

Changes in Families and Family Values

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Introduction

Over the last generation the American family has been undergoing a transformation. Both the structure of the family and family values have been changing. Moreover, these two changes have played off of each other. The structural changes in marriage, household composition, and childbearing have encouraged a rethinking of traditional values and perspectives. In turn, a shift from a traditional to a modern view of the family and its role has encouraged demographic re-structuring. The resonating interaction of structural and value change makes the family of the 1990s fundamentally different from the family of the preceding generation.

This report examines the changes that the American family has undergone in recent decades. First, it describes structural changes in 1) marriage and household structure, 2) childbearing, and 3) gender roles within families. Second, it traces how values have changed regarding the family and key aspects of society related to the family. These include the examination of trends regarding 1) marriage and divorce, 2) children and parents, 3) gender roles, 4) religion, 5) sexual morality, and 6) social capital (socializing and community involvement). Third, differences in the organization of families and of family values are examined across major social groups: 1) race and ethnicity, 2) age, 3) gender, 4) education, 5) marital status, and 6) community type.

Except as noted, data in this report come from the 1972-1996 General Social Surveys (GSSs) of the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago. Details about the GSS are provided in Appendix 1.

Structural Changes

While still a vital and important institution in society, marriage has a less central role than previously. As Table 1 shows, the proportion of adults who have never been married rose from 15% to 22% between 1972 and 1996. When the divorced, separated, and widowed are added in, this means that while three quarters of adults were married in the early 1970s, only 57% were in the mid-1990s. The decline in marriage comes from three main sources. First, people are delaying marriage. Between 1960 and now the median age at first marriage rose from 22.8 to 26.7 years for men and from 20.3 to 24.5 years for women (Smith, 1996). Second, divorces have increased. The divorce rate more than doubled from 9.2 divorces per year per 1,000 married women in 1960 to a divorce rate of 22.6 in 1980. The divorce rate remained near this peak throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s (Table 1). This rise was at least in part caused by the increases in female labor force participation and decreases in fertility mentioned below (Michael,

1988).

As a result of the surge in the divorce rate, the proportion of ever married adults who have been divorced doubled from 17% in 1972 to 34% in 1996.¹ Third, people are slower to remarry than previously. While most people divorced or widowed before the age of 50 remarry, the length of time between marriages has grown (Cherlin, 1996). Fourth, both the delay in age at first marriage and in remarriage is facilitated by an increase in cohabitation. As Table 2A shows, cohabitators represented only 1.1% of couples in 1960 and over 6% in the mid-1990s. The cohabitation rate is still fairly low overall because most cohabitations are short term, typically leading to either a marriage or a break-up within a year (Goldscheider and Waite, 1991). But cohabitation has become the norm for both men and women both as their first form of union and after divorces. Table 2B indicates that for women born in 1933-1942 only 7% first lived with someone in a cohabitation rather than in a marriage, but for women born in 1963-1974, 64% starting off cohabiting rather than marrying. The trend for men is similar.

Along with the decline of marriage has come a decline in childbearing. The fertility rate peaked at 3.65 children per woman at the height of the Baby Boom in 1957 and then declined rapidly to a rate of 1.75 children in 1975. This is below the "replacement level" of about 2.11 children that is needed for a population to hold its own through natural increase. The rate then slowly gained ground to 2.0-2.1 children in the early 1990s. The results of the changes in the fertility rate are shown in Table 3. In 1972 the average adult had had 2.4 children and this number steadily slipped to 1.8 children in the mid-1990s. Likewise, while only 45% of households had no children under 18 living at home in 1972, this climbed to over 60% in the 1990s. Accompanying this decline in childbearing and childrearing, was a drop in preferences for larger families. In 1972 56% thought that the ideal number of children was 3 or more. By 1996 only 39% thought that 3 or more represented the ideal number of children.

Moreover, during the last generation, childbearing increasingly became disconnected from marriage. In 1960 only 5.3% of births were to unmarried mothers while by 1993 31% of all births were outside of marriage (Table 4). Dramatic as this trend is, it

¹The 34% level is lower than commonly cited figure that "half of all marriages end in divorce." This is because the later is a projection of how many married people will eventually divorce. In effect, these projections indicate that of the 66% of ever married people who haven't yet been divorced at least a quarter of them will end their marriages with a divorce (i.e. $34\% + (66\% * .25) = 50.5\%$). In a 1991 survey 39% said that "my spouse divorcing me" was a very important concern about the future (American Board of Family Practice, 1992).

is similar to that experienced by other advanced, industrial nations. While the percent of births to unmarried women climbed from 5% in 1960 to 27% in 1989 in the US, it rose from 5% to 27% in Britain, from 4% to 23% in Canada, and from 6% to 28% in France (Smith, 1996).

The rate of increase has been much greater for Whites than for Blacks. For Whites the percentage of unmarried births has expanded ten-fold from 2.3% of all births in 1960 to 23.6% in 1993, while the Black level grew by just over three-fold from 21.6% in 1960 to 68.7% in 1993. While the Black to White ratio has fallen from a little over 9:1 in 1960 to under 3:1 in 1992, the gap between Blacks and Whites has risen from 19 percentage points in 1960 to 45 percentage points in 1993. The cumulative difference between Whites and Blacks is further shown by the fact that by ages 30-34 only 17% of never married White women have given birth, while 71% of never married Black women have had a child (Bachu, 1991 and Loomis and Landale, 1994).

The rise in divorce and the decline in fertility and marital births have in turn had a major impact on the type of household in which children are raised. As Table 5 indicates, there has been a decline in the proportion of adults being married and having children living at home (from 45% in 1972 to 26% in 1996) and a rise in the percent of adults not married and with no children (from 16% in 1972 to 30% in 1996).

Changes are even more striking if they are looked at from the perspective of the children and who heads the households. As Table 6 shows, in 1972 less than 5% of children under age 18 were living in a household with only one adult present. By 1996 this had increased to almost 20%. Similarly, the % of children being raised by two parents with at least one having been divorced grew from 10% to 14% and those in the care of two adults who were not currently married, but had been, rose from less than 4% in 1972 to 8.5% in 1996. Conversely, while in 1972 73% of children were being reared by two parents in an uninterrupted marriage, this fell to 49% in 1996. Thus, a majority of children no longer live in a traditional household headed by their two married parents who had not been previously divorced.

Equally important to the disruptions in marriage and their impact on childbearing and childrearing are the developments that have occurred even within intact marriages. The biggest of these are the alterations in traditional gender roles in general and in the division of responsibility between husbands and wives in particular. Women have greatly increased their participation in the paid labor force outside of the home. In 1960 42% of women in the prime working ages (25-64) were employed. This grew to 49% in 1970, 59.5% in 1980, and 69% in 1990. Most of this growth came from mothers of children under 18 entering the labor force (Goldscheider and Waite, 1991). Table 7 shows that among all married couples, the traditional home with an employed husband and a wife keeping house

declined from 53% in 1972 to 22-24% in the 1990s. Conversely, the modern pattern of both spouses being employed grew from 32% to 59%. Showing little change were households in which only the wife was employed and in which neither spouse worked.

Table 8 indicates that this shift was even slightly greater among married couples with children under 18. The traditional arrangement dropped from 60% to 29% and the modern arrangement doubled from 33% to 66%. "Mr. Mom" households remained a rarity and showed no clear increase and the equally rare households with no employed spouse slightly decreased. Thus, over the last two decades America has shifted from a society in which having a full-time homemaker was the norm to one in which the both spouse (and both parents for those with children at home) worked outside the home.

In brief, the American family has undergone a series of fundamental changes over the last generation. Many of the changes have negative, as Sociologist Norval Glenn (1992) notes, "if you watch what Americans do, traditional family relationships are in trouble." Marriage has declined as the central institution under which households are organized and children are raised. People marry later and divorce and cohabit more. In terms of childbearing, American has shifted from the Baby Boom of the 1950s and early 1960s to the Birth Dearth of the 1970s and a growing proportion of the shrinking number of children has been born outside of marriage. Even within marriage the changes have been profound as more and more women have entered the labor force and gender roles have become more homogeneous between husbands and wives.

Changes in Attitudes and Values

Partly in response to and partly as a cause of these structural changes, attitudes towards the family have also shifted. Many important family values regarding marriage and divorce, childbearing and childrearing, and the duties and responsibilities of husbands and wives have changed. In addition, values closely related to the family have also been transformed. Views on and practices relating to sexual behavior and religion are different now than during the last generation.

Marriage and Divorce

Marriage is the core institution of the American family, but because of the structural changes described above it no longer occupies as prominent a role in people's adult lives or in childbearing and childrearing. Moreover, its impact on the quality of people's lives is changing. On the one hand, married people are much happier with life in general than the unmarried are. While 40% of the currently married rate their lives as very happy, the

unmarried are much less happy (% very happy: widowed - 23%, divorced - 19%, separated - 16%, never married 23%). In addition, married people are happier in their marriages (62% very happy) than they are about life as a whole (40% very happy). On the other hand, there has been a small, but real, decline in how happy people are with their marriages, from about 68% very happy in the early 1970s to about 61% very happy in the mid-1990s (Table 9). People are less likely to rate marriages in general as happy and more likely to say there are few good marriages (Thornton, 1989).

