THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2012

Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys

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Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys

For decades survey research has provided trusted data about political attitudes and voting behavior, the economy, health, education, demography and many other topics. But political and media surveys are facing significant challenges as a consequence of societal and technological changes.

It has become increasingly difficult to contact potential respondents and to persuade them to participate. The percentage of households in a sample that are successfully interviewed – the response rate – has fallen dramatically. At Pew Research, the response rate of a typical telephone survey was 36% in 1997 and is just 9% today.

Surveys Face Growing Difficulty Reaching, Persuading Potential Respondents

	1997	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Contact rate (percent of households in which an adult was reached)	90	77	79	73	72	62
Cooperation rate (percent of households contacted that yielded an interview)	43	40	34	31	21	14
Response rate (percent of households sampled that yielded an interview)	36	28	25	21	15	9

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Rates computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standard definitions for CON2, COOP3 and RR3. Rates are typical for surveys conducted in each year.

The general decline in response rates is evident across nearly all types of surveys, in the United States and abroad. At the same time, greater effort and expense are required to achieve even the diminished response rates of today. These challenges have led many to question whether surveys are still providing accurate and unbiased information. Although response rates have decreased in landline surveys, the inclusion of cell phones – necessitated by the rapid rise of households with cell phones but no landline – has further contributed to the overall decline in response rates for telephone surveys.

A new study by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press finds that, despite declining response rates, telephone surveys that include landlines and cell phones and are weighted to match the demographic composition of the population continue to provide accurate data on most political, social and economic measures. This comports with the consistent record of accuracy achieved by major polls when it comes to estimating election outcomes, among other things. [1]

[1] See the post-election assessments of poll accuracy by the National Council of Public Polls.

This is not to say that declining response rates are without consequence. One significant area of potential non-response bias identified in the study is that survey participants tend to be significantly more engaged in civic activity than those who do not participate, confirming what previous research has shown.[2] People who volunteer are more likely to agree to take part in surveys than those who do not do these things. This has serious implications for a survey's ability to accurately gauge behaviors related to volunteerism and civic activity. For example, telephone surveys may overestimate such behaviors as church attendance, contacting elected officials, or attending campaign events.

However, the study finds that the tendency to volunteer is not strongly related to political preferences, including partisanship, ideology and views on a variety of issues. Republicans and conservatives are somewhat more likely than Democrats and liberals to say they volunteer, but this difference is not large enough to cause them to be substantially over-represented in telephone surveys.

The study is based on two new national telephone surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. One survey was conducted January 4-8, 2012 among 1,507 adults using Pew Research's standard methodology and achieved an overall response rate of 9%. The other survey, conducted January 5-March 15 among 2,226 adults, used a much longer field period as well as other efforts intended to increase participation; it achieved a 22% response rate.

The analysis draws on three types of comparisons. First, survey questions are compared with similar or identical benchmark questions asked in large federal government surveys that achieve response rates of 75% or higher and thus have minimal non-response bias. Second, comparisons are made between the results of identical questions asked in the standard and high-effort surveys. Third, survey respondents and non-respondents are

Data Comparisons

U.S. government surveys

Survey estimates compared with benchmarks from high-response rate surveys on demographic characteristics, receipt of government benefits, voter registration health status, community and political engagement, and others.

High-effort Pew Research survey

Survey estimates from the standard survey are compared with estimates on 40 identical questions from a high-effort survey that achieved a response rate of 22%.

Voter and Consumer databases

Survey respondents and non-respondents in the landline samples are compared on a range of household characteristics, including past voting behavior, partisan affiliation, financial status and personal interests using two national databases with data on nearly every U.S. household.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study.

[2] See Katherine G. Abraham, Sara Helms and Stanley Presser. 2009. "How Social Processes Distort Measurement: The Impact of Survey Nonresponse on Estimates of Volunteer Work in the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 114: 1129-1165. Roger Tourangeau, Robert M. Groves and Cleo D. Redline. 2010. "Sensitive Topics and Reluctant Respondents: Demonstrating a Link between Nonresponse Bias and Measurement Error." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 74: 413-432.

compared on a wide range of political, social, economic and lifestyle measures using information from two national databases that include nearly all U.S. households.

