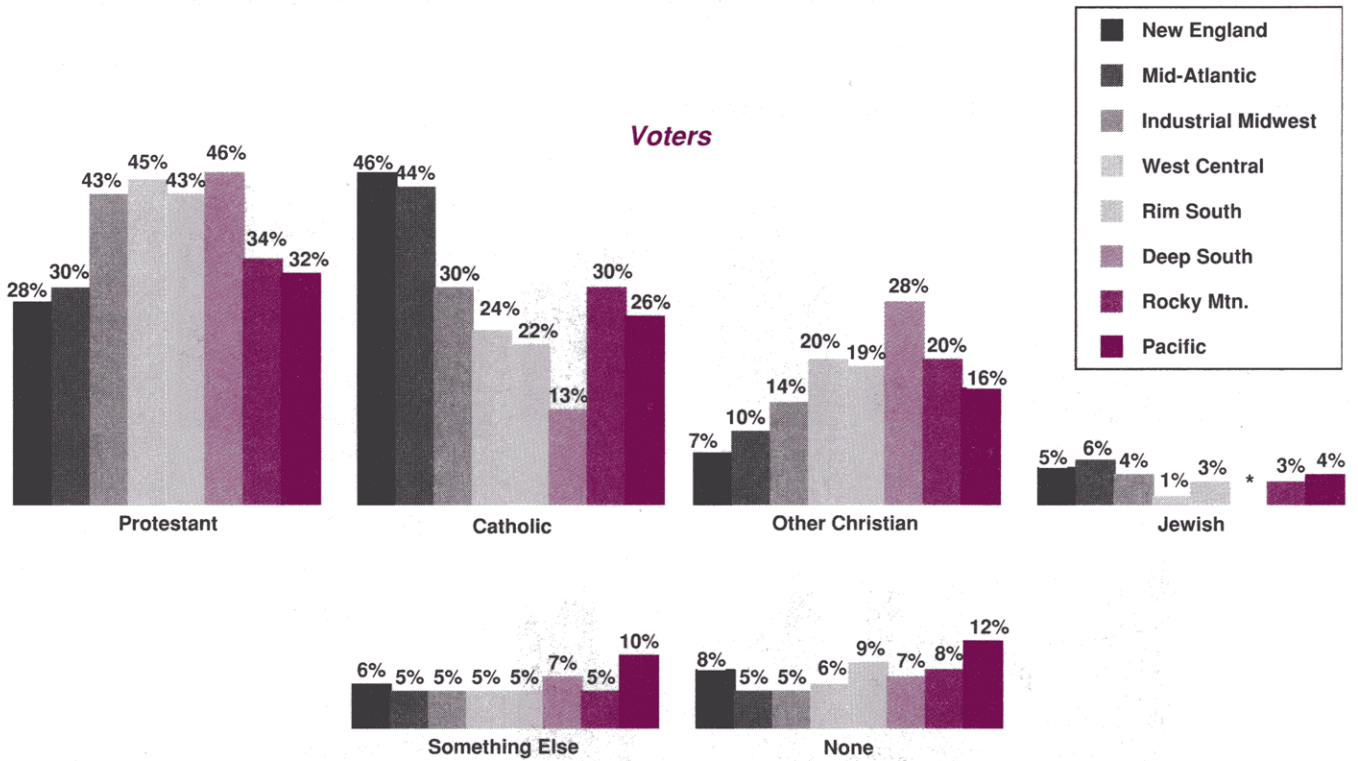
Geographic Mobility Greatest in the South Atlantic, Mountain, and Pacific States

Question: In what state or foreign country were you living when you were 16 years old? When you were 16 years old, were you living in this same (city/town/county)?

	New England	Mid-Atlantic	Industrial Midwest	West Central	South Atlantic	South central	Southwest	Mountain	Pacific
Same city	33%	41%	49%	36%	39%	59%	41%	27%	27%
Same state/Different city	33%	29%	29%	29%	17%	21%	29%	20%	29%
Different state	34%	30%	22%	35%	44%	19%	30%	52%	45%

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined.

Sharp Differences in Church Ties By Region



Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November 1996.

Catholics A Large Plurality in New England; Protestants A Big Majority in the South

All Adults

	New England	Mid-Atlantic	Industrial Midwest	West Central	South/Atlantic	South/central	South/west	Mountain	Pacific
Protestant	34%	43%	59%	69%	82%	90%	73%	59%	50%
Catholic	49	39	27	20	8	3	18	23	25
Jewish	3	6	1	1	1	*	1	1	2
None	10	9	10	8	6	5	7	13	17
Other	3	3	2	2	3	1	2	5	6

* less than 1%

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined.

Persons of German Ancestry Outnumber All Other Groups in the Midwest

	New England	Mid-Atlantic	Industrial Midwest	West Central	South/Atlantic	South/central	South/west	Mountain	Pacific
Africa	2%	9%	7%	5%	23%	23	13%	3%	4%
Asian	0	*	*	*	*	0	*	*	2
Canada	18	3	2	1	*	*	2	0	2
East Central Europe	9	15	11	5	2	*	4	3	6
France	4	2	2	2	1	1	5	2	3
Germany	6	19	32	37	15	14	16	20	15
Great Britain	23	15	17	17	26	28	22	25	21
Ireland	19	17	12	10	15	19	13	9	13
Italy	13	17	4	1	2	*	3	6	7
Native American	2	2	4	3	11	9	10	9	4
Netherlands	2	*	3	3	2	2	2	*	2
Scandinavia	2	2	5	15	1	*	*	12	8
Mexico	0	*	1	1	*	*	11	10	11

* less than 1%

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined.

Note: To obtain ancestry information a series of questions was asked, all designed to permit respondents to choose the best fit for his/her country of origin. First: "From what countries or part of the world did your ancestors come?" If respondents named just one country, that was entered, of course, as his/her ethnic background. If several countries were mentioned (question provided for up to three responses), these were recorded, and a second question asked: "Which of these countries do you feel closer to?" If one response was elicited, it was in turn entered as the "predominant" ethnic background. No country of origin was assigned where respondents could not decide among the several countries they had mentioned. Recodification was employed to provide for four separate responses to the original question: code 1, "names only one country;" code 2, "names two or more countries and chooses one;" code 3, "names two or more countries but can't choose;" code 4, "unable to name countries." The combined responses of codes 1 and 2 are shown in the table above.

The Dozen States Experiencing the Largest Increase in Population Through Immigration, 1992-1996

California	1,668,000	Massachusetts	144,000
New York	892,000	Virginia	102,000
Texas	547,000	Washington	101,000
Florida	422,000	Maryland	99,000
Illinois	289,000	Pennsylvania	91,000
New Jersey	286,000	Michigan	83,000

Note: Total includes both numbers of legal immigrants (recipients of green cards) admitted to state of intended residence over the 5-year span, and estimated number of undocumented (illegal) immigrants over the same span, by state of residence.

Source: INS Statistical Yearbook, 1996, and INS Office of Policy Planning.