The importance that people accord marriage is also shown by a reluctance to make divorce easier. Only a quarter to a third have favored liberalizing divorce laws over the last three decades, while on average 52% have advocated tougher laws and 21% keeping laws unchanged (Table 9). This opposition to easier divorce probably contributed to the levelling-off of the divorce rate in the early 1980s noted above, but has not led to a general tightening of divorce laws or a notable drop in the divorce rate.

Children and Parents

While most people want to and eventually do have children, the desire for larger families has declined both in terms of the actual level of childbearing and preferences towards family size (Table 5). The ambivalence towards children is also shown by a question in 1993 on the things that people value and that are important to them. 24% said that having children was one of the most important things in life, 38% that it was very important, 19% somewhat important, 11% not too important, and 8% not at all important. While clearly most people saw having children as personally important, overall it was fourth on the list behind having faith in God (46% one of the most important), being self-sufficient and not having to depend on others (44%), and being financially secure (27%). Similarly, surveys in 1988 and 1994 generally showed that people were pro-children, but that traditional attitudes towards children were somewhat declining (Table 10).

In terms, of what children should be taught and how they should be raised, people have become less traditional over time with a shift from emphasizing obedience and parent-center families to valuing autonomy for children (Alwin, 1990 and Ellison and Sherkat, 1993b). From 1986 to 1996 a majority of Americans selected thinking for oneself as the most important trait for a child to learn and the proportion mentioning obedience declined from about 23% in 1986 to about 18% in the mid-1990s (Table 11). Likewise, support for the corporal punishment of children has declined during the last decade (Table 12; see also Ellison and Sherkat, 1993a). In general, strictness and discipline have given ground to a more liberal approach to raising and guiding children.

In contrast to the liberalizing trends regarding children, there has been a traditional shift in attitudes about care of

elderly parents. In 1973 only 33% thought it was a good idea for aged parents to live with their children (Table 13; see also Alwin, 1994). This grew to 53% in 1987 and remains at 48-49% in the mid-1990s.

Gender Roles

Among the most fundamental changes affecting American society over the last generation has been the redefinition the role of men and women and husbands and wives (Firebaugh, 1993; Thornton, 1989). A traditional perspective in which women were occupied in the private sphere of life centering around running a home and raising a family while men engaged in the public sphere of earning a living and participating in civic and political events has rapidly been replaced by a modern perspective in which there is much less gender segregation and women have increasingly been entering the labor force and other areas of public life.

Table 14 shows that the acceptance of women in politics has grown substantially over the last quarter century. In 1972 74% said they would be willing to vote for a woman for president and in 1996 93% accepted female candidates. Similarly, disagreement with the statement that "most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women" climbed from about 50% in the early 1970s to 79% in the mid-1990s and while in the early 1970s 64% opposed the idea that "women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country up to men," about 85% now disagree with this sentiment.

Likewise, people have re-evaluated the participation of women in the labor force. In 1972 67% approved of a wife working even if her husband could support her and in 1996 83.5% agreed (Table 15). Similarly, while 43% in 1977 disagreed that a wife should help her husband's career rather than have one of her own, 80% disagreed by 1996 and while only 34% in 1977 opposed the idea that "it is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family" 62-66% disagreed in the mid-1990s. In fact, people increasingly think that both the husband and wife should earn money (67% in 1996 - Table 16).

Moreover, people have become more convinced that having a working mother doesn't negatively affect her children. In 1977 49% felt that a working mother can have just as "warm and secure a relationship with her children" as a mother who does not work and in 1996 66% agreed (Table 15). But at the same time most people are still not convinced that mothers of young children should have full-time jobs. In 1994 85% felt that a wife should work before having children and 80% favored her being employed after her youngest child left home (Table 17). But only 38% endorsed a full-time job after the youngest had started school and just 12% were for such employment when there was a child under school age.

However, under each condition, approval of a mother working was increasing.

Religion

Religions and families are closely tied to each other. Religions are organized around families and most people are introduced to religions as part of being raised by their parents. Religions encourage and sanction marriage and childbearing within the confines of marriage and are concerned about and in some cases opposed to divorces. Moreover, religions teach family values (e.g. "honour thy father and thy mother") and are seen as playing an important role in preserving families (e.g. "the family that prays together stays together").

Religions have also been undergoing some important changes over the last quarter century (Firebaugh and Harley, 1991; Glenn, 1987; Greeley, 1997; Smith, 1992). While the vast majority of Americans still have a religious preference, the proportion without any affiliation grew from 5% in 1972 to 12% in 1996 (Table 18). Correspondingly, infrequent church attendance increased. In 1972 28% attended church just once a year or less and in 1996 39% were infrequent attenders. In addition, some religious beliefs became less rigid and conservative. Between 1984 and 1996 those believing that the Bible was not the literal word of God rose from 62% to 69%.

But the shift was not uniformly in the secular direction. Disbelief in an afterlife declined from 21.5% in 1973 to 16% in 1996. In addition, between 1983 and 1996 frequency of praying changed little.

Thus, while there has not been an uniform decline in religion, there is less "church" in American religious life than before. That is, while some spiritual beliefs (e.g. in an afterlife) have grown and certain personal religious practices (e.g. praying) have been stable, participation in a church and attendance of its services have slipped.

Sexual Morality

America is commonly seen as having undergone a sexual revolution over the last generation in which attitudes and behavior became more permissive. But in fact trends in sexual morality are more complex (Smith, 1990; Smith, 1994; Thornton, 1989). First, there was a notable growth in permissiveness towards premarital sex. The % saying sex between an unmarried man and woman is always wrong dropped from 36% in 1972 to 24% in 1996 (Table 19) and the rate of cohabitation (Table 2) and non-marital births (Table 3) both climbed appreciably. But over two-thirds say that pre-marital sex between teenagers 14-16 years old is always wrong and since 1986 there has been no lowering of disapproval. When it comes to

teenagers, people prefer that they postpone the initiation of sexual intercourse, but first and foremost they want the young to be well-informed about sex in general and safe sex in particular. Support for sex education in the schools is high (87% in favor of it in 1996) and it has grown over the years (Table 20). Birth control is also strongly supported. Since the mid-1980s about three-fifths have favored making contraception available to sexually active teens even without their parents' approval (Table 20).

Second, attitudes toward homosexuality first became less tolerant and then reversed to becoming more accepting. Approval of homosexual activity has never been high. In the mid-1970s 69-70% said it was always wrong and this moved upwards to 76-77% during the mid-1980s to early 1990s (Table 19). Then after 1991 disapproval fell to only 61% considering homosexuality always wrong in 1996.

Third, disapproval of extra-marital sex has always been high and has increased over the last generation. In the early 1970s about 70-71% thought infidelity was always wrong. This increased to about 79-80% considering it always wrong from the late 1980s to the present.

Social Capital

As Robert Putnam (1995) has noted, societies function more smoothly when people have a lot of social capital. Social capital consists of ties to others in the community. These may be friendships and other informal contacts, memberships in voluntary associations, or participation in civic events and politics. If people have these ties, they are both integrated into the larger community and have the means by which to seek assistance when either they need help or they want to enlist others to deal with a community problem. Without such social capital, people are isolated or stranded and tend to become anomic and cynical.

The data on inter-personal socialization show some minor decline in social capital (Table 21). First, people are slightly less likely to visit with relatives than in the past. In the mid-1970s about 38% spent a social evening with relatives at least several times a week and in the mid-1990s the figure was down to about 35%. Second, there was a more substantial drop in visiting with neighbors; from 30% in 1974 to 20% in 1996. Third, visits to bars/taverns also fell slightly from about 11% in the 1970s with multiple visits per week to 8% at present.² Fourth, these slight to moderate declines are partly off-set by a slight increase in visits with friends outside the neighborhood. While the small fall in

²Obviously visits to bars are not as likely to be as civically important or productive as the other forms of social interaction.

family interactions is not large enough to be of major concern, the drop in neighborhood ties is both notable in size and likely to hinder the type of community action that social capital facilitates.

Fortunately, there's no sign of a decline in group memberships. As de Tocqueville noted, America is a nation of joiners and volunteers. Less than a third belong to no voluntary groups and about half belong to two or more groups (Table 22). These levels have remained stable over time. In 1996 59% engaged in voluntary work beyond just being a member for a group and 72% donated money. Volunteering averaged 6 hours per month and contributions during the last year covered such assistance as 26% giving money to relatives in need, 32% to needy friends, 38% to the homeless, 46% to needy neighbors, and 48% to other needy people. Considering these two activities together shows that 19% neither volunteered nor gave money to a group, 31% volunteered or gave money, and 50% both volunteered and gave money during the last year.

Demographics of the Family and Family Values

Family structure and family values are not uniform across American society. Some social groups have predominantly traditional families holding traditional values, others have more modern families with modern values, and most have a complex blend of both. This section examines how structures and values vary across racial and ethnic groups, the young and old, men and women, the better and less educated, the married and unmarried, and residents of cities, suburbs, towns, and the countryside. Except as noted, the results below are based on the combined 1990-1996 GSSs.

Marriage

Most White ethnic groups differ little in marital status (Table 23). Italians and Jews are a little less likely to have been previously married.³ Scandinavians are a little more likely never to have married and Eastern Europeans (besides Poles) somewhat less so. But non-European groups have some very different patterns. While nearly 60% of Americans are currently married, only 41% of Blacks are. Blacks have the highest level of people both previously married and never married. Asians are distinctive in having the lowest level previously married. Hispanics and Others stand out as

³Here and elsewhere references are to Italians, Jewish, etc. Americans. "Americans" has been omitted to avoid needless repetition. For details on the racial and ethnic groups see Appendix 2.

being lower than average in the post-married category and higher than average in being never married.