Comparisons with Government Benchmarks

Comparisons of a range of survey questions with similar questions asked by the federal government on its large national demographic, health and economic studies show Pew Research's standard survey to be generally representative of the population on most items, though there are exceptions. In terms of basic household characteristics and demographic variables, differences between the standard survey's estimates and the government benchmarks are fairly modest.

Citizenship, homeownership, length of time living at a residence, marital status and the presence of children in the home all fall within or near the margin of error of the standard survey. So too does a measure of receipt of unemployment compensation. The survey appears to overstate the percentage of people receiving government food assistance (17% vs. 10%).

Larger differences emerge on measures of political and social engagement. While the level of voter registration is the same in the survey as in the Current Population Survey (75% among citizens in both surveys), the more difficult participatory act of contacting a public official to express one's views is significantly overstated in the survey (31% vs. 10% in the Current Population Survey).

Modest Differences on Many Measures but Large Gaps on Civic and Political Engagement

	Pew Research standard survey	US government survey
	%	%
U.S. Citizen	95	92
Homeowner	63	62
Lived at current address 5 or more years	56	59
Married	50	54
Children in household	37	37
Internet user	80	74
Current smoker	22	19
In prior year, received…		
Unemployment benefits	11	11
Social Security payments	32	27
Food stamps or nutrition assistance	17	10
Registered to vote*	75	75
Contacted a public official in past year	31	10
Volunteered for an organization in past year	55	27
Talked with neighbors in past week	58	41

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study.
All government figures are from the Current Population Survey except marital status, smoking and home ownership which are from the National Health Interview Survey.
*Based on citizens.

Similarly, the survey finds 55% saying that they did some type of volunteer work for or through an organization in the past year, compared with 27% who report doing this in the Current Population Survey. It appears that the same motivation that leads people to do volunteer work may also lead them to be more willing to agree to take a survey.

Comparisons of Standard and High-Effort Surveys

The second type of comparison used in the study to evaluate the potential for non-response bias is between the estimates from the standard survey and the high-effort survey on identical questions included in both surveys. This type of comparison was used in the Pew Research Center's two previous studies of non-response, conducted in 1997 and 2003.[3] The high-effort survey employed a range of techniques to obtain a higher response rate (22% vs. 9% for the standard survey) including an extended field period, monetary incentives for respondents, and letters to households that initially declined to be interviewed, as well as the deployment of interviewers with a proven record of persuading reluctant respondents to participate.

Consistent with the two previous studies, the vast majority of results did not differ between the survey conducted with the standard methodology and the survey with the higher response rate; only a few of the questions yielded significant differences. Overall, 28 of the 40 comparisons yielded differences of two percentage points or less, while there were three-point differences on seven items and four-point differences on five items. In general, the additional effort and expense in the high-effort study appears to provide little benefit in terms of the quality of estimates.

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[3] See Scott Keeter, Carolyn Miller, Andrew Kohut, Robert M. Groves and Stanley Presser. 2000. "Consequences of Reducing Nonresponse in a National Telephone Survey." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64: 125-148.
Scott Keeter, Courtney Kennedy, Michael Dimock, Jonathan Best and Peyton Craighill. 2006. "Gauging the Impact of Growing Nonresponse on Estimates from a National RDD Telephone Survey." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 70: 759-779.

Comparisons Using Household Databases

A third way of evaluating the possibility of non-response bias is by comparing the survey's respondents and non-respondents using two large national databases provided by commercial vendors that include information on nearly every U.S. household, drawn from both public and private sources.[4] An attempt was made to match all survey respondents and non-respondents to records in both the voter and consumer databases so they could be compared on characteristics available in the databases. Very few telephone numbers in the cell phone frame could be matched in either of the databases, especially for non-respondents, and thus the analysis is limited only to the landline frame.

The first database was created by an organization that provides voter data and related services to political campaigns, interest groups, non-profit organizations and academics. It is a continually updated file of more than 265 million adults, including both voters and non-voters. The analysis indicates that surveyed households do not significantly over-represent registered voters, just as the comparison of the survey's voter registration estimate with the Current Population Survey estimate shows. However, significantly more responding than non-responding households are listed in the database as having voted in the 2010 congressional elections (54% vs. 44%) This pattern, which has been observed in election polls for decades, has led pollsters to adopt methods to correct for the possible over-representation of voters in their samples.