Big Differences in States' Per Capita Income

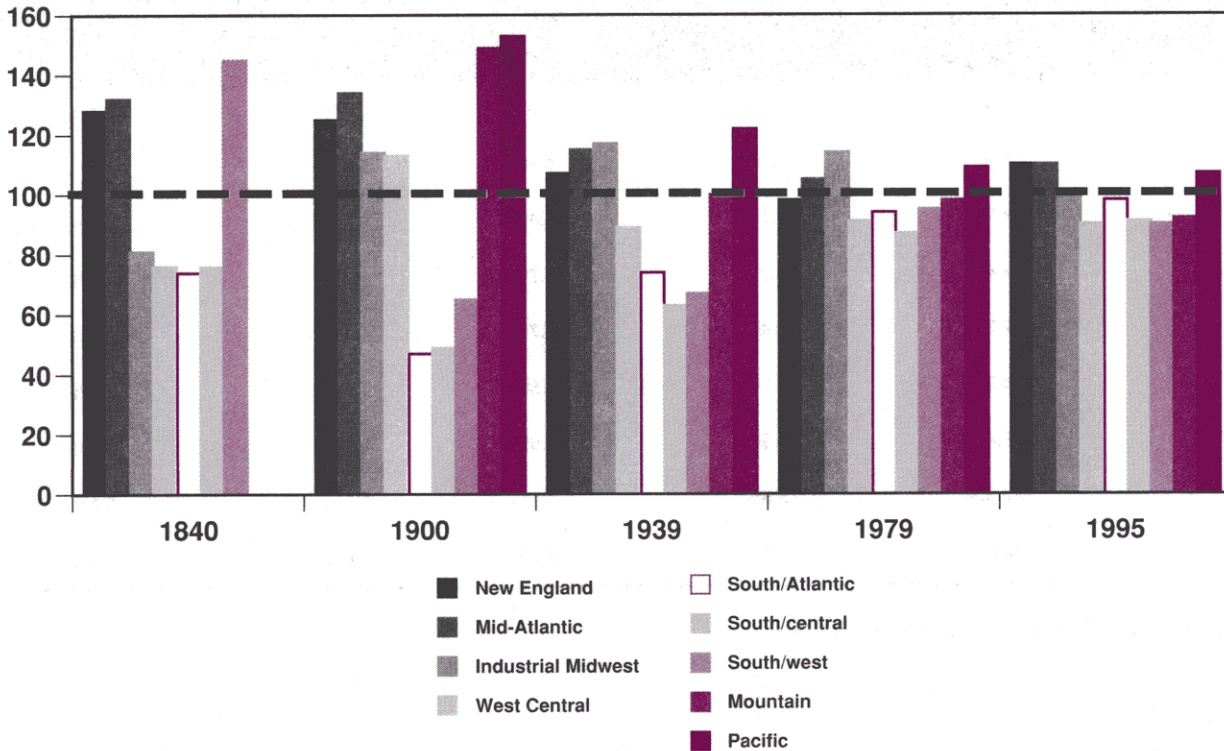
Mississippi's Lags Far Below Connecticut's

	Per capita income in 1996	1996 income, percentage above or below (-) US average	Percentage growth in real income 1980-1996
United States	\$24,231	NA	28.7
New England			
Maine	28,134	16.1	43.1
New Hampshire	20,826	-14.1	34.3
Vermont	26,520	9.5	43.3
Massachusetts	22,124	-8.7	37.3
Rhode Island	29,439	21.5	45.9
Connecticut	24,765	2.2	36.7
Mid-Atlantic	33,189	37.0	44.4
New York	27,959	15.4	37.7
New Jersey	28,782	18.8	39.3
Pennsylvania	31,053	28.2	41.3
District of Columbia	24,668	1.8	31.5
Delaware	34,932	44.2	49.0
Maryland	27,622	14.0	38.6
Industrial Midwest	27,221	12.3	33.1
Ohio	24,470	1.1	27.9
Indiana	23,537	-2.9	27.0
Illinois	22,440	-7.4	28.4
Michigan	26,598	9.8	29.0
Wisconsin	24,810	2.4	28.6
West Central	23,269	-4.0	25.5
Minnesota	23,448	-3.2	31.5
Iowa	25,580	5.6	34.2
Missouri	22,560	-6.9	26.4
North Dakota	22,864	-5.6	30.4
South Dakota	20,710	-14.5	41.0
Nebraska	21,516	-11.2	45.7
Kansas	23,047	-4.9	34.9
South/Atlantic	23,281	-3.9	25.5
Virginia	23,636	-2.5	35.9
West Virginia	24,925	2.9	33.8
North Carolina	18,444	-23.9	22.2
South Carolina	22,010	-9.2	45.3
Georgia	19,755	-18.5	38.0
Florida	22,709	-6.3	44.1
South/central	24,104	-0.5	29.8
Kentucky	20,095	-17.1	37.3
Tennessee	19,687	-18.8	29.8
Alabama	21,764	-10.2	42.7
Mississippi	20,055	-17.2	38.3
South/west	17,471	-27.9	34.6
Arkansas	21,144	-12.7	19.5
Louisiana	18,928	-21.9	35.2
Oklahoma	19,824	-18.2	20.5
Texas	19,350	-20.1	9.1
Mountain	22,045	-9.0	18.3
Montana	21,735	-10.3	21.5
Idaho	19,047	-21.4	15.0
Wyoming	19,539	-19.4	21.4
Colorado	21,245	-12.3	-1.0
New Mexico	25,084	3.5	24.7
Arizona	18,770	-22.5	21.6
Utah	20,989	-13.4	19.8
Nevada	19,156	-20.9	27.5
Pacific	25,451	5.0	17.1
Washington	24,909	2.8	15.3
Oregon	24,838	2.5	23.0
California	22,668	-6.5	21.5
Alaska	25,144	3.8	13.6
Hawaii	24,558	1.4	-5.7
	25,159	3.8	23.4

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis and ACBJ Research, July 1997.

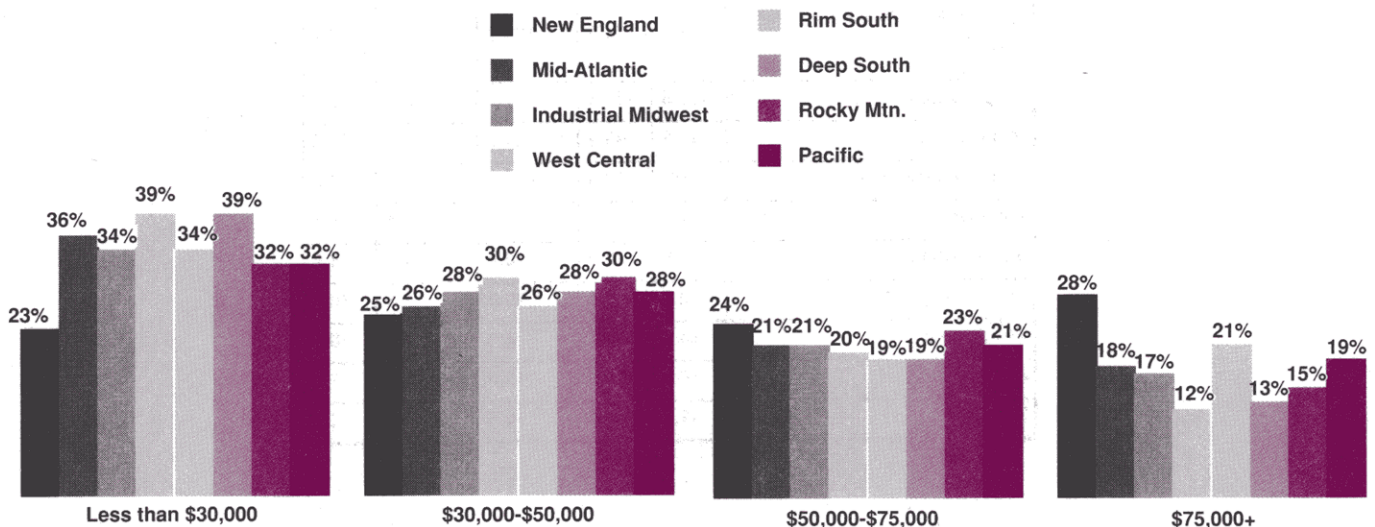
But Regional Differences in Income Have Declined Markedly in This Century

Wage and Salary Income Per Worker, 1995 Dollars



Source: The figure above is a variant of that used in Steven Sass, "Leapfrog and Catch-Up," *Regional Review* (Federal Reserve Bank of Boston), Volume 8, No. 1, 1998; data provided by Andrew Sum, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University. Reprinted with permission.