Marital status of course varies considerably by age. The percent never married falls dramatically between the twentysomes and those in their 30s and then continues to slowly decline. The previously married proportion increases with age, among the younger ages due to divorce and then later on more due to death. The proportion married climbs sharply from the 20s to the 30s, continues to slowly rise until a drop after age 65 due to deaths.

Women are more likely to be previously married than men because of being widowed and because they are slower to remarry after divorces and men are more likely not to have married primarily because their age at first marriage is two years greater.

Being married increases with education. This is primarily because those with more education (and better jobs and higher incomes) are less likely to divorce than the less well-off.

Marriage is also greater in suburbs and outside of metropolitan areas than in large central cities. This difference is due to the large number of never-married people in big cities. Overall, the married outnumber the never married 3:1, but in the largest central cities it is only 4:3. Moreover, when the never married are joined with the post-married, this means that a majority of adults in urban centers are not currently married.

Cohabitation

Cohabitation is highest among Jews, American Indians, and Blacks and lowest among the British, French, and Asians (Table 24).

As indicated above, cohabitation has increased notably in recent decades and, as a result, is more established among younger cohorts than older cohorts. Close to a third of the Baby Boomers cohabitated before marriage, while fewer than 5% of their parental generation (i.e. those 65+) lived with someone before marrying.

As one would expect, women and men report similar levels of cohabiting.

The proportion currently cohabitating decreases with more education, but the level of cohabitation before marriage does not vary by amount of education.

Both current and previous cohabitation is greater among those divorced, separated, and never married. In line with other research (Smith, 1996), those who cohabit before marriage and then wed are more likely to eventually divorce than those who do not cohabit before marrying.

Cohabitation is greatest in metropolitan areas and the least in rural areas.

Marital Happiness

Marital happiness is highest among Asians and Jews (over 70%

very happy), about the same for most other ethno-racial groups (59-67%), and much lower for Blacks (45% very happy)(Table 25).

Happiness is highest among the young (and mostly recently married), drops to a low point among those in their 40s and then rises among older adults in surviving marriages.

Men report slightly greater happiness in their marriages than women do (64% very happy vs. 60%).

Marital happiness generally increases with education. It is lowest with 58% very happy among those with less than a high school degree and highest at 68% for those with a bachelor's degree.

Marital happiness is lowest in large central cities.

Divorce Laws

Support for easier divorces is highest among Blacks (50% for easier divorces), Hispanics (38%), Jews (34%), and Others (31%) and lowest among the British (19%)(Table 25).

The twentysomes are most in favor of easier divorces (36%) while those over 65 are the least supportive (15%).

Men and women do not differ in their attitudes towards divorce.

Support for easy divorces is highest among the less educated (34%) and drops to a low among those with advanced degrees (19%).

The separated, never married, and divorced are most for easier divorce, while the married and widowed are less in favor of it.

Those in central cities are most for easy divorce, followed by suburbanites, and lastly by those outside of metropolitan areas.

Ideal Number of Children

A majority of Others, Blacks, and Hispanics favor larger families (three or more children)(Table 26). Most European ethnic groups show little differences in family size preference (35-45% favoring 3 or more children).

Larger families are least favored by the Baby Boomers (34-37%). The twentysomes are somewhat more for more children (41.5%), but those 65+ are the most in favor of larger families (51%).

Men and women do not differ in their preferences on family size.

Those without a high school diploma are the most in favor of larger families (46%), but there is little variation among other educational groups (35-41%).

The divorced are the least for having 3 or more children (34%) and the widowed the most (50%). The pro-child attitudes of the widowed reflects their age more than their marital status.

Residents of large central cities are surprisingly the most in favor of large families (51%) and there is little difference between other areas (37-41%).

Traits for Children

It is striking that the two minority groups that are commonly deemed to have been the most successful in America, Jews and Asians, hold extremely different ideas about what values are important for children (Table 27). European groups in general emphasize "thinking for ones self," but Jews are much more likely to select this trait (71%) than other groups are. Racial minorities are less prone to mentioning independent thinking and Asians are by far the least likely to cite it (24%). Conversely, Asians are the most likely to select hard work (33%) and helping others (21%). Blacks are the most likely to mention obedience (27%).

Adults 65 and older hold different child values than younger adults do. They are the most likely to mention obedience and the least to choose independent thinking. Younger age groups are more similar and more likely to select thinking for ones self, hard work, and helping others.

Men are more traditional and authority centered than women in their ranking of child values. The differences are not large, but men favor obedience, hard work, and helping others more than women do, while women lean towards independent thinking.

The educational differences are large with the better educated being much more in favor of wanting children to think for themselves and less in favor of obedience. The least well educated are also the most likely to select helping others.

There are few notable differences by marital status or place of residence.

Spanking Children

The spanking of children is most endorsed by Blacks (86%) and least favored by Jews (46%)(Table 28). Neither most other racial minorities nor most European groups differ greatly in their attitudes toward corporal punishment.

Spankings are somewhat more supported by older adults and men than by younger adults and women.

Education makes a much large difference with 80% of those with less than a high school education, but only 62% with a graduate-level degree backing corporal punishment.

Support for spankings varies little by marital status, although the married and post-married are somewhat more in favor (75-78%) than the never married (71%).

Corporal punishment is most backed in rural areas (85%) and the least supported in metropolitan areas (68-72%).

Caring for Elderly Parents

Having children take care of their elderly parents is thought of as a good idea by 74% of Asians and 67% of Others, but only by

31% of Jews. Most European ethnic groups are less likely to favor this arrangement than racial minorities are (Table 29).

Support for having older parents live with their adult children declines dramatically with age. While 62% of those under 30 consider it a good idea only 26% of those over 64 concur.

Men are slightly more in favor of the idea than women are (50% vs. 46%).

The less educated and the widowed are less supportive of this living arrangement, but this difference is really a reflection of age and not schooling and marital status.

Residents of large metropolitan areas are the most in favor of parents staying with their children and rural dwellers the least so (51.5-53% vs. 42%).

Gender Roles

Modern gender roles are most favored by Jews and least supported by Asians and Others (Tables 30 & 31).⁴ Blacks tend to agree that working mothers can take care of their children, but are slightly less likely than others to endorse a political role for women. Hispanics are slightly more liberal on both counts.

Support for modern roles for women is highest among the most recent cohorts and lowest among those born earliest. 61% of those 65+ think that women are as emotionally fit for politics as men are compared to 81-83% of those under 40 and 50% of those 65 and older believe that a working mother can be as close to her children as a non-working mother can be vs. 75% of those under 30 feeling this way.

Men and women differ little on political roles, but women are much more likely to think that working mothers can cope as well as non-working others (respectively 74% vs. 59%).

Education also makes a big difference. 86% of those with graduate degrees see women as emotionally fit for politics while only 64% of those without a high school degree do. On emotional closeness those with a high school degree or more are more confident in working mothers than those without any diploma.

The widowed are the most traditionalist and the never married the most modern, but this reflects mostly their age rather than their marital status. The married are more traditional than the divorced, separated, and never married are on politics, but these groups differ little on assessments of mothering and working.

Support for modern gender roles differs little by community type, but rural residents are a little more traditionalist on both politics and childrearing.

⁴The patterns shown by all eight items in Tables 14 and 15 are similar to those illustrated by the two items in Tables 28 and 29.

Religion

Religious belief and behavior are strongest for Blacks and lowest for Jews. Asians also tend to be less religiously involved (Table 32).

Religiousness also is lower along more recent cohorts. For example 42% of those under 30 attend church once a year or less compared to 31.5% of those 65+. The exception to this pattern is that belief in an afterlife does not differ much by cohorts and is actually marginally greater among twentysomes than other age groups.

Men are uniformly more secular than women. For example, 34% of men vs. 16% of women do not believe in an afterlife.

Education has a complex relationship with religion. The better educated are less likely to have a religious affiliation, pray frequently, or believe in an inerrant Bible, but are more likely to attend church. In addition, while belief in life after death does not vary greatly, it is lower for the best and worst educated. It appears that religiousness declines with education because of exposure to secular intellectualism and drops among the less educated because of lower class anomie and marginality.

Differences by marital status (especially for the widowed) are partly a reflection of age differences, but in and of itself being married fosters more religious ties.

Religious behaviors and beliefs are strongest in rural areas and weakest in metropolitan areas.

Sexual Permissiveness

Sexual permissiveness is consistently highest for Jews (Table 33). Most other racial and ethnic groups do not vary greatly in their sexual attitudes. Asians are least in favor of premarital and teenage sexual activity, Blacks and Others least approving of homosexuality, and by a slight margin Other Whites, Germans, and American Indians are the least supportive of extramarital relationships.

Earlier cohorts are uniformly the least permissive and the age differences are usually large. For example, 84% of those 65+ consider homosexual relations always wrong compared to only 60% of those under 30. The exception is on extramarital relationships where those under 30 are almost as disapproving as those 65+.

Men are more permissive than women regarding premarital, teenage, and extramarital relationships, but less approving of homosexuality

More education is consistently and strongly related to greater permissiveness. For example, 75% of those with less than a high school degree think teenage sex is always wrong vs. only 56% of those with graduate degrees.