Voter Database Comparisons

	Characteristics of landline households who…	
Database identifies household as…	**Responded**	**Did not respond**
	%	%
Registered to vote	82	79
Voted in 2010	54	44
Party registration		
Republican	17	17
Democrat	23	22
Other	6	9
No record of party/not a party registration state	54	51
N	593	4,972

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study.
Voter database information is based on public voter registration and turnout data. Comparisons are between landline households in the standard survey who responded and those who did not respond.

The database also indicates that registered Republicans and registered Democrats have equal propensities to respond to surveys. The party registration balance is nearly identical in the surveyed households (17% Republican, 23% Democratic) and in the non-responding households (17% Republican, 22% Democratic).

[4] The accuracy of the databases was verified by comparing information provided by respondents with the databases' information about those households. More details about this analysis are available in the methodological appendix.

The second database used for comparisons includes extensive information on the demographic and economic characteristics of the households' residents, including household income, financial status and home value, as well as lifestyle interests. This consumer information is used principally in marketing and business planning to analyze household-level or area-specific characteristics.

Surveys generally have difficulty capturing sensitive economic variables such as overall net worth, financial status and home values. However, a comparison of database estimates of these economic characteristics indicates that they correspond reasonably well with survey respondents' answers to questions about their family income and satisfaction with their personal financial situation. Accordingly, they may provide a valid basis for gauging whether, for example, wealthy households are less likely to respond to surveys.

The analysis indicates that the most affluent households and the least affluent have a similar propensity to respond. For example, households with an estimated net worth of $500,000 or more make up about an equal share of the responding and non-responding households (23% vs. 22%). Similarly, those estimated to have a net worth under $25,000 are about equally represented (19% in the responding households vs. 21% in non-responding households). A similar pattern is seen with an estimate of overall financial status.

The database includes estimates of the partisan affiliation of the first person listed in the household. Corroborating the pattern seen in the voter database on party registration, the relative share of households identified as

Financial Situation and Lifestyle Comparisons

	Characteristics of landline households who…	
Database identifies household as…	**Responded**	**Did not respond**
Estimated net worth	%	%
$500,000 +	23	22
Under $25,000	19	21
Home value		
$500,000 +	7	9
Under $100,000	29	26
Overall financial status		
Top 20%	24	21
Bottom 20%	19	20
Min. N for financial measures	695	6,179
Estimated party affiliation of first person listed in household		
Republican	31	30
Democrat	44	44
N for party measure	399	3,287
Interests		
Reading	78	73
Community & charities	43	33
Politics/current affairs	31	25
Religious/inspirational	29	22
Hunting and shooting	31	29
Camping and hiking	26	19
NASCAR	14	10
N for interest measures	718	6,418

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Household database information comes from a marketing services and information company that has household data on more than 124 million U.S. households. Comparisons are between landline households in the standard survey who responded and those who did not respond.

Republican and Democratic is the same among those who responded (31% Republican, 44% Democratic) and those who did not respond (30%, 44%).

Some small but significant differences between responding households and the full sample do appear in a collection of lifestyle and interest variables. Consistent with the benchmark analysis finding that volunteers are likely to be overrepresented in surveys, households flagged as interested in community affairs and charities constitute a larger share of responding households (43%) than all non-responding households (33%). Similarly, those flagged as interested in religion or inspirational topics constituted 29% of responding households, vs. 22% among non-responding households.

SECTION 1: SURVEY COMPARISONS AND BENCHMARKS

For the past few decades, telephone survey researchers have faced increasing difficulty contacting Americans and getting reluctant people to cooperate. Surveyors also face the challenge of adequately covering the U.S. population at a time of growing cell phone use. More than a third of households can be reached only on a cell phone, thus making it essential to include cell phone numbers in all surveys.[5]

The Pew Research standard 5-day survey, employing techniques commonly used by many opinion polling organizations, obtained interviews in just 9% of sampled households. This response rate is comparable to other Pew Research polls in 2012, and is similar to the rates obtained by other major political and media survey organizations. Over the past 15 years, response rates have declined steadily, from 36% in 1997 to 25% in 2003 and 15% in 2009.