Reported Income of Voters in the 1996 Elections



Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November 1996.

Strong Economic Gains Coast to Coast

	# of Jobs Added 3/97-3/98	% Increase in # of Jobs 3/97-3/98	% Unemployed 3/97	% Unemployed 3/98	% Change in Average Annual Pay of Workers 1995-1996
New England	153,400	2.3%	4.5%	3.8%	3.8%
Mid-Atlantic	291,000	1.4%	5.9%	5.4%	4.6%
Industrial Midwest	354,200	1.7%	4.4%	4.0%	3.5%
West Central	199,400	2.2%	3.7%	3.2%	4.0%
South/Atlantic	657,300	3.4%	4.7%	4.2%	3.7%
South/central	124,200	1.7%	5.5%	4.7%	3.6%
South/west	417,800	3.3%	5.5%	4.6%	3.4%
Mountain	262,300	3.5%	4.5%	4.2%	3.5%
Pacific	590,600	3.3%	6.3%	5.6%	2.8%

Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

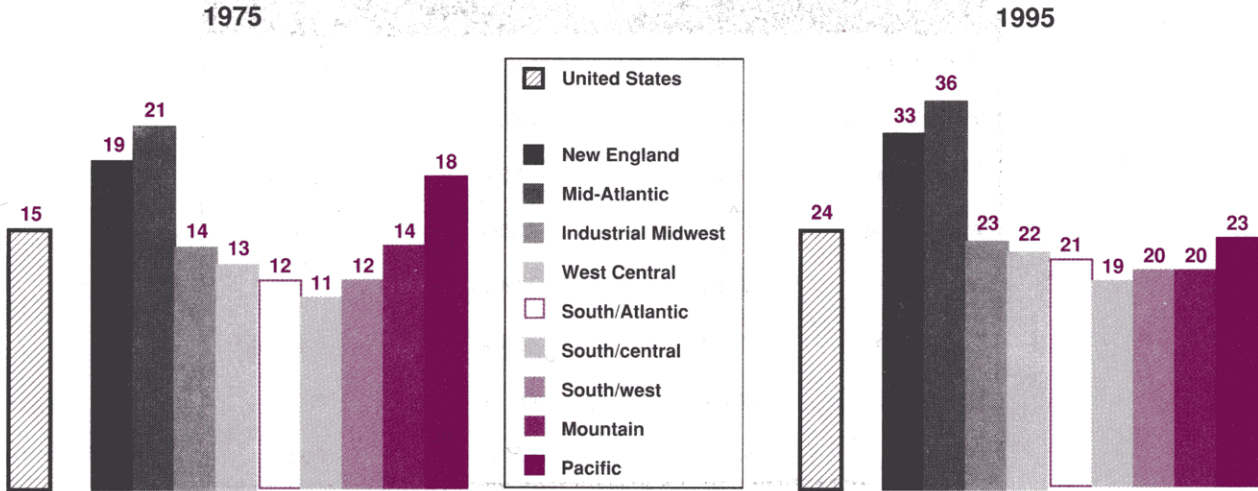
Consumer Confidence Lags in the Mid-Atlantic States, Well Behind That Elsewhere

	April	July	October	January	April
Consumer Confidence Index: National	118.5	126.3	123.4	128.3	136.7
New England	-30.5	-21.4	-1.3	-15.3	-0.6
Mid-Atlantic	-42.5	-43.2	-21.3	-26.2	-33.6
Industrial Midwest	5.2	10.6	3.5	8.0	7.8
West Central	7.8	6.1	12.1	11.4	8.1
South/Atlantic	7.8	3.3	10.9	1.4	4.5
South/central	2.7	5.0	10.5	1.3	10.5
South/west	13.5	0.8	5.4	7.0	-0.7
Mountain	19.8	15.9	16.9	10.6	7.8
Pacific	-1.1	-1.0	-1.5	4.4	4.1

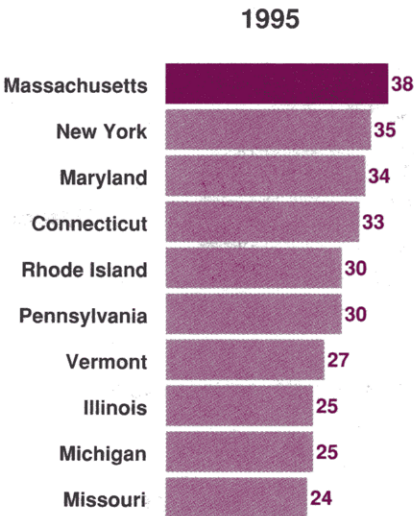
Note: The regional figures are the number of index points by which each region's index is higher or lower (-) than the national average.
Source: Surveys by the Conference Board.

Is There a Doctor in the State?

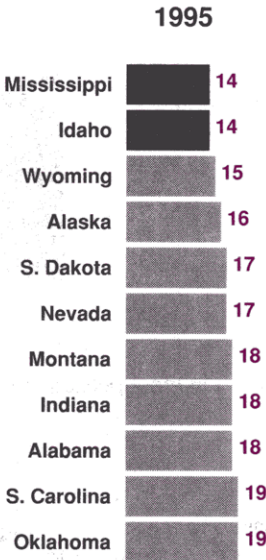
(Number of physicians per 10,000 population)



Physician-Rich States



Physician-Poor States



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, *Health, United States, 1996-97*, Table 100, pp. 230-231.

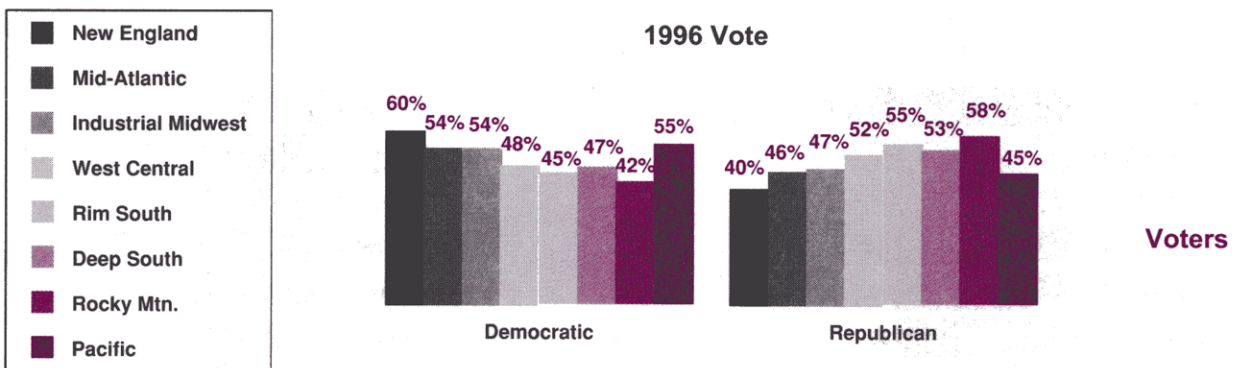
Dole Carried Only the Rim South and the Mountain States (And Them Narrowly) in 1996

	Democratic (Clinton)	Republican (Dole)	Reform Party (Perot)
New England	56.8%	31.0%	10.1%
Mid-Atlantic	56.0%	36.0%	8.5%
East Central	50.2%	40.3%	10.0%
West Central	47.3%	42.3%	10.4%
Rim South	45.7%	46.6%	7.7%
Deep South	47.5%	46.1%	6.5%
Mountain	42.6%	46.4%	8.7%
Pacific	50.4%	38.2%	7.5%

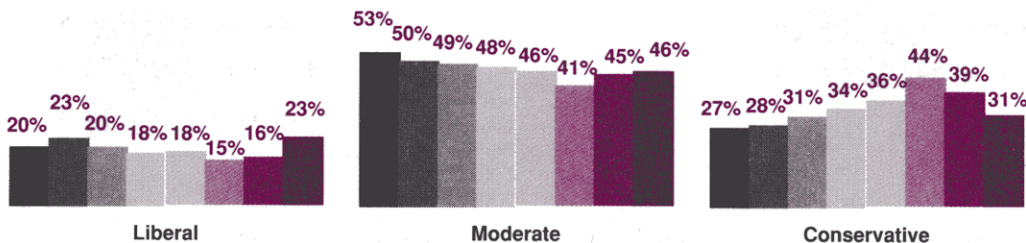
Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1997* (Washington, DC: US Bureau of the Census, 1997), p. 273.