The widowed are the least permissive and the never married

generally the most permissive. This reflects the age of these groups as much as it does their marital status. The married are less permissive than the divorced and separated.

Rural residents are the least permissive with residents of large cities or their suburbs the most accepting.

Sex education and Contraception for Teenagers

Most ethnic and racial groups have fairly similar attitudes on sex education and contraception for teenagers (Table 34). Jews are the most supportive of education and contraception and Asians and Others the least supportive.

Age makes a large difference with those in younger cohorts the most progressive.

Men and women differ little and inconsistently on these attitudes.

Support for sex education is lower for those with less than a high school education, but it varies little among higher educational groups. Approval of birth control also modestly increases with schooling.

The widowed are least for sex education and teenage contraception, but this mostly reflects their age. More noteworthy is the low level of approval of teenage contraception among the married compared to the divorced, separated, and never married.

Support for sex education is slightly higher in large cities than in rural areas. Contraception is also more approved of in the large cities and the difference is more substantial. 71% of those in the largest central cities favor contraception for teenagers compared to 51% of those from the countryside.

Socializing

Racial minorities tend to socialize with relatives more than European ethnic groups do (Table 35). Hispanics are most likely to visit with a relative at least several times a week (54%), while Jews are the least prone to (26%).

The young are the most likely to visit with relatives (43%), while older groups differ little in their socializing with relatives (30-35%).

Women visit with relatives more than men do (39.5% vs. 30%).

Visiting with relatives declines sharply with more education. 40% of those with no high school degree vs. 21% of those with a graduate-level degree visit at least several times a week.

Visiting does not vary much by marital status, but is lowest for those in intact marriages.

Rather than being the most isolated, residents of large cities are slightly more likely to see relatives than other residents are (40% vs. 33-35%).

Volunteer Memberships, Volunteering, and Giving

Group memberships are greatest among Jews with 66% belonging to two or more organizations and lowest among Blacks with only 31% in multiple groups (Table 36). In general, White ethnics join more groups than racial minorities do.

Memberships are highest among the middle aged. Joining rises among young adults, peaks among the 40-49 year olds and drops among older adults. Likewise, this group is the most likely to have both done volunteer work and made charitable contributions during the last year.

Men are somewhat more likely to join groups than women are (50% vs. 43%), but there is no meaningful gender difference on giving and volunteering.

Joining groups greatly increases with education from 24.5% of those with no high school diploma belonging to two or more organizations to 79% among those with graduate degrees. Likewise, giving and volunteering is much higher among the better educated,

The married are more likely to be a member of an organization, to do volunteer work, or to make a donation than others are.

Suburbanites are the most likely to join a group (45-51%) and residents of large central cities (40%) and rural areas (41%) the least likely. Giving and volunteering are greatest in suburbs and small towns (55-57%), intermediate in rural areas (47%), and lowest in the largest cities (39%).

The Demographic Pattern

Age and education have the largest and most consistent impact on family values and related attitudes. Those born and raised in more recent times have more modern views on family values like easier divorce and the role of women and mothers and on attitudes closely connected to the family like religion and sexual permissiveness. Similarly, the college educated (and especially those with advanced degrees) hold the most modern views while those without a high school education are the most traditional. On family values and connected attitudes, more education promotes a modern point of view.

Community type also generally aligns along the traditional-modern continuum with rural residents representing the more conservative view and with those living in large central cities (and sometimes their suburbs) being the most progressive. But there are some exceptions to this pattern. Residents of large cities are the most likely to socialize with relatives, think that elderly parents should live with their children, and consider the ideal number of children as three or more.

Racial and ethnic groups also show clear, but complex, differences. Jews typically have the most modern outlook. For example, they are more tolerant of sexual permissiveness, less

approving of corporal punishment for children, and more for children being independent. At the opposite side Asians and Others are typically the most traditional. For example, they are the most in favor of parents living with their children, for women staying in the private sphere, and for children being obedient. Blacks tend to have a unique pattern, being progressive on some matters and conservative on others. Blacks are strong on religion, disciplining children, and favoring large families, but for easier divorce laws, more likely to cohabit, and relatively uninvolved in voluntary associations. Most European ethnic groups (besides Jews) are fairly similar to one another. While particular groups stand out on an issue or two, across all topics, no group is particularly distinctive.

The widowed are typically the most traditional in their attitudes and values and the never married the most modern. This however is largely a reflection of the large age differences that separate these groups. Married people are generally more conservative than the divorced, separated, and never married. They are not only in more stable marriages, but also tend to be better connected to society as a whole with more group memberships, church attendance, involvement in volunteering, and charitable giving. In addition, the married hold more traditional values. For example, they are less for easy divorces and contraception for teenagers and more for larger families and confining sex to marriage.

Finally, despite the popular claim that "men are from Mars and women as from Venus," there are few notable gender differences in behaviors and attitudes compared to those that appear across the other social groups discussed above. On about half the comparisons there are no meaningful differences between men and women (e.g. on sex education, ideal number of children, divorce laws, cohabitation). When differences do appear, they tend to be modest in magnitude and inconsistent in direction. Thus, women are more modern in favoring new roles for women and mothers, opposing the spanking of children, and favoring independence in children, but men are on the non-traditional side in accepting more sexual permissiveness, less religion, and less socializing with relatives.

Summary

Few areas of society have changed as much as the family has over the last generation. The basic structure of the family has been reshaped and family values and related attitudes have also undergone notable transformations. Families are smaller and less stable, marriages less central and cohabitation more common, and within marriages gender roles and childrearing practices have become less traditional and more egalitarian.

The flux that the family has been experiencing has in turn remade society. As Meng-tzu has noted "the root of the state is the

family" and the transplanting that the family has been undergoing has uprooted society in general. Certain social problems such as juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancy, and drug abuse have probably been exacerbated by the family changes. Other consequences have been more positive such as greater equality for women. For society to thrive dysfunctional changes in family structure and values must be addressed and reversed or compensated for.

Table 1

Changes in Marital Status

	% Never Married	% Not Now Married	% Ever Divorced (All)	% Ever Divorced (Ever Married)	Divorce Rate ^a
1960					9.2
1965					10.6
1970					14.9
1972	15	26	14	17	
1973	15	26	13	15	
1974	14	25	15	17	
1975	16	28	15	19	20.3
1976	16	30	15	18	
1977	16.5	31	16	19	
1978	15	30	18	21	
1980	17	33	18	21	22.6
1982	19	35	19.5	24	
1983	17	33	19	23	
1984	20	36	20	25	
1985	18	35	20	25	21.7
1986	19	37	21	26	
1987	20	39	21	26	
1988	22	40	22	28	
1989	21	38	21	26	
1990	20	39	25	31	20.9
1991	21	39	22.5	29	
1993	19	39	24.5	30	
1994	20	40	26	32	
1996	22	43	26.5	34	

^aDivorces per year per 1,000 married women 15 years and older. Data from Statistical Abstracts.

Table 2

Trends in Cohabitation

A. Cohabitators as % of ...

	All Couples	All Households	All Adults
1960	1.1	0.8	
1970	1.1	0.8	
1975	1.8	1.2	
1977	2.0	1.3	
1978	2.3	1.5	
1980	3.1	2.0	
1981	3.5	2.2	
1982	3.6	2.2	
1983	3.6	2.3	
1984	3.8	2.3	
1985	3.7	2.3	
1986	4.1	2.5	3.5
1987	4.3	2.6	4.0
1988	4.7	2.8	
1989	5.0	3.0	
1990	5.1	3.1	
1991	5.4	3.2	
1992	5.8	3.5	
1993	6.1	3.6	4.2
1994	6.3	3.8	4.3
1995	6.3	3.7	---
1996	---	---	6.0

Sources: Glick and Spanier, 1980; Spanier, 1983; Thornton, 1988; Current Population Surveys, 1987-1995; GSS, 1996

B. % for whom first union was cohabitation: Ever in union

Birth Cohorts	Men	Women
1933-42	16.4	6.9
1943-52	30.3	21.8
1953-62	53.1	42.4
1963-74	65.7	64.0

Source: Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, and Michaels, 1994

Table 3

Trends in Children

	% with No Children Under 18 in House	Mean # of Children Born	% Ideal Number of Children for a Family To Have		
			0-1	2	3+
1972	45	2.4	3	41	56
1973	48	2.3			
1974	47	2.2	3	45	52
1975	49	2.1	3	49	48
1976	50	2.1	5	51	44
1977	52	2.1	3	49	48
1978	50	2.1	3	51	46
1980	54.5	2.1			
1982	58	2.0	3	55	42
1983	53	2.1	3	51	46
1984	57.5	2.0			
1985	58	2.1	4	55.5	40.5
1986	56.5	2.1	3	51.5	45.5
1987	58.5	2.0			
1988	59	2.0	3	51	46
1989	57.5	1.9	4	54	42
1990	63	1.9	3	55	42
1991	61	1.9	4	54	42
1993	60	1.8	4	58	38
1994	60	1.9	4	54	42
1996	61	1.8	4	57	39

Question Wordings:

How many children have you ever had? Please count all that were born alive at any time (including any you had from a previous marriage).