High-Effort Surveys Increase Contact and Cooperation Levels

	--1997--	--2003--	----------2012----------		
	Landline	Landline	Landline	Cell	Total
Contact rate (% of households in which an adult was reached)	%	%	%	%	%
Standard survey	90	79	62	62	62
High-effort survey	94	91	86	84	85
Cooperation rate (% of households contacted that yielded an interview)					
Standard survey	43	34	16	11	14
High-effort survey	72	58	32	19	27
Response rate (% of households sampled that yielded an interview)					
Standard survey	36	25	10	7	9
High-effort survey	61	50	27	16	22

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Rates computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standard definitions for CON2, COOP3 and RR3.

These declines result from the increasing difficulty in making contact with someone in a household, as well as in gaining cooperation once contact is made. The standard survey made contact with 62% of households, down from 72% of households in 2009, 79% in 2003 and 90% in 1997.

Among contacted households in 2012, just 14% yielded a completed interview with an adult, lower than in 2009 (21%) and far lower than in 2003 (34%) and 1997 (43%). Some of this decline is due to the inclusion of cell phones, given the fact that people reached by cell phones cooperate at lower rates than those reached by landline (11% vs. 16%). The

[5] Stephen J. Blumberg and Julian V. Luke. 2011. "Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January-June 2011." National Center for Health Statistics.

greater reluctance of cell phone owners to consent to an interview will likely be a growing problem for surveys as the share of interviews completed on a cell phone increases.

When additional efforts are utilized, a higher response rate can be achieved. Households in the high-effort survey were contacted over an extended field period with far more call attempts (up to a maximum of 25 calls for landline numbers and 15 calls for cell phone numbers over two and a half months for the high-effort survey vs. a maximum of 7 calls over 5 days for the standard survey) and received incentives to participate (ranging from $10-$20). Households where address information could be obtained were also sent letters encouraging them to respond to the survey. In addition, elite interviewers, who have many interviewing hours and are particularly skilled at persuading reluctant respondents, were deployed later in the field period to further increase the cooperate rate.

Although participation among cell respondents can be increased through the use of incentives and elite interviewers, there are limitations on the ability to increase participation by increasing the number of call attempts. In addition, cell phone respondents cannot be reached via traditional mail because their numbers cannot be linked with an address.

The additional techniques used to increase participation resulted in a 22% response rate, compared with just 9% in the standard survey. The high-effort survey succeeded in making contact with far more households than the standard survey (85% vs. 62%). The additional efforts also improved the cooperation rate from 14% to 27%.

The high-effort survey obtained a response rate that was far lower than was achieved with additional efforts in 2003 (50%) and 1997 (61%). Because the high-effort survey achieved a response rate of only 22%, there is a greater potential for it to be affected by non-response bias, since about three-in-four households are still not represented in the survey.

Samples Still Representative

Despite the growing difficulties in obtaining a high level of participation in most surveys, well-designed telephone polls that include landlines and cell phones reach a cross-section of adults that mirrors the American public, both demographically and in many social behaviors.

The profile of survey respondents in a standard Pew Research survey generally matches that obtained from high response rate and government surveys when it comes to gender, age, race, citizenship, marital status, home ownership and health status. Telephone surveys have traditionally under-represented young people and minorities, but the inclusion of cell phone interviews improves the overall representativeness of telephone surveys.

As has long been true, one of the largest differences between standard survey samples and the full population is on educational attainment – 39% of respondents in the standard survey say they graduated from college. That compares with 28% of adults in the Current Population Survey. Those with a high school education or less were under-represented in the survey (34% in the standard survey vs. 43% in the Current Population Survey).