Democrats Strongest in House Voting in the Northeast

Question: In today's election for US House of Representatives, did you just vote for the Democratic candidate, or the Republican candidate?



Question: On most political matters, do you consider yourself Liberal, Moderate, or Conservative?



Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November 1996.

Voter Turnout: As Goes Maine, So Goes Minnesota

Percent Casting Votes for House Candidates

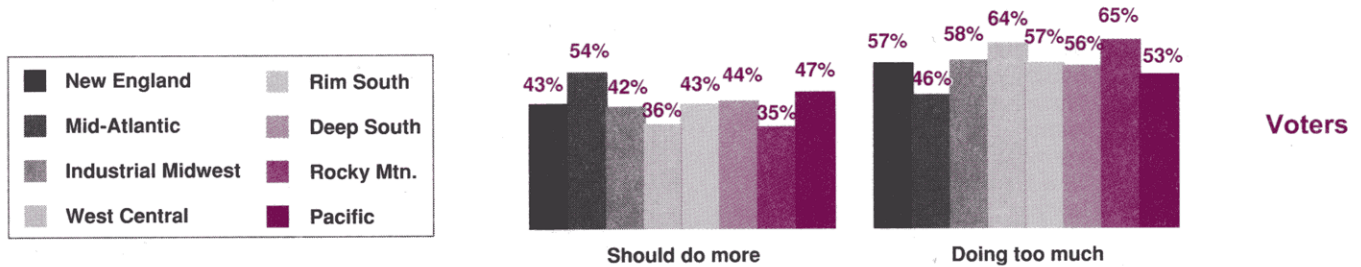
	1996	1994
Highest Turnout States		
Maine	64	54
Minnesota	63	52
Montana	62	56
South Dakota	61	59
Wyoming	60	57
Idaho	58	49
Vermont	58	49
New Hampshire	57	36
Iowa	56	46
Oregon	56	51
Wisconsin	56	39
Alaska	55	50
Hawaii	40	40
Kansas	55	44
Nebraska	55	48
North Dakota	55	50
Missouri	53	45
Ohio	53	40
Washington	53	42
Connecticut	52	43
Massachusetts	52	43
Michigan	52	43
Colorado	51	39
Delaware	49	37
Oklahoma	49	41
Utah	49	40
Indiana	48	36
Rhode Island	48	45
Arkansas	47	39
Illinois	47	35
New Jersey	47	34
Pennsylvania	47	37
Alabama	46	35
Mississippi	46	32
North Carolina	46	30
New Mexico	45	39
Tennessee	45	36
Virginia	44	38
Maryland	43	36
Florida	42	27
Kentucky	42	27
Lowest Turnout States		
Arizona	41	36
California	41	37
New York	41	34
Georgia	40	29
South Carolina	38	32
Texas	38	31
Nevada	37	34
West Virginia	37	29
Louisiana	21	NA

Source: US Bureau of the Census.

States and Regions

On Many “How Much Government?” Questions, Regional Differences Are Small

Question: Which comes closer to your view: government should do more to solve problems, or government is doing too many things better left to businesses and individuals?



Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November 1996.

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 opinion somewhere in between. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven’t you have up your mind on this? [Respondents were given a scale of 1-5, with 1 meaning “I strongly agree that the government should do more,” and 5 meaning “I strongly agree that the government is doing too much,” and 3 meaning “I agree with both answers.” In the chart below, responses of 1 and 2 have been combined, and 4 and 5 have been combined.]

All Adults	Region								
	New England	Mid-Atlantic	Industrial Midwest	West Central	South/Atlantic	South/central	South/west	Mountain	Pacific
1990-1996									
Gov’t should do more	28%	30%	29%	23%	28%	30%	23%	23%	30%
Agree with both	43%	43%	40%	42%	37%	42%	39%	40%	37%
Gov’t does too much	29%	27%	31%	35%	35%	28%	37%	37%	33%
1980-1986									
Gov’t should do more	29%	33%	26%	22%	28%	29%	32%	15%	21%
Agree with both	41%	38%	40%	43%	42%	45%	38%	39%	39%
Gov’t does too much	31%	29%	34%	35%	30%	26%	30%	47%	40%

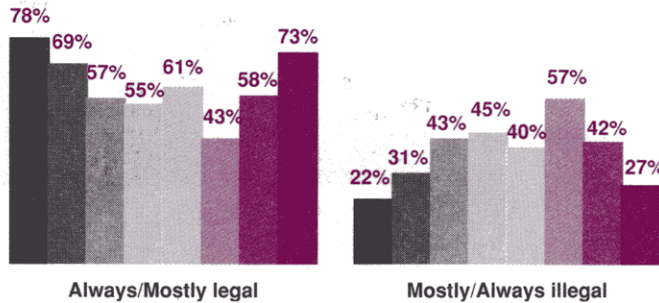
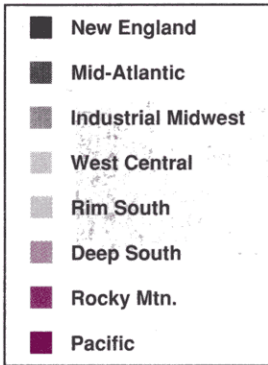
Question: We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on...

All Adults		Region								
		New England	Mid-Atlantic	Industrial Midwest	West Central	South/Atlantic	South/central	South/west	Mountain	Pacific
...improving the conditions of Blacks?	Too much (1990-1996)	15%	19%	17%	15%	23%	28%	29%	17%	13%
	Too much (1980-1986)	17%	18%	19%	15%	23%	25%	24%	19%	22%
...welfare?	Too much (1990-1996)	51%	52%	53%	51%	57%	56%	55%	54%	54%
	Too much (1980-1986)	49%	49%	48%	49%	50%	40%	49%	51%	48%
...military, armaments, and defense?	Too much (1990-1996)	36%	39%	37%	38%	34%	23%	28%	37%	42%
	Too much (1980-1986)	36%	37%	35%	39%	23%	26%	23%	32%	36%

Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

But On Social Issues, "Bi-Coastal Liberalism" Is Often Seen and Sometimes Pronounced

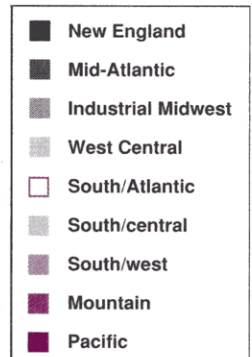
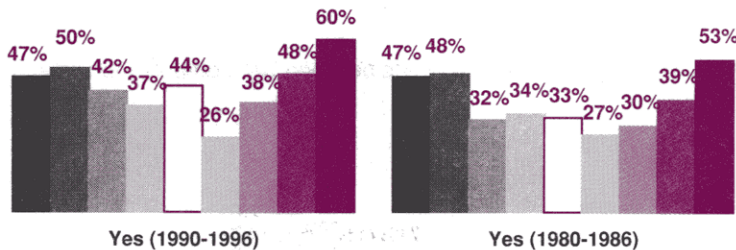
Question: Which comes closest to your position: abortions should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases?