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

Table 4

Trends in Out-of-Marriage Births

	% of All Births to Unmarried Mothers	Birth Rates for Unmarried Mothers
1960	5.3	21.6 ^a
1965	7.7	23.5
1970	10.7	26.5
1975	14.2	24.5
1980	18.4	29.4
1985	22.0	32.8
1986	23.4	34.3
1987	24.5	36.1
1988	25.7	38.6
1989	27.1	41.8
1990	28.0	43.8
1991	29.5	45.2
1992	30.1	45.2
1993	31.0	45.3

	Whites	Blacks	Whites	Blacks
1960	2.3	21.6 ^b	9.2	98.3 ^b
1965	4.0	26.3	11.6	97.6
1970	5.7	37.6	13.9	95.5
1975	7.3	48.8	12.4	84.2
1980	11.0	55.2	17.6	81.4
1985	14.5	60.1	21.8	78.8
1986	15.7	61.2	23.2	80.9
1987	16.7	62.2	24.6	84.7
1988	17.7	63.5	26.6	88.9
1989	19.0	64.5	29.9	93.1
1990	20.1	65.2	31.8	93.9
1991	21.8	67.9	34.6	89.5
1992	22.6	68.1	35.2	86.5
1993	23.6	68.7	35.9	84.0

^aNumber to births to unmarried women per 1,000 unmarried women age 15-44.

^bIn 1960 and 1965 figures are for non-Whites. This slightly underestimates the rate for Blacks only.

Source: Statistical Abstracts

Table 5

Trends in the Living Arrangements of Families

	Married No Children	Married Children	Not Married No Children	Not Married Children
1972	29	45	16	10
1973	32	42	16	10
1974	31	44	16	9
1975	31	41	18	11
1976	32	38	19	12
1977	33	37	19.5	11
1978	31	39.5	19	11
1980	32	35	22	10.5
1982	33	32	25.5	10
1983	31	35.5	22	11.5
1984	31	32	26	10
1985	33	32	25	10
1986	30	33	27	10
1987	30	31	28	10.5
1988	31	28	28	13
1989	30.5	31	27	11
1990	33	28	30	10
1991	31	30	29	10
1993	32	29	29	10
1994	31	29	29	11
1996	30	26	30	13

Table 6

% of Children in Various Types of Households

	Single Parent	Two Parent, Continuing	Two Parent, Remarried	Two Adults Ex-married	Two Adults Never Married
1972	4.7	73.0	9.9	3.8	8.6
1973	6.4	71.8	9.2	6.4	6.2
1974	5.9	71.4	12.0	4.1	6.6
1975	8.3	65.1	14.8	4.8	7.0
1976	10.7	63.8	11.0	3.8	10.6
1977	12.4	63.4	13.1	3.2	7.9
1978	10.2	65.3	13.6	4.0	6.9
1980	13.1	61.7	12.7	5.8	6.8
1982	14.3	59.3	13.7	5.2	7.3
1983	13.5	61.8	12.2	4.6	7.8
1984	14.9	58.4	14.2	6.5	5.9
1985	14.0	61.4	12.2	4.6	7.7
1986	11.3	61.0	13.6	6.6	7.4
1987	10.3	60.4	14.9	8.3	6.1
1988	18.6	54.7	13.0	5.0	8.7
1989	15.9	56.5	12.2	7.3	8.1
1990	14.9	56.1	17.9	5.1	6.0
1991	18.7	53.6	15.5	5.2	7.0
1993	15.9	57.7	13.2	6.6	6.7
1994	18.4	52.8	14.7	7.1	7.0
1996	19.6	48.8	14.4	8.5	8.7

Single Parent - only one adult in household

Two Parents, Continuing - married couple, never divorced

Two Parents, Remarried - married couple, at least one remarried
(unknown if remarriage came before or after children born)

Two adults, Ex-married - two or more adults; previously, but not
currently married

Two adults, Never Married - two or more adults; never married (This
category also includes some complex family structures.)

Table 7

Trends in Labor Force Participation of Married Couples

	Traditional: Husband Works Wife at Home	Modern: Both Work Outside Home	Non-Trad.: Wife Works Husband Home	"Retired": Neither Works ^a
1972	53	32	3	11.5
1973	48.5	34	4.5	13
1974	47	35	3	14
1975	45	37	4.5	14
1976	46	35	3	16
1977	41	40	5	14
1978	45	40	3.5	12
1980	37	44	4	14.5
1982	35	45	5	15.5
1983	35	47	4	13.5
1984	34	48	4	14
1985	30	49	4	16
1986	29	49	4	18
1987	25.5	55	6	14
1988	25	52	4	18.5
1989	26	53	4	17
1990	25	55	4	15
1991	26	51	5	18
1993	22.5	56	5	16
1994	23	56	5	15
1996	24	59	5	12

^aHouseholds in which neither spouse is in the labor force. While retired couples are the largest group, category includes any combination of retired, disabled, students, and keeping house.

Table 8

Trends in Labor Force Participation of Married Couples
with Children Under 18 in Household

	Traditional: Husband Works Wife at Home	Modern: Both Work Outside Home	Non-Trad.: Wife Works Husband Home	"Retired": Neither Works ^a
1972	60	33	2	4
1973	58	34.5	2	5
1974	57	39	0.5	4
1975	54	40	2	3.5
1976	54.5	48	3	5
1977	52	41.5	2	4
1978	54.5	42	1	2.5
1980	46	49	2.5	2
1982	43	50	3	4.5
1983	45	52	1	2
1984	40	54	3	3
1985	37	58	4	1.5
1986	34	60	2	5
1987	31	63	2.5	4
1988	33	64	2	1.5
1989	32	63	3	2
1990	33	62	2	3
1991	33	61	2	4
1993	27	67	3	2
1994	28	66	4	2
1996	29	66	3	2

^aHouseholds in which neither spouse is in the labor force. While retired couples are the largest group, category includes any combination of retired, disabled, students, and keeping house.

Table 9

Trends Regarding Marriage and Divorce

	% Very Happy with Marriage	% Divorces Should be Easier
1973	67	
1974	69	33.5
1975	67	29
1976	66	29
1977	65	29
1978	65.5	28
1980	67.5	--
1982	66	23.5
1983	62.5	25
1984	66	--
1985	56	24
1986	63	28
1987	65	--
1988	62	25
1989	60	27
1990	65	25
1991	64	29.5
1993	61	27
1994	60	27
1996	62	28

Question Wordings:

Taking things all together, how would you describe your marriage?
Would you say that your marriage is very happy, pretty happy, or
not too happy?

Should divorce in this country be easier or more difficult to
obtain than it is now?

Table 10

Trends in Attitudes about Children

	% Disagree that Those Wanting Children Should Get Married	% Disagree that Children Are Life's Greatest Joy	% Agree that Children Inter- fer with Par- ent's Freedom	% Disagree That People w/o Children Lead Empty Lives
1988	14.8	4.1	10.7	44.8
1994	17.2	4.1	8.9	52.9

Question Wording:

Do you agree or disagree...

People who want children ought to get married.

Watching children grow up is life's greatest joy.

Having children interferes too much with the freedom of the parents.

People who have never had children lead empty lives.

Table 11

Importance of Traits in Children

% Most Important

	To think for Ones Self	To Obey	To Work Hard	To Help Others	To be Well Liked and Popular
1986	51	23	11	14	0
1987	54	20	12	13	1
1988	50	23	14.5	12	1
1989	53	19	14	12	1
1990	51	18	16	14	1
1991	51	20	15	14	0
1993	53	19	14	13	1
1994	53	18	16	13	0
1996	51	18.5	18	13	1

Question Wordings:

If you had to chose, which thing on this list would you pick as the most important for a child to learn to prepare him or her for life?
 A. To obey B. To be well-liked or popular C. To think for himself or herself D. To work hard E. To help others when they need help

Table 12

Trends in Approval of Spanking Children

	% Approving of Spanking
1986	83.5
1988	80
1989	77
1990	79
1991	75
1993	74
1994	74
1996	73

Question Wording:

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that it is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good, hard spanking?

Table 13

Trends in Attitudes Towards Elderly Parents Living
With Their Children

% Thinking It's a
Good Idea

1973	32.8
1975	33.9
1976	38.7
1978	36.6
1980	41.6
1983	44.7
1984	51.8
1986	41.9
1987	52.7
1988	46.0
1989	43.6
1990	47.4
1991	46.3
1993	46.3
1994	48.8
1996	47.8

Question Wording:

As you know, many older people share a home with their grown children. Do you think this is generally a good idea or a bad idea?

Table 14

Trends in Attitudes Towards Women and Politics

	% Willing to Vote for Women for President	% Women Emotionally Suited for Politics	% Women Help Run Country as Well as Homes
1972	74		
1974	80	53	64.5
1975	80	50	64
1977	80	50	62
1978	83	57	69
1982	86.5	62	74.5
1983	86.5	64	77
1985	83	61	74
1986	86.5	63	77
1988	88	68	79
1989	86.5	69	80
1990	91	74	82
1991	91	74	81
1993	90	78	85
1994	92.5	79	87
1996	93	79	84

Question Wordings:

If your party nominated a woman for President, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?

Tell me if you agree or disagree with this statement: Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women.

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country up to men.

Table 15

Trends in Attitudes towards Women, Work, and the Family

	% for Wife Working if Husband Can Support Her	% Agree Mom who Works Can be as Close to Children	% Disagree Wife Should Help Husband's Career First	% Disagree Better if Man Works Woman at Home
1972	67			
1974	70			
1975	75			
1977	67	49	43	34
1978	74			
1982	75			
1983	77.5			
1985	--	61	63	52
1986	79	62.5	64	53
1988	81	62.5	69	59
1989	79	64.5	72	60
1990	83	63.5	71.5	61
1991	80	66	71	59
1993	81	68	77	65
1994	82	70	79	66
1996	83.5	66	80	62

Question Wordings:

Do you approve or disapprove of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her?