The additional techniques used to encourage participation in the high-effort survey improved the representativeness of the survey sample on some variables. For example, the racial composition and educational attainment

Demographic Profiles Match on Gender, Age but Not on Education

	Pew Research		
	Standard survey	High-effort survey	US government survey
	%	%	%
Men	48	48	49
Women	52	52	51
	100	100	100
18-29	21	18	22
30-49	29	29	35
50-64	31	31	25
65+	20	22	17
White	73	66	68
Black	10	14	12
Hispanic	11	13	14
Other/Mixed	7	7	7
College grad+	39	33	28
Some college	27	31	28
HS or less	34	36	43
U.S. citizen	95	94	92
Married	50	48	54
Own home	63	61	62
Lived at address 5 years or more	56	59	59
Rate health as excellent	20	23	26
Current smoker	22	21	19
In 2011, received…			
Unemployment compensation	11	13	11
Social Security payments	32	33	27
Food stamps or nutrition assistance	17	18	10

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study.
All U.S. government figures are from the Current Population Survey, except marital status, home ownership and smoking, which are from the National Health Interview Survey. Whites, blacks and other/mixed race are non-Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Survey data for gender, age, race-ethnicity and education are weighted to account for probability of selection. All other figures are based on fully weighted data.

of people interviewed in the high-effort survey are somewhat closer to the government benchmarks than in the standard survey. However, the high-effort survey actually yields a larger percentage of older respondents than the standard survey and is even further from the government parameter. In addition, estimates of receiving various types of government assistance and current smoking status from the high-effort survey are not any closer to the national parameters in the high-effort survey.

Comparison of Standard and High-Effort Survey Responses

Overall, there are only modest differences in responses between the standard and high-effort surveys. Similar to 1997 and 2003, the additional time and effort to encourage cooperation in the high-effort survey does not lead to significantly different estimates on most questions.

The majority of questions (28 of 40) show a difference of two points or less between the standard and high-effort surveys; the median difference is two points. However, on seven questions, there are statistically significant differences between the two surveys. In particular, there are differences in views about government, attitudes about immigrants, political engagement and how often people go out in the evenings.

There are no significant differences between the surveys on party identification, leaned party identification or political ideology. The share of people who say they are registered to vote also is similar in both surveys (71% in standard survey vs. 69% in high-effort survey).

Registered voters in the standard survey are more likely to say they always vote (60%

Party Identification Similar in Standard and High-Effort Surveys

	Pew Research	
	Standard survey	**High-effort survey**
	%	%
Registered voter	71	69
Always vote	60	56
Enjoy keeping up with political news a lot	23	27
Party identification		
Republican	26	27
Democrat	31	32
Independent	35	32
Other/No pref/Don't know	8	9
Republican/Lean Rep	41	39
Democrat/Lean Dem	46	46
Political ideology		
Conservative	35	37
Moderate	34	34
Liberal	23	22
Attend religious services weekly or more	35	34
Mean # of days go out in evenings	2.58	2.69
Say most people can be trusted	40	42
Use social networking sites	56	56
Use Twitter	12	10

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Comparisons shown are based on weighted data from the Pew Research standard and high-effort surveys.

standard vs. 56% high-effort), whereas respondents in the high-effort survey are more likely to say that they "enjoy keeping up with political news" a lot (27% vs. 23%).

There are few differences on a variety of measures of social integration and community engagement.

Respondents in the standard survey are more likely than those in the high-effort survey to say they do not typically go out at all during an average week (20% vs. 16%). Respondents in the standard survey go out a mean number of 2.58 days, compared with a mean of 2.69 days for people in the high-effort survey. This indicates that people who are less frequently at home had a better chance of being contacted in the high-effort survey, in which more calls were placed to their households over a longer period of time than in the standard survey.

On measures of social trust there are no significant differences between the standard and high-effort surveys. Similarly, comparable percentages in both surveys say they use social networking sites and Twitter.

Both surveys asked respondents several questions about their political values. There are no significant differences on views about homosexuality, racial discrimination or Wall Street's impact on the economy, but there are significant differences on views about government and immigration. In the standard survey, 39% favor a bigger government providing more services over a smaller government providing fewer services; that compares with 43% in the high-effort survey. Respondents in the high-effort survey are slightly more likely to say that immigrants today strengthen the country because of their hard work and talents (52% vs. 48% in the standard survey).