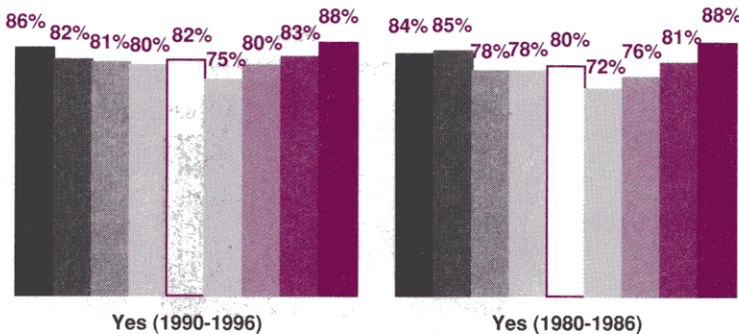
Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November, 1996.

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

...the woman wants it for any reason?



...there is a strong chance of serious defect in the baby?

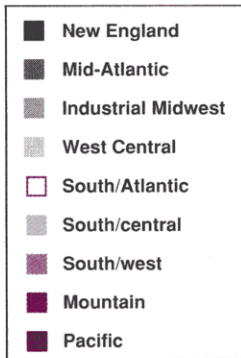
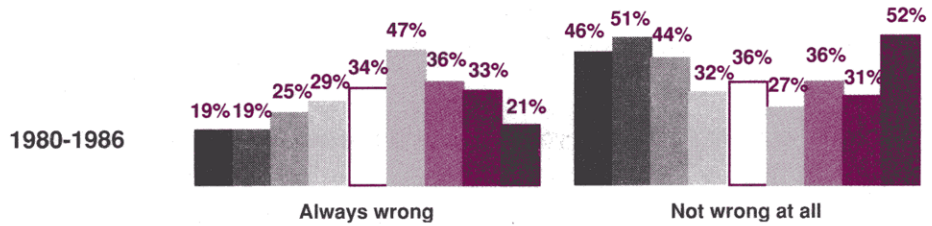
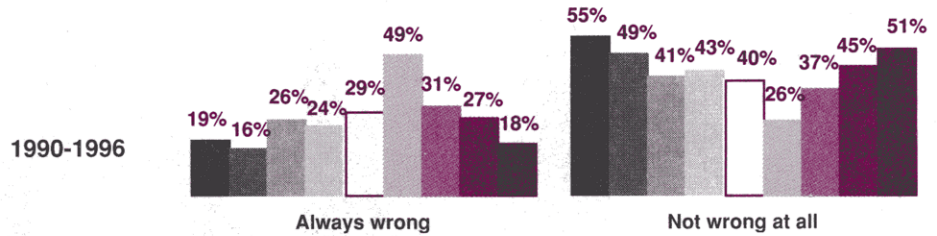


Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

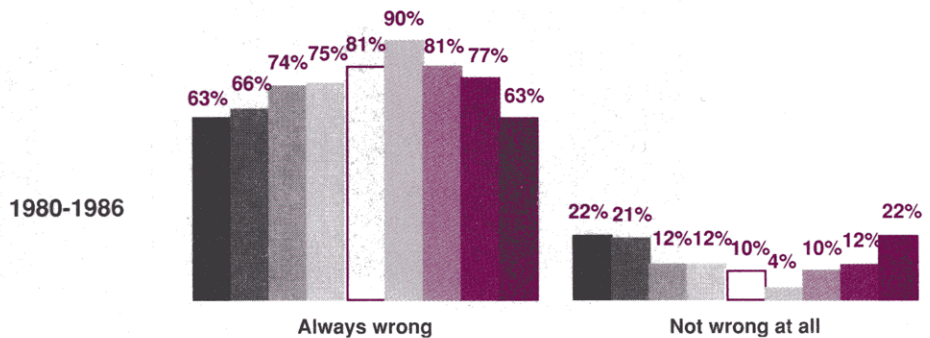
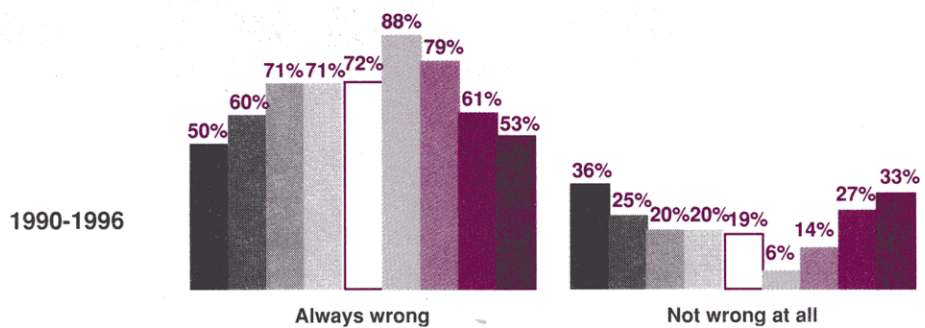
Homosexual Relations Find Much Less Support in the South and Heartland Than On the Coasts

Question: There's been a lot of discussion about the way morals and attitudes about sex are changing in this country....

...If a man and woman have sex relations before marriage, do you think it is always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?



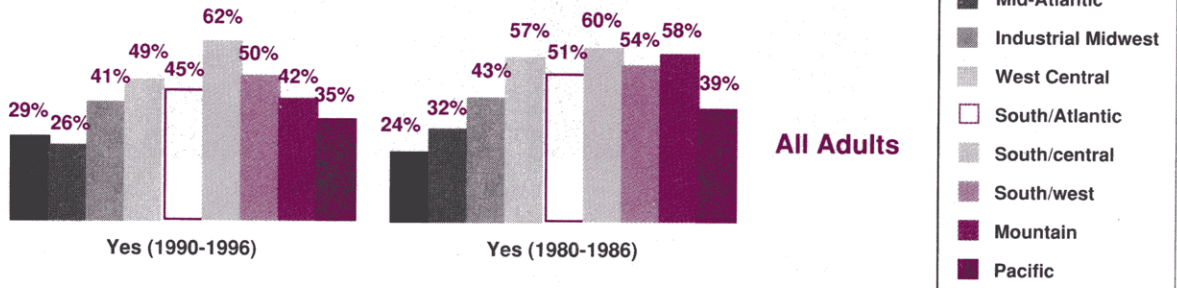
...What about sexual relations between two adults of the same sex...?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

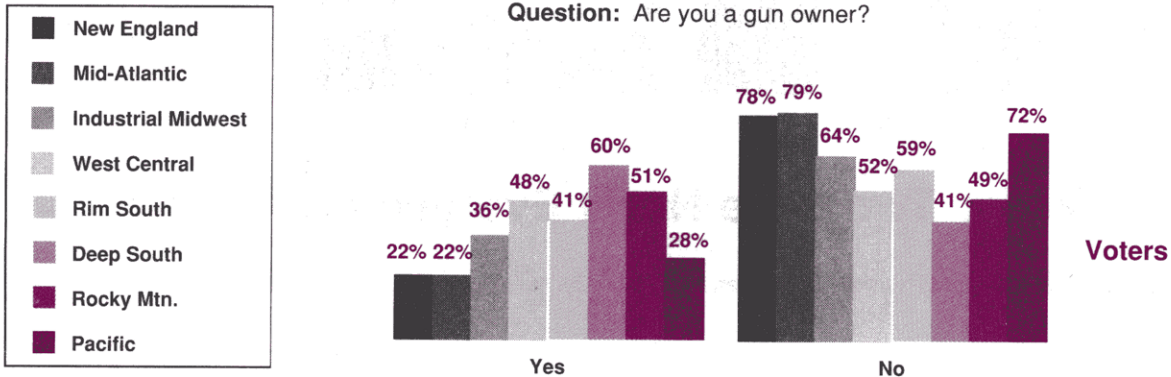
Gun Ownership Is Lowest in the Northeast and on Pacific Coast, Highest in Sections of the South and in West Central and Mountain States

Question: Do you happen to have in your home any guns or revolvers?