Now I'm going to read several more statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it. For example, here is the statement:

A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have one herself.

It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family.

Table 16

Trends on Gender Roles

	% Disagree Women Really Want Home and Kids	% Disagree Housework as Fulfilling as Job	% Agree Job is Best for Woman to be Indpndnt.	% Agree Both Spouses Should Earn Incomes
1988	38.9	23.0	42.5	49.3
1994	43.6	21.9	45.0	57.6
1996	--	--	--	67.0

Question Wording:

Do you agree or disagree...

A job is alright, but what most women really want is a home and children.

Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.

Both the husband and the wife should contribute to the household income.

Table 17

Trends on Mothers Working

Wife Should Work Full-Time...

	Before First Child	When Has Preschooler	After Young- est in School	After Children Leave Home
1988	76.8	10.7	36.0	73.8
1994	84.5	11.6	38.0	80.2

Question Wording:

Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part-time, or not at all under these circumstances...

- a. After marrying and before there are children
- b. When there is a child under school age
- c. After the youngest child starts school
- d. After the children leave home

Table 18

Trends in Religious Beliefs and Practices

	% with No Religion	% Attending Church Once A Year or Less	% Not Believing in Afterlife	% Pray less than Weekly	% Bible Not God's Exact Word
1972	5.1	28			
1973	6.6	35	21.5		
1974	7.0	34	--		
1975	7.3	33.5	23		
1976	7.4	36	20		
1977	5.9	35	--		
1978	7.6	37	21.5		
1980	6.8	35	16		
1982	7.1	36.5	--		
1983	7.5	35	24	25	
1984	6.8	32	18	22	62
1985	7.2	36	--	22	63
1986	6.9	34	17	--	--
1987	7.1	33	19	21	64
1988	7.7	36	20	23	65
1989	7.8	36.5	21	26	68
1990	7.7	34	19	25	67
1991	6.3	35	18	--	64
1993	9.0	37.5	17	24	66
1994	9.0	37	17	24	67
1996	11.9	39	16	21	69

Question Wordings:

What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?

How often do you attend religious services?

Do you believe there is life after death?

About how often do you pray?

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

Table 19

Trends in Sexual Permissiveness

% Always Wrong

	Extramarital Sex	Homosexual Sex	Premarital Sex	Teenage Premarital Sex
1972			36	
1973	70	72.5	--	
1974	73	69	33	
1975	--	--	31	
1976	69	70	--	
1977	74	73	31	
1978	--	--	29	
1980	71	74	--	
1982	74	74	28	
1983	--	--	28	
1984	71.5	75	--	
1985	75	76	28	
1986	--	--	28	67
1987	74	77.5	--	
1988	81	77	26	68.5
1989	78.5	74	28	70
1990	79	76	25	69
1991	77	77	28	68
1993	78.5	66	27	68.5
1994	80	68	26	70
1996	78.5	61	24	70

Question Wordings:

There's been a lot of discussion about the way morals and attitudes towards 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 if they are in their early teens, say 14 to 16 years old? In that case, do you think sex relations before marriage are always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

What is your opinion about a married person having sexual relations with someone other than the marriage partner --is it always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

What about sexual relations between two adults of the same sex --

do you think it is always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

Table 20

Trends in Sexual Attitudes

	% for Sex Educa- tion in Schools	% for Birth Control for Teenagers
1974	82	
1975	80	
1977	78.5	
1982	85	
1983	86	
1985	85	
1986	85	57
1988	88	59
1989	88	56
1990	90	61
1991	87.5	61
1993	86	58
1994	88	57
1996	87	60

Question Wordings:

Would you be for or against sex education in the public schools?

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that methods of birth control should be available to teenagers between the ages of 14 and 16 if their parents do not approve?

Table 21

Trends on Socializing

% Spending Social Evening at Least Several
Times a Week ...

	With Relatives	With Neighbor	With Other Friend	At Bar
1974	38	30	22	11
1975	39	26.5	21	9
1977	37.5	27	22	11
1978	36	28.5	21	10
1982	37	24	22	12.5
1983	33	25	21	12
1985	36	23	21	9
1986	37	28	21	9.5
1988	37	25	20	10
1989	34	22	22	8
1990	35	22	20	8
1991	36	23	24	9
1993	33	21	24	8
1994	34	21	23	8
1996	36	20	24	8.5

Question Wordings:

How often do you do the following things? A. Spend a social evening with relatives B. Spend a social evening with someone who lives in your neighborhood C. Spend a social evening with friends who live outside the neighborhood D. Go to a bar or tavern

Table 22

Trends in Group Memberships

	% Belonging to ___ Groups			
	None	1	2-5	6+
1974	25	25	44	6
1975	27	28	39	5.5
1977	28	28	39	5
1978	27	27	42	4
1980	34	25	36	4
1983	27	25	42	6
1984	32.5	24	38	6
1986	28	25	42	5
1987	32	26	37	4
1988	29	25	40	5
1989	31	23	41	5
1990	32.5	25	38	5
1991	32.5	22	41	4
1993	28	24	43	5
1994	28	24	43	5

Question Wording:

Now we would like to know something about the groups or organizations to which individuals belong. Here is a list of various organizations. Could you tell me whether or not you are a members of each type?

Table 23

Demographic Breakdown on Marriage^a

	% Married	% Previously Married	% Never Married
All	59.6	19.9	20.5
British	65.5	19.6	15.0
French	61.7	18.8	19.6
Scandinavian	57.1	20.7	22.1
Irish	62.0	18.6	19.4
Germanic	60.5	20.1	19.3
Italian	59.9	15.8	19.3
Polish	61.9	21.8	16.3
Eastern Europe	65.4	20.9	13.7
Jewish	68.6	13.5	17.9
Other White	63.0	19.7	17.3
American Indian	58.9	22.0	19.0
Black	41.2	26.8	32.0
Hispanic	55.1	14.3	30.6
Asian	68.6	7.5	23.9
Other	57.7	13.3	29.0
18-29	33.9	5.2	60.8
30-39	65.1	16.9	18.0
40-49	70.8	21.7	7.5
60-64	72.2	23.2	4.6
65+	57.0	39.0	4.0
Men	63.0	13.2	23.8
Women	56.7	25.5	17.8
Less than High School	52.8	27.6	19.6
High School	58.3	20.0	21.7
Junior College	61.3	20.2	18.6
Bachelor Degree	65.8	13.3	20.9
Graduate Degree	72.0	14.1	13.9
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	44.5	21.9	33.6
13-100th Largest CCs	51.0	22.2	26.7
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	63.2	16.9	19.9
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	60.6	19.0	20.5
Other Urban	62.9	19.2	17.9
Other Rural	64.4	22.2	13.4

^aThese and all other breakdowns are based on the 1990-96 GSS except as noted. All nationality groups (e.g. Italians) are ethnic groups

in the US (i.e. Italian Americans).

Table 24

Demographic Breakdown on Cohabitation

	% Cohab- itating Now	% Cohabited Before Marriage
All	4.1	21.2
British	2.9	-- ^a
French	2.7	--
Scandinavian	4.5	--
Irish	4.9	--
Germanic	3.8	--
Italian	4.5	--
Polish	3.5	--
Eastern Europe	4.6	--
Jewish	5.3	--
Other White	4.3	--
American Indian	5.4	--
Black	5.5	--
Hispanic	3.2	--
Asian	2.8	--
Other	0.9	--
18-29	7.4	23.1
30-39	5.8	31.0
40-49	3.3	29.0
50-64	2.2	11.5
65+	0.9	4.4
Men	4.4	22.4
Women	4.0	20.3
Less than High School	4.4	21.1
High School	4.5	22.0
Junior College	4.0	19.8
Bachelor Degree	3.9	19.1
Graduate Degree	2.6	21.7
Married	---	13.1
Widowed	2.3	7.9
Divorced	15.3	56.2
Separated	8.9	45.5
Never Married	10.8	33.5
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	5.9	25.4
13-100th Largest CCs	5.2	25.1
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	3.0	17.5
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	5.0	25.6
Other Urban	3.8	20.0

Other Rural

3.2

14.2

^aToo few cases for most ethnic groups for reliable reporting.