Effects of Over-Representing Volunteers

The additional methods used to increase participation in the high-effort survey do not significantly improve estimates of volunteering, contacting a public official or talking with neighbors, when compared with the government benchmarks. A majority (56%) of respondents in the high-effort survey say they volunteered for an organization in the past year, which is virtually the same percentage as in the standard survey (55%) and much higher than the 27% in the Current Population Survey.

High-Effort Survey Estimates No Closer to Government Benchmarks

	Pew Research		
	Standard survey	High-effort survey	US government survey
In the past year,	%	%	%
Volunteered for an organization	55	56	27
Contacted a public official	31	29	10
Talked with neighbors weekly	58	58	41

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study.
All U.S. government figures are from the Current Population Survey. Survey figures are based on weighted data.

Similarly, the estimates of the number who have contacted a public official in the past year are no closer to the government benchmark than those in the standard survey (29% vs. 10% in the Current Population Survey). And in both surveys, 58% say they talked with neighbors at least once in the past week, compared with 41% in the Current Population Survey.

For all these comparisons, the question wording is nearly identical to the government surveys and the differences are likely, at least partly, a result of non-response bias. But the context in which the questions are asked could not be replicated exactly and may have contributed to some of the differences observed.

Although the Pew Research surveys produce much higher incidences of volunteerism and contact with a public official, the demographic characteristics of those who say they have volunteered and contacted a public official in the past year are similar to those obtained in the Current Population Survey.

While there are large differences between volunteers and non-volunteers on many questions in the survey, the analysis indicates that this over-representation of volunteers does not introduce substantial biases into the survey, especially on political measures.

To analyze how the survey estimates might be affected if volunteers were not over-represented, the survey data were re-weighted so that along with the standard demographic weighting, the percentage of volunteers matched the proportion in the Current Population Survey.

This re-weighting has very little impact on the survey estimates, including on estimates of voter registration, party identification and ideology, or on any of the other political views tested.

For example, while volunteers are much more likely than non-volunteers to be registered to vote (79% vs. 61%), there is only a four point difference in the overall voter registration estimate between the standard weighting and the volunteer weighting.

Over-Representing Volunteers Has Little Effect on Survey Estimates

	Volunteered in past year		Total sample with…	
	Yes	No	Standard weight	Volunteer weight
Voting	%	%	%	%
Registered to vote	79	61	71	67
Always/nearly always vote	88	77	84	81
Party identification				
Republican	29	23	26	25
Democrat	31	31	31	31
Independent	34	36	35	36
Republican/Lean Republican	44	37	41	39
Democratic/Lean Democratic	44	47	46	47
Political ideology				
Conservative	38	32	35	33
Moderate	36	32	34	34
Liberal	21	25	23	24
Political views				
Prefer a smaller government, with fewer services	56	46	52	49
Immigrants strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents	51	45	48	48
Blacks who can't get ahead today are mostly responsible for their own condition	60	60	60	59
Homosexuality should be accepted by society	58	55	56	58
Wall Street hurts the economy more than it helps	46	50	48	48
Most people can be trusted	46	32	40	37

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Comparison of volunteers and non-volunteers from the Pew Research standard survey. Also, shows results weighted to basic demographic parameters and weighted to include volunteering as a parameter in addition to basic demographics.

Similarly, while Republicans and Republican leaners make up a larger share of volunteers than non-volunteers (44% vs. 37%), the volunteer-weighted estimate of the Republican share is only two points lower than the standard weighting (39% vs. 41%).

A majority of volunteers say they prefer a smaller government with fewer services (56%), compared with 46% among non-volunteers. But the volunteer-weighted estimate of this attitude (49%) differs by only three percentage points from the standard-weighted

estimate (52%). There are no significant differences between volunteers and non-volunteers, nor the reweighted estimates, on views of immigrants, homosexuality, racial discrimination or Wall Street.

There are only a few questions on which the re-weighted estimates are significantly different from the standard weighting. These include the frequency of talking with neighbors, church attendance, contacting a public official and frequency of voting. For all of these questions, the alternative weighting reduced the frequency of these behaviors.

Among voters, volunteers are somewhat more likely than non-volunteers to say they always or nearly always vote (88% vs. 77%). In the re-weighted data, these frequent voters comprise a slightly smaller share of the total (81%) than in the standard weighting (84%).