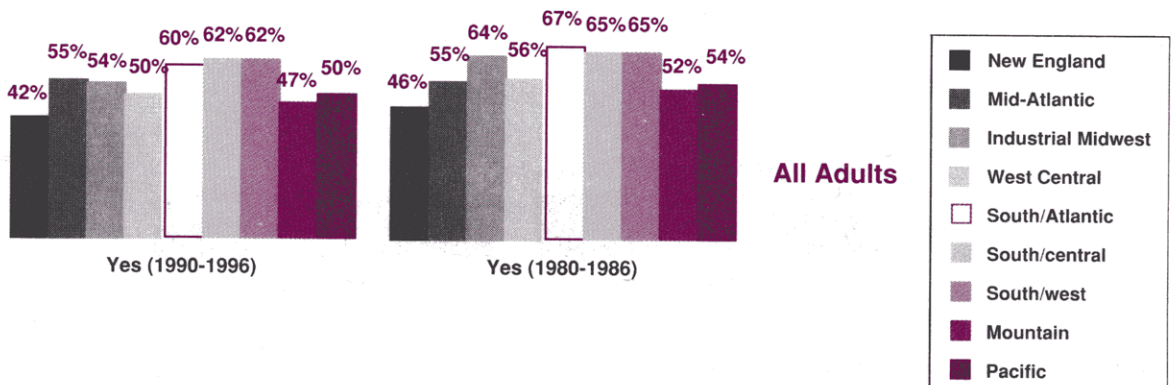
Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

Question: Are you a gun owner?



Source: Exit poll by Voter News Service (VNS), November 1996.

Question: On the average (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are...because most...just don't have the motivation or will power to pull themselves up out of poverty?

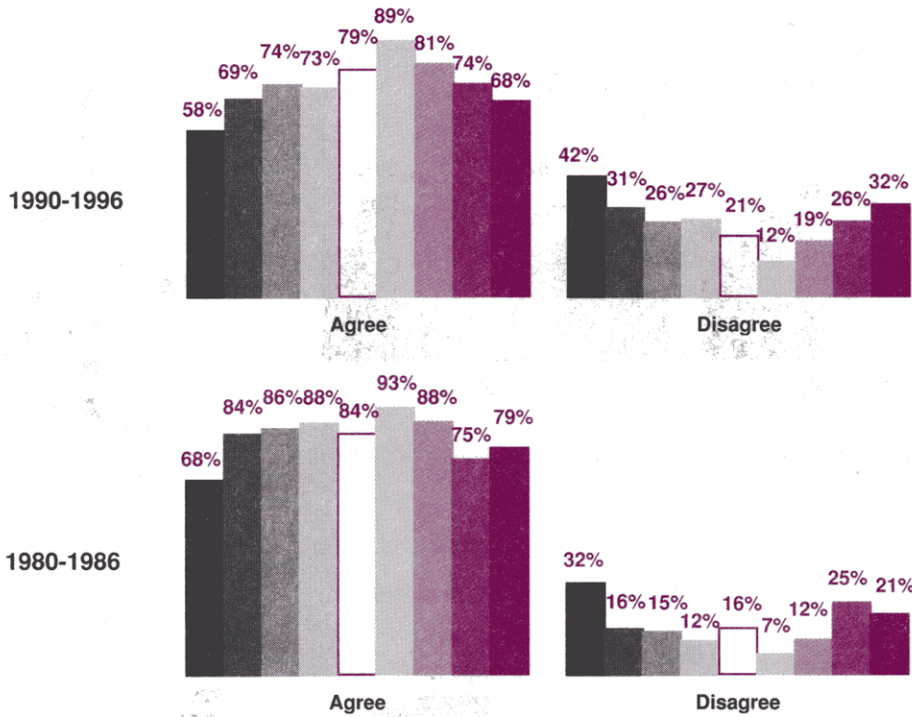


Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

States and Regions

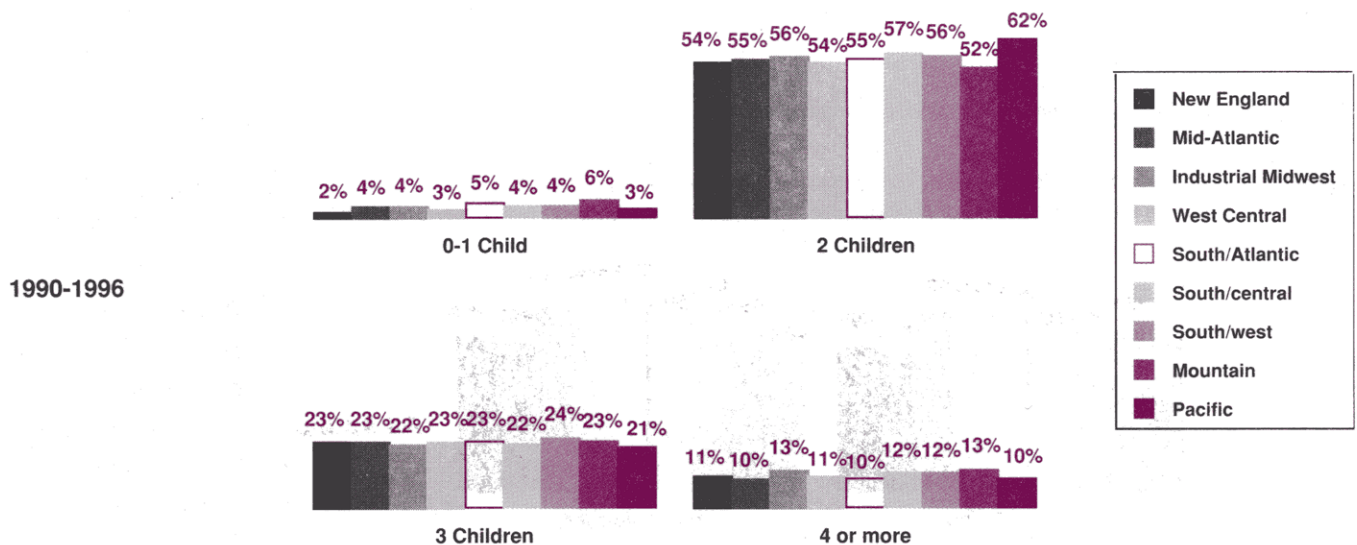
Support for Spanking Evinces Bi-Coastal Liberalism

Question: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that it is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good, hard spanking? [Responses of "strongly agree" and "agree" have been combined in the table below, as well as responses of "disagree" and "strongly disagree."]



Kids: Two's the Norm Everywhere

Question: What do you think is the ideal number of children for a family to have?