Table 25

Demographic Breakdown Regarding Marriage and Divorce

	% Very Happy with Marriage	% Divorces Should be Easier
All	62.0	27.3
British	67.3	18.8
French	61.4	24.9
Scandinavian	64.9	25.7
Irish	61.6	26.6
Germanic	63.0	21.1
Italian	65.3	24.1
Polish	59.2	21.7
Eastern Europe	66.4	21.9
Jewish	71.1	34.0
Other White	60.8	23.7
American Indian	63.1	34.7
Black	44.9	49.7
Hispanic	62.4	37.7
Asian	74.2	22.4
Other	64.0	31.3
18-29	68.1	35.8
30-39	61.7	29.4
40-49	58.5	27.0
50-64	60.3	24.5
65+	66.2	15.1
Men	64.1	28.7
Women	60.1	26.1
Less than High School	57.6	34.4
High School	60.6	27.9
Junior College	62.4	23.7
Bachelor Degree	68.3	22.5
Graduate Degree	65.8	18.6
Married	62.0	21.4
Widowed	--	21.0
Divorced	--	36.1
Separated	--	53.6
Never Married	--	38.5
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	53.5	35.0
13-100th Largest CCs	60.3	32.8
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	63.4	29.0
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	61.4	27.0
Other Urban	64.0	23.7

Other Rural

60.0

25.9

Table 26

Demographic Breakdown of Child-Related Items

	% Saying Ideal Number of Children is 3 or more
All	40.2
British	35.5
French	45.2
Scandinavian	40.4
Irish	39.8
Germanic	35.4
Italian	39.9
Polish	37.5
Eastern Europe	44.1
Jewish	45.1
Other White	34.7
American Indian	36.2
Black	55.6
Hispanic	51.6
Asian	43.7
Other	61.6
18-29	41.5
30-39	37.2
40-49	34.4
60-64	40.3
65+	51.4
Men	40.5
Women	40.0
Less than High School	46.2
High School	39.3
Junior College	35.3
Bachelor Degree	39.0
Graduate Degree	40.7
Married	39.3
Widowed	49.7
Divorced	34.4
Separated	39.8
Never Married	43.0
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	51.1
13-100th Largest CCs	40.8
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	39.7

Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	37.1
Other Urban	39.3
Other Rural	41.0

Table 27

Demographic Breakdown of Importance of Traits in Children

% Selecting as Most Important

	Think for Self	ObeY	Work Hard	Help Others	Well Liked &Pop.
All	51.8	18.4	16.1	13.2	0.6
British	56.1	18.1	13.3	12.1	0.4
French	50.1	16.6	16.1	16.3	0.9
Scandinavian	60.7	12.1	15.7	11.5	0.0
Irish	58.5	14.2	13.4	13.6	0.3
Germanic	54.2	17.1	15.8	12.6	0.3
Italian	53.3	12.6	18.1	15.1	0.9
Polish	55.1	13.7	15.2	16.0	0.0
Eastern Europe	49.4	20.0	11.5	16.6	2.5
Jewish	71.1	6.8	10.5	9.6	2.0
Other White	52.1	19.5	15.0	12.7	0.7
American Indian	48.1	19.0	15.8	17.0	0.0
Black	42.6	27.3	18.9	10.6	0.6
Hispanic	35.3	20.2	26.4	15.9	2.3
Asian	24.2	19.4	33.1	21.1	2.2
Other	37.1	20.4	22.0	19.0	1.4
18-29	47.6	15.4	20.9	15.9	0.3
30-39	56.3	14.2	15.2	14.0	0.4
40-49	57.8	14.2	15.0	12.5	0.5
50-64	52.2	20.9	15.3	10.8	0.8
65+	41.6	32.1	12.9	11.9	1.5
Men	45.7	20.3	19.0	14.2	0.9
Women	56.8	16.8	13.6	12.3	0.5
Less than High School	32.8	30.7	15.7	19.1	1.6
High School	50.7	19.3	16.9	12.5	0.5
Junior College	63.2	13.4	14.4	9.0	0.0
Bachelor Degree	63.9	8.5	15.3	11.8	0.4
Graduate Degree	71.2	6.4	12.8	9.6	0.0
Married	52.5	18.9	15.9	12.0	0.7
Widowed	43.2	25.8	12.8	17.3	1.0
Divorced	56.4	17.3	13.4	12.5	0.5
Separated	50.4	20.7	15.0	13.6	0.3
Never Married	50.1	14.6	19.1	15.7	0.5
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	52.7	17.7	17.5	11.3	0.8
13-100th Largest CCs	49.5	21.1	17.0	11.9	0.5

Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	59.9	11.0	17.3	11.4	0.4
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	57.0	13.8	15.3	13.2	0.7
Other Urban	49.6	19.4	16.4	14.0	0.7
Other Rural	45.9	25.8	12.4	15.2	0.7

Table 28

Demographic Breakdown of% Approving of Spanking Children

All	74.5
British	74.7
French	67.3
Scandinavian	67.1
Irish	67.7
Germanic	75.6
Italian	67.9
Polish	73.1
Eastern Europe	70.8
Jewish	45.7
Other White	76.7
American Indian	79.8
Black	86.4
Hispanic	69.9
Asian	70.4
Other	78.2
18-29	71.9
30-39	74.7
40-49	72.4
50-64	77.4
65+	77.5
Men	77.4
Women	72.1
Less than High School	80.2
High School	76.9
Junior College	75.0
Bachelor Degree	65.8
Graduate Degree	62.4
Married	75.3
Widowed	76.1
Divorced	74.8
Separated	78.0
Never Married	70.9
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	71.6
13-100th Largest CCs	72.4
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	68.2
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	70.4
Other Urban	76.8
Other Rural	84.9

Table 29

Demographic Breakdown of Attitudes Towards Elderly Parents
Living with Their Children

% Thinking It's a Good Idea

All	47.6
British	42.5
French	48.7
Scandinavian	45.6
Irish	50.0
Germanic	44.4
Italian	49.2
Polish	52.0
Eastern Europe	50.3
Jewish	30.8
Other White	45.9
American Indian	51.6
Black	51.0
Hispanic	57.2
Asian	74.2
Other	66.9
18-29	61.6
30-39	53.3
40-49	50.0
50-64	39.8
65+	25.5
Men	49.7
Women	45.8
Less than High School	43.1
High School	48.1
Junior College	49.9
Bachelor Degree	49.2
Graduate Degree	49.8
Married	44.4
Widowed	30.5
Divorced	50.3
Separated	47.7
Never Married	61.9
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	53.4
13-100th Largest CCs	48.8
Suburbs of 12 Largest CCs	51.5
Suburbs of 13-100th CCs	47.1
Other Urban	46.7

Other Rural

41.6

Table 30

Demographic Breakdown of Attitudes Towards Women and Politics

% Agreeing that Women are Emotionally Suited for Politics

All	77.3
British	76.5
French	79.3
Scandinavian	75.6
Irish	79.3
Germanic	78.6
Italian	79.8
Polish	82.6
Eastern Europe	70.6
Jewish	87.2
Other White	76.6
American Indian	77.7
Black	76.0
Hispanic	80.1
Asian	48.1
Other	75.9
18-29	81.3
30-39	83.4
40-49	79.2
50-64	75.4
65+	61.3
Men	76.4
Women	78.1
Less than High School	64.4
High School	77.8
Junior College	82.1
Bachelor Degree	83.8
Graduate Degree	85.7
Married	77.2
Widowed	62.1
Divorced	78.9
Separated	74.5
Never Married	82.2
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	76.2
13-100th Largest CCs	77.9
Suburbs of 12 Largest CCs	80.2
Suburbs of 13-100th CCs	80.6
Other Urban	76.1
Other Rural	73.5

Table 31

Demographic Breakdown of Attitudes Towards
Women, Work, and the Family

% Agreeing that a Working Mother Can be as Close to Her Children

All	67.1
British	62.3
French	64.2
Scandinavian	67.7
Irish	71.3
Germanic	66.0
Italian	68.4
Polish	74.4
Eastern Europe	63.5
Jewish	74.9
Other White	65.2
American Indian	66.9
Black	74.0
Hispanic	68.2
Asian	64.3
Other	53.2
18-29	75.3
30-39	73.1
40-49	68.6
50-64	62.1
65+	49.6
Men	58.6
Women	74.1
Less than High School	57.9
High School	77.6
Junior College	74.2
Bachelor Degree	69.2
Graduate Degree	74.6
Married	64.9
Widowed	54.5
Divorced	69.5
Separated	71.0
Never Married	75.1
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	69.9
13-100th Largest CCs	70.6
Suburbs of 12 Largest CCs	66.7
Suburbs of 13-100th CCs	66.0
Other Urban	67.1

Other Rural

62.4

Table 32

Demographic Breakdown of Religious Beliefs and Practices

	% No Relig.	% No Att. Church	% No After- life	% Pray < Weekly	% Bible Not Exact
All	9.2	37.1	16.9	23.7	67.2
British	9.0	38.3	13.6	26.2	73.9
French	8.7	36.7	16.1	29.1	80.3
Scandinavian	11.5	36.0	15.8	21.2	69.8
Irish	9.6	36.3	16.5	25.8	74.9
Germanic	8.7	36.9	14.2	23.1	70.6
Italian	9.3	35.8	19.4	20.8	81.3
Polish	7.3	35.3	20.4	26.8	77.5
Eastern Europe	7.0	37.4	15.2	29.1	76.7
Jewish	---	43.0	42.9	51.9	90.6
Other White	11.5	44.7	15.5	26.8	65.0
American Indian	11.2	42.0	13.0	23.8	54.8
Black	5.9	22.6	20.1	8.7	45.2
Hispanic	8.3	29.3	25.5	20.9	56.3
Asian	14.8	32.3	19.6	20.5	72.3
Other	13.3	44.0	13.1	25.4	55.3
18-29	14.5	42.4	18.2	31.8	69.7
30-39	10.4	39.5	16.1	27.4	69.8
40-49	9.9	36.7	15.0	21.2	68.7
50-64	5.0	32.7	17.5	19.2	64.4
65+	4.1	31.5	18.6	14.9	60.9
Men	12.0	42.9	18.9	33.6	72.3
Women	6.9	32.2	15.4	15.8	63.1
Less than High School	9.0	42.5	21.4	21.9	45.0
High School	8.8	38.6	15.5	22.9	65.4
Junior College	8.4	32.7	15.9	23.3	74.1
Bachelor Degree	10.0	30.1	16.5	24.4	83.3
Graduate Degree	11.7	30.0	19.2	30.9	90.8
Married	7.3	33.7	16.3	21.7	66.5
Widowed	3.8	26.4	15.9	9.5	53.3
Divorced	11.1	44.5	16.5	25.5	68.0
Separated	11.4	38.0	16.7	18.5	66.5
Never Married	15.4	46.1	19.4	33.8	73.6
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	11.0	36.6	22.3	23.5	70.0
13-100th Largest CCs	10.1	37.9	18.9	22.6	67.3
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	9.2	33.6	19.1	24.9	77.9
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	10.3	42.0	17.5	27.0	73.9