Volunteers Are More Connected Socially

	Volunteered in past year		*Total sample with…*	
	Yes	No	Standard weight	Volunteer weight
Community involvement	%	%	%	%
Talk with neighbors a few times a week or more in past year	65	49	58	53
Attend religious services weekly or more	43	25	35	29
Contacted a public official in past year	41	18	31	26
Health				
Rate health as excellent or very good	58	40	50	47
Current smoker	19	27	22	24
Financial situation				
Family income $75,000 or more	35	17	27	24
Own home	69	54	63	60
In 2011, household received				
State or federal unemployment compensation	10	13	11	12
Food assistance or food stamps	13	22	17	18
Technology use				
Internet user	88	73	81	80
Mobile internet user	61	45	54	52
Social networking/Twitter user*	72	65	69	68
N	897	610	1507	1507

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Comparison from the Pew Research standard survey of volunteers and non-volunteers and of the total sample weighted to basic demographic parameters and weighted to include volunteering as a parameter in addition to basic demographics.
*Based on internet users.

Volunteers are far more likely than non-volunteers to talk with their neighbors in the past week (65% vs. 49%), attend religious services at least weekly (43% vs. 25%) and twice as likely to have contacted a public official in the past year (41% vs. 18%). The re-weighting of the data lowered the estimate of talking with neighbors and contacting a public official by 5 percentage points (bringing both closer to the government benchmark), and the percentage of weekly attendance at religious services by 6 points.

SECTION 2: HOUSEHOLD DATABASE COMPARISONS

One way to further understand how well the surveys performed is to compare survey respondents with those who did not respond to the survey, using household data from third-party sources. An attempt was made to match all responding and non-responding households to records in two large national databases so they could be compared on a variety of characteristics available in the databases. These databases are provided by commercial vendors and include information on nearly every U.S. household, drawn from both public and private sources.

The utility of the two national databases for judging the representativeness of the survey sample depends on the share of the survey sample for which database information is available and on the accuracy of the information in the databases. About half (49%) of households in the landline sample could be matched to the voter database and 64% of could be matched to the consumer database. Matching the cell phone sample was not possible for most numbers, other than some of the responding households where a name or address was obtained. And for many households in our sample, there were multiple matches to records in the database and decisions had to be made about which records to select.

To assess the accuracy of the databases, household information in the databases was compared with answers given by survey respondents on a variety of characteristics. In general, the analysis finds that the information in the databases compares reasonably well to data provided by respondents in the survey. For additional information about validating the databases, see the Appendix.

Overall, the financial characteristics and technology and media use of survey respondents and non-respondents are quite similar, but there are some differences when it comes to lifestyle and interests. Using characteristics about the households from the consumer database, responding households in the landline sample were compared with households who refused to participate and households where a person was never reached.

The financial profile of responding households closely matches that of households that did not take part in the survey. The estimated net worth of responding and non-responding households is quite similar; households whose net worth is under $100,000 make up 35% of responding households and 37% of non-responding households. Similarly, the overall financial status of responding and non-responding households is quite similar.

Responding households are no more likely to be homeowners than those that did not participate (81% vs. 80%). Similarly, there are virtually no differences between responding and non-responding households in terms of the value of their home; 7% of responding and 9% of non-responding households have home values of $500,000 or more. Similarly, 29% of responding households have home values less than $100,000, compared with 26% of households that did not participate.

Responding households also are quite similar to non-responding households when it comes to technology and media use. Slightly more responding households own a computer than households who did not participate (72% vs. 67%), but a similar share own a cell phone (42% vs. 38%). When it comes to media use, responding households are no more likely than those that refused to participate to be heavy internet users, newspaper or magazine readers, primetime TV watchers, or radio listeners.