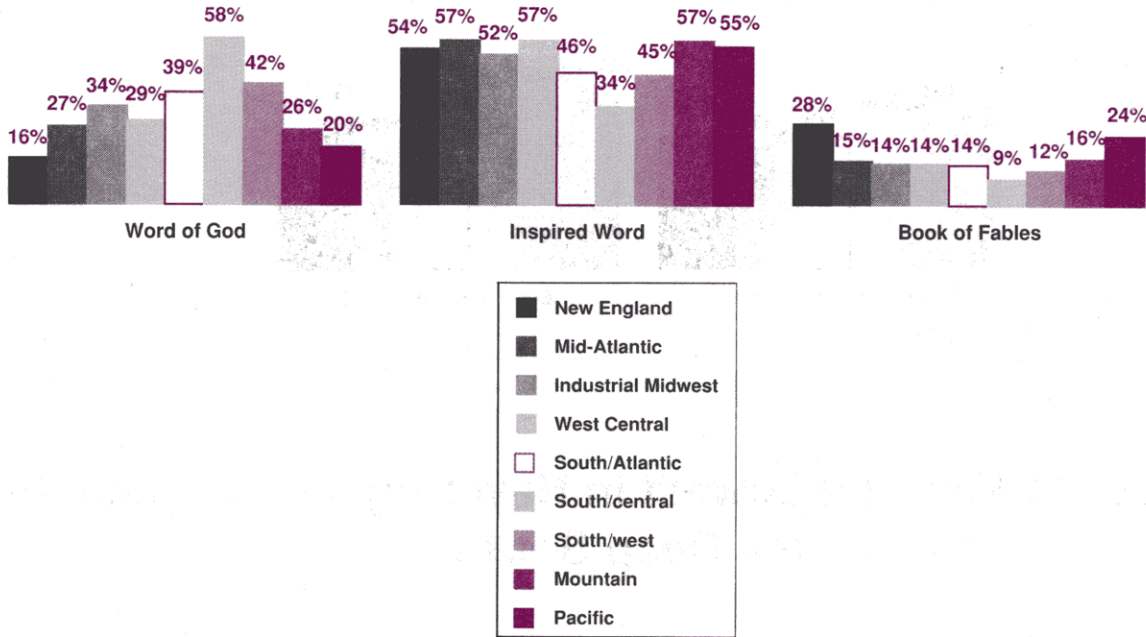


Note: Responses of "as many [children] as you want" not shown above.

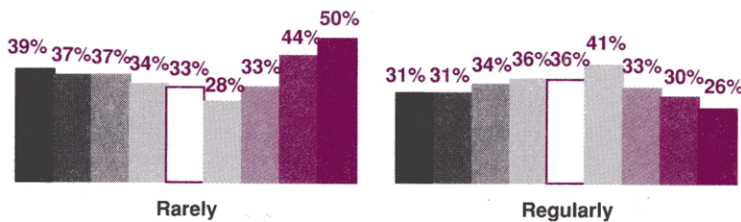
Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

Just 16 Percent in New England and 20 Percent on the Pacific Coast Call the Bible “the Actual World of God...To Be Taken Literally,” Compared to 58 Percent in the Deep South

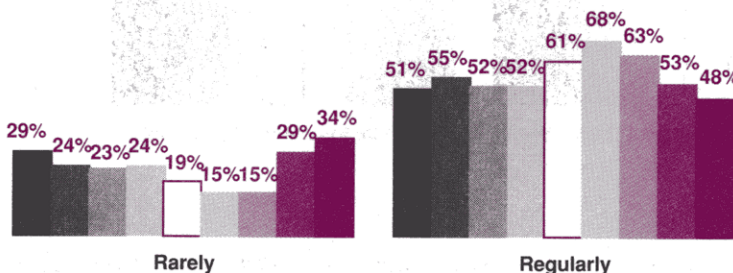
Question: Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible? ...The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word, ...The Bible is the inspired word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word, ...The Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral precepts recorded by men?



Question: How often do you attend religious services? Rarely = Less than once a year or never; Regularly = Nearly every week, every week, or several times a week.



Question: How often do you pray? Rarely = Less than once a week; Regularly = Once a day or more.

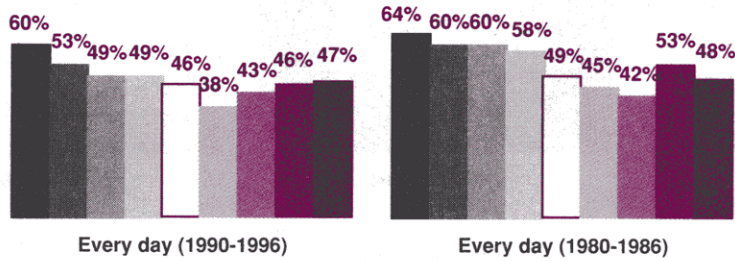


Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996.

States and Regions

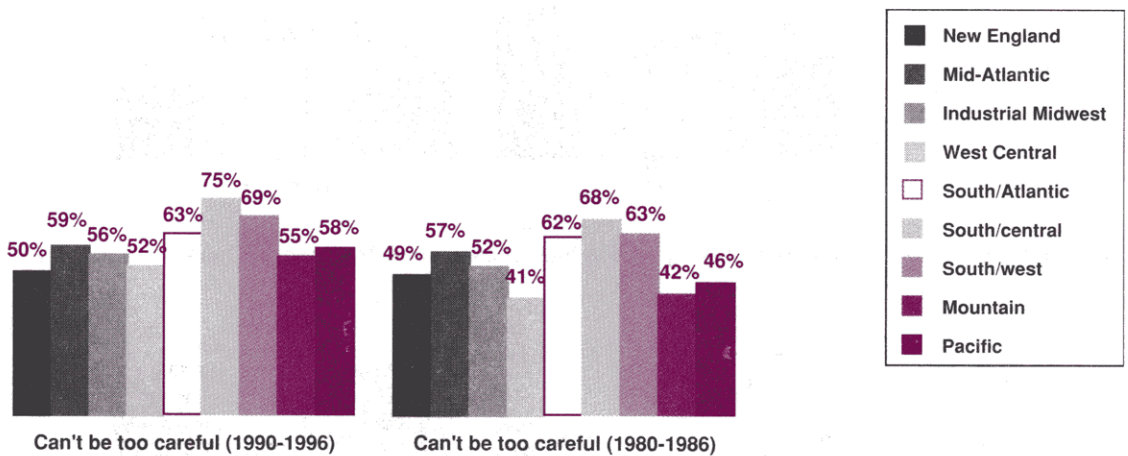
Newspaper Readership Highest in New England, Lowest in the Deep South

Question: How often do you read the newspaper—every day, a few times a week, once a week, less than once a week, or never?



Professed Mistrust Lowest in New England, Highest in the Deep South

Question: ...[W]ould you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center-General Social Survey (NORC-GSS), 1990-1996 combined and 1980-1986 combined.

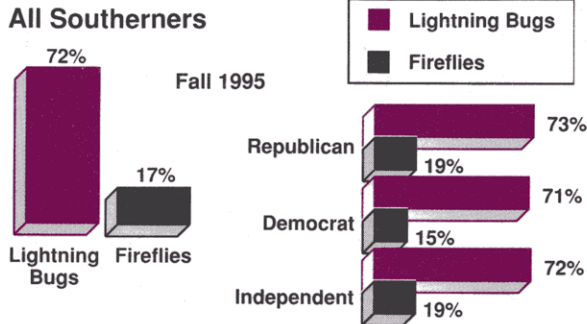
More Teenagers Have Access to Guns at Home in the Heartland and the South than Elsewhere