Other Urban	8.7	36.2	15.0	23.9	64.5
Other Rural	7.1	35.5	14.4	17.3	52.7

Table 33

Demographic Breakdown of Attitudes on Sexual Permissiveness

% Always Wrong

	Extra-marital Sex	Homo-sexual Sex	Pre-Marital Sex	Teen Sex
All	78.7	68.1	25.6	69.3
British	78.8	66.6	28.6	73.2
French	76.4	61.9	18.6	65.5
Scandinavian	78.8	66.4	28.7	65.6
Irish	75.9	62.9	23.3	65.6
Germanic	81.6	69.3	27.5	69.0
Italian	75.9	56.7	13.3	64.4
Polish	73.6	61.6	17.2	70.8
Eastern Europe	80.0	63.6	20.9	64.9
Jewish	56.5	25.3	4.0	49.6
Other White	81.4	70.5	27.4	71.4
American Indian	81.6	77.6	30.5	73.6
Black	74.6	78.9	29.9	72.0
Hispanic	80.8	66.0	18.7	63.9
Asian	77.0	67.5	37.2	72.7
Other	73.7	80.0	20.2	69.3
18-29	80.7	59.7	17.3	53.4
30-39	76.5	63.8	19.4	64.6
40-49	74.9	65.9	24.5	71.1
50-64	80.2	73.7	30.1	78.0
65+	83.0	84.1	44.0	86.4
Men	75.8	70.4	22.0	64.4
Women	81.3	66.2	28.6	73.2
Less than High School	81.5	82.2	33.6	75.1
High School	81.2	71.5	25.8	71.6
Junior College	74.1	61.1	21.4	67.5
Bachelor Degree	75.1	54.0	21.9	61.8
Graduate Degree	64.1	41.6	17.6	55.8
Married	81.7	72.7	29.2	74.6
Widowed	82.8	81.0	44.7	85.0
Divorced	71.6	62.5	15.6	66.0
Separated	70.8	67.2	18.3	63.3
Never Married	73.7	54.4	15.0	50.8
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	67.8	61.4	16.3	58.2
13-100th Largest CCs	75.2	64.4	23.2	65.4

Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	77.3	58.9	21.0	65.1
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	78.1	63.0	19.4	67.5
Other Urban	80.9	71.2	29.5	72.1
Other Rural	85.9	84.1	36.3	79.3

Table 34

Demographic Breakdown in Other Sexual Attitudes

	% for Sex Education in the Schools	% for Birth Control for Teenagers
All	87.8	59.2
British	84.5	54.0
French	89.5	58.1
Scandinavian	86.9	57.3
Irish	92.1	60.3
Germanic	87.3	57.9
Italian	90.4	66.8
Polish	91.0	57.8
Eastern Europe	93.7	59.5
Jewish	98.9	78.9
Other White	86.7	57.3
American Indian	85.1	65.4
Black	89.4	62.7
Hispanic	83.9	63.4
Asian	87.9	46.1
Other	77.8	53.3
18-29	94.4	70.5
30-39	90.6	63.7
40-49	88.8	61.0
50-64	85.1	52.3
65+	75.0	40.3
Men	87.0	57.4
Women	88.4	60.6
Less than High School	78.3	57.7
High School	89.1	58.6
Junior College	91.6	61.4
Bachelor Degree	89.8	59.6
Graduate Degree	92.8	63.7
Married	86.1	54.6
Widowed	75.8	46.2
Divorced	91.4	68.8
Separated	91.2	67.7
Never Married	94.4	70.3
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	89.0	70.9
13-100th Largest CCs	88.5	62.9
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	91.3	62.9

Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	88.9	61.6
Other Urban	86.4	55.6
Other Rural	85.3	51.2

Table 35

Demographic Breakdown of Socializing

% spending Social Evening with _____ at Least Times Several a Week

With Relative

All	35.1
British	29.9
French	32.7
Scandinavian	32.2
Irish	31.4
Germanic	30.4
Italian	36.1
Polish	36.4
Eastern Europe	29.8
Jewish	26.2
Other White	34.6
American Indian	46.1
Black	43.0
Hispanic	54.3
Asian	41.2
Other	36.4
18-29	43.2
30-39	34.7
40-49	30.3
60-64	33.4
65+	32.8
Men	29.7
Women	39.5
Less than High School	40.3
High School	37.6
Junior College	33.3
Bachelor Degree	28.0
Graduate Degree	21.3
Married	32.7
Widowed	39.8
Divorced	36.9
Separated	43.7
Never Married	38.4
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	40.4
13-100th Largest CCs	34.3
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	34.4
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	32.8

Other Urban	35.0
Other Rural	34.2

Table 36

Demographic Breakdown of Memberships and Volunteerism

	% Belonging to 2+ Groups	% Giving and Volunteering
All	46.8	50.3
British	55.3	-- ^a
French	51.1	--
Scandinavian	56.6	--
Irish	48.9	--
Germanic	51.6	--
Italian	43.9	--
Polish	46.4	--
Eastern Europe	54.0	--
Jewish	65.9	--
Other White	40.8	--
American Indian	37.9	--
Black	31.0	--
Hispanic	42.8	--
Asian	41.0	--
Other	39.0	--
18-29	41.3	40.7
30-39	45.3	56.9
40-49	54.3	57.9
50-64	43.9	50.0
65+	44.6	41.2
Men	49.6	50.7
Women	42.8	50.0
Less than High School	24.5	28.6
High School	42.1	47.6
Junior College	54.7	55.9
Bachelor Degree	69.5	70.8
Graduate Degree	79.2	65.8
Married	49.3	56.9
Widowed	37.0	36.1
Divorced	38.6	48.7
Separated	38.1	49.3
Never Married	42.2	37.7
12 Largest Central Cities (CCs)	40.2	39.3
13-100th Largest CCs	46.3	42.5
Suburbs, 12 Largest CCs	51.3	47.3
Suburbs, 13-100th Largest CCs	45.0	55.7
Other Urban	46.8	54.7

Other Rural

41.2

47.3

^aToo few cases for most ethnic groups for reliable reporting.

Appendix 1: The National Opinion Research Center's
General Social Survey

The National Data Program for the Social Sciences has been monitoring trends in American society since 1972. It is the largest and longest-running research effort supported by the Sociology Program of the National Science Foundation. Nearly each year since 1972 the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago has conducted the General Social Survey (GSS) to examine how American society works and what social changes are occurring. The GSSs are full-probability samples of adults (18+) living in households in the United States. Interviews are conducted in person. The annual response rates have ranged from 73.5% to 79.4% and have averaged 76.6%. Each GSS interviews about 1,500 respondents (with 3,000 in 1994 and 1996) and across the 21 surveys from 1972 to 1996 35,284 people have been interviewed. For more details on sampling and survey design see James A. Davis and Tom W. Smith, General Social Surveys: 1972-1996: Cumulative Codebook. Chicago: NORC, 1996.

The GSSs are directed by James A. Davis (NORC, University of Chicago) and Tom W. Smith (NORC, University of Chicago).

Appendix 2: Ethnic Classification

Because the GSSs are replicating cross-sectional surveys, it is possible to aggregate sub-groups by pooling across years. This strategy is used in this analysis. To compare the various ethnic groups the 1990-1996 GSSs were combined into the following categories:

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Sample Size</u>
Germanic (Includes Austrian, Dutch)	1664
British (English, Welsh, Scottish)	1406
Black	1219
Irish	955
Italian	453
Hispanic (Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, etc.)	436
Native American (American Indian)	407
Scandinavian (Danish, Swedish, Norse, Finnish)	336
French	279
Polish	213
Eastern European (except Polish)	209
Jewish	204
Asian	151
Other Whites (Other Countries/DK Country)	2343
Others (Non-White and Non-Black)	117
All	10390

This ethnic typology combines elements of national origins, religion, and race. Classification as German, British, Irish, Hispanic, Italian, Scandinavian, Native American, French, Eastern European, Polish, and Asian is based on the national origin item ("From what country or part of the world did your ancestors come?"). Classification as Jewish is based on current religion ("What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?"). Classification as

Black, Other Whites, and Others is based in whole or in part on the race item ("What race do you consider yourself?"). Those saying their race is Black are classified as Blacks. Other Whites are those a) giving their race as White, b) not Jewish, and c) either mentioning a national origin not covered above or not selecting any national origin. Others are a) Other on race (non-White and non-Black), b) not Jewish, and c) either mentioning a national origin not covered above or not selecting any national origin.

In the above listing these are the maximum number of each group that the analysis is based on. Due to missing values and questions not being asked in a particular GSS, the number in most comparisons will be smaller.

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