		Northeast	Industrial Midwest	West Central	Rim South	Deep South	West
Question: Have you ever smoked cigarettes? [If yes] Are you a regular smoker, or have you smoked just a few times?	No, never	59%	62%	62%	60%	70%	71%
	Yes, regular smoker	14%	8%	9%	10%	11%	2%
	Yes, a few times	26%	25%	29%	27%	19%	24%
Question: On average, how often do you drink alcohol, wine, or beer...?	At least once a week	1%	4%	12%	4%	6%	2%
	Few times/Once a month	10%	10%	9%	7%	11%	10%
	Hardly ever	31%	23%	29%	29%	33%	27%
	Never	58%	63%	49%	60%	50%	60%
Question: Do you have your own car?	Yes	40%	57%	72%	69%	68%	52%
	No	60%	43%	29%	31%	32%	48%
Question: Do you have your own television set in your room?	Yes	68%	65%	51%	78%	77%	54%
	No	32%	35%	49%	22%	23%	46%
Question: Do you think...premarital sex is always okay...or it is always wrong to have sex before marriage?	Always okay	10%	4%	8%	8%	2%	8%
	Okay some of the time	49%	45%	49%	36%	56%	43%
	Always wrong	40%	50%	42%	54%	41%	47%
Question: Do you think sexual relations between people of the same sex are always okay...or...always wrong?	Always okay	19%	12%	15%	15%	8%	24%
	Okay some of the time	36%	25%	37%	21%	24%	24%
	Always wrong	44%	59%	46%	62%	62%	47%
Question: Do you or does any other member of your household own a handgun, rifle, shotgun or any other kind of firearm?	Yes, self	10%	18%	13%	18%	20%	12%
	Yes, other member	28%	36%	48%	42%	45%	35%
	No	61%	45%	39%	39%	35%	52%
Question: Generally speaking, do you usually consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?	Republican	23%	30%	30%	29%	26%	25%
	Democrat	23%	12%	23%	21%	24%	22%
	Independent	29%	32%	24%	30%	32%	22%
	Uncertain	25%	25%	24%	21%	19%	32%

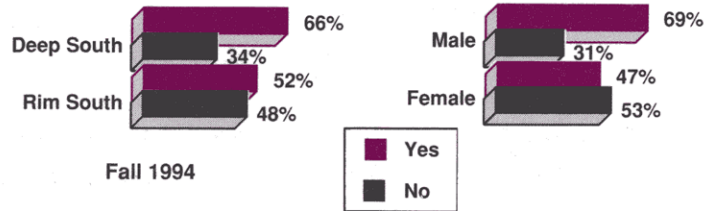
The Southern Focus Poll on the Light Side of Regional Culture

“Lightnin’ Bugs” and Fireworks

Question: ...What do you call those bugs that light up at night?



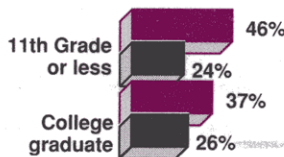
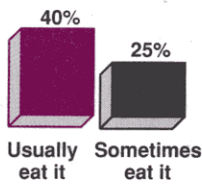
Question: Have you ever set off fireworks or fired a gun to celebrate New Year's Eve?



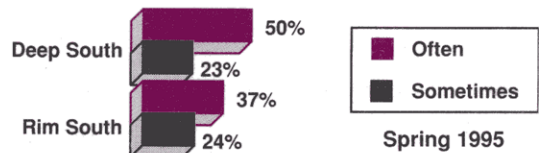
Sweet Potato Casserole and Okra

Question: For each...[food], would you tell me whether you usually eat it at the holidays, sometimes eat it, seldom eat it, or have never eaten it?...Sweet Potato Casserole

All Southerners



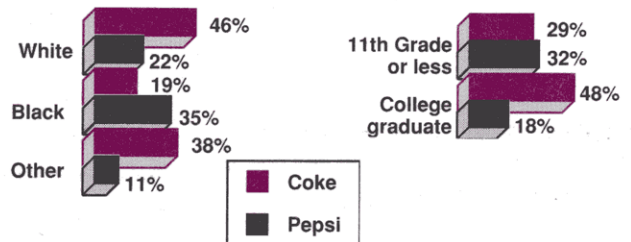
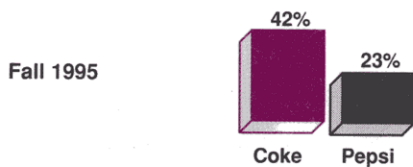
Question: For each...[unusual food]...tell me whether you eat it often, sometimes, seldom, or never...Okra?



Coke Over Pepsi

Question: What kind of cola drink is your favorite: Coke, Diet Coke, Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, or something else?

All Southerners

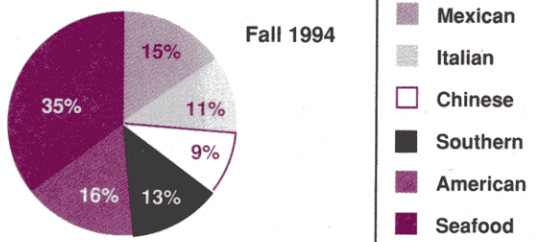


Note: Responses of “Coke and Diet Coke” and “Pepsi and Diet Pepsi” have been combined.

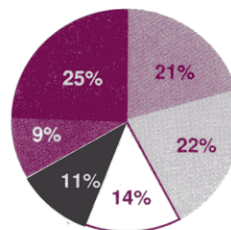
Yet...Culinary Integration

Question: ...If you were going out to eat, which of the following foods would you most prefer...?

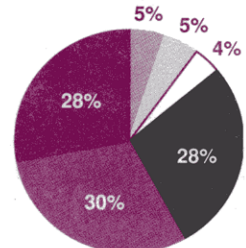
All Southerners



18-24 Year Olds



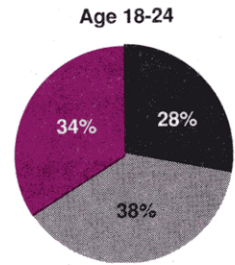
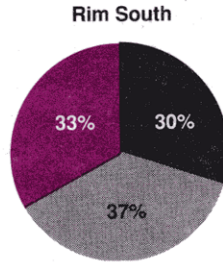
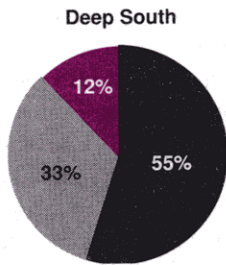
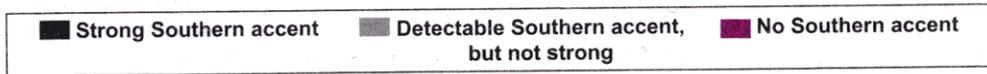
65 Years of Age and Older



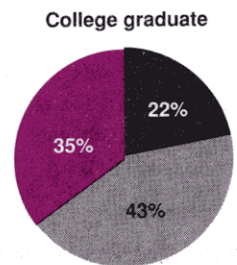
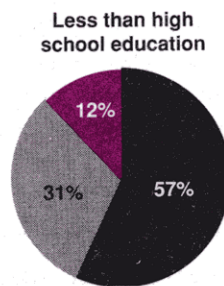
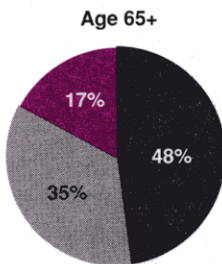
Source: Surveys by the Southern Focus Poll, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Y'all Hurry Back

[Interviewers were instructed to rank respondents' accents]



Fall 1996



The Civil War is Over

Question: What means more to you: being a Southerner, or being an American?

Respondents saying "Being an American means more"



Spring 1994



Question: Do you agree that the South is better off as part of the United States than it would be as a separate country?

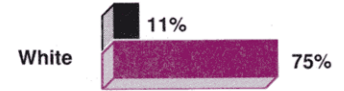
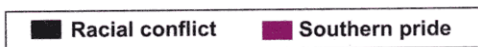
Respondents saying "Agree"



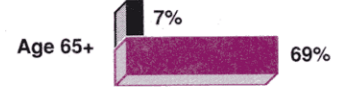
Spring 1997



Question: Do you think the...Confederate flag is more a symbol of racial conflict or of Southern pride?



Fall 1994



Source: Surveys by the Southern Focus Poll, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.