No Bias on Financial Characteristics

	Characteristics of landline households who…		
Database identifies household as…	**Responded**	**Did not respond**	**Total**
Overall financial status	%	%	%
Top 20%	24	21	22
Top 5%	8	7	7
Upper 20%	21	21	21
Middle 20%	16	17	17
Lower 20%	19	20	20
Bottom 20%	19	20	20
Bottom 5%	5	5	5
Estimated net worth			
$500k+	23	22	22
$2,000k+	5	6	6
$250-500k	17	18	18
$100-250k	25	23	23
$25-100k	16	16	16
Under $25k	19	21	21
Under $5k	12	13	12
Homeowner	81	80	80
Home value			
$500k +	7	9	8
$275-500k	17	18	18
$175-275k	21	21	21
$100-175k	26	27	27
Under $100k	29	26	26
Minimum N	695	6,179	6,874

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Household database information comes from a marketing services and information company that has household data on more than 124 million U.S. households. Comparisons are between responding and non-responding households in the landline sample for the standard survey

There are some small but significant differences between responding and non-responding households on various lifestyle and interest measures. More non-responding households than responding households were not flagged on any of the interest measures (15% vs. 8%). This suggests that differences between responding and non-responding households on these interest measures may be, at least partly, due to differences in the availability of data.

A larger proportion of responding than refusing households are interested in community affairs and charity (43% vs. 33%) and politics and current affairs (31% vs. 25%). There are similar differences on interest in religious and inspirational topics and environmental issues.

There also are some differences between responding and non-responding households on interest in reading (78% vs. 73%) and exercise and health (66% vs. 60%). According to information available in the database, there also are differences on interest in cooking, sports, travel and interest in investment and finance. In addition, a slightly larger share of responding than non-responding households have a pet.

Media Use Similar Among Survey Respondents and Non-respondents

	Characteristics of landline households who…		
Database identifies household as…	**Responded**	**Did not respond**	**Total**
	%	%	%
Computer owner	72	67	68
Cell phone owner	42	38	39
Media use Likely a heavy			
Internet user	26	28	28
Cell phone user	35	34	34
Newspaper reader	45	42	42
Primetime TV watcher	41	36	36
Magazine reader	20	25	24
Radio listener	23	23	23
Interests			
Community & charities	43	33	34
Politics/ current affairs	31	25	26
Religious/inspirational	29	22	23
Environmental issues	21	14	15
Reading	78	73	74
Cooking	71	63	64
Exercise/health	66	60	61
Sports	66	57	58
Travel	66	57	58
Outdoors	60	52	53
Investment/finance	56	47	48
Cat owner	23	17	17
Dog owner	31	24	25
Minimum N	718	6,418	7,136

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study.
Household database information comes from a marketing services and information company that has household data on more than 124 million U.S. households. Comparisons are between responding and non-responding households in the landline sample for the standard survey.

Additional analysis separated non-responding households into two groups – known households who refused to take part in the survey and households in which no contact was made – that could be compared with survey respondents. In general, the differences between responding households and refusing households are similar to the comparisons shown above and in some cases the differences are smaller. See the Appendix for tables with these comparisons.

APPENDIX: DETAILS ABOUT THE DATABASE MATCHING

The database analysis in this report relied on two separate databases – a consumer database that matched landline numbers to addresses and provided information about the households, such as financial status, lifestyle interests, as well as some basic demographic information about the people in the household. The phone numbers and addresses were then matched to a database containing voter registration status, turnout and, where available, party of registration for voters and non-voters. The companies that provided the databases asked not to be identified by name.

Each phone number was matched to a maximum of two household records in the consumer database; when a phone number was matched to more than one household, the more complete record was selected for the analysis presented in the report. There was at least some information available about the household for 18,164 landline phone numbers; 1,931 were households where an adult completed the interview, 8,913 were households that did not participate in the survey and 7,320 were for numbers that were determined to be non-working or non-residential (and thus are excluded from the analysis). For the analysis comparing respondents to non-respondents, phone numbers for which no contact was made and thus could not be determined with any certainty to be a residential household are weighted down to represent the proportion assumed to be eligible.[6] An additional 854 phone numbers in the cell frame were also matched to household records in the consumer database based on names and addresses provided during the survey interview; matching other cell phone numbers was not possible. Thus, the analysis presented in the report is limited to numbers in the landline frame and it is unknown whether similar patterns would be observed between respondents and non-respondents in the cell phone frame.

The phone numbers and address information obtained from the consumer database were then matched to individuals in the voter database. Each phone number was matched to a maximum of six individual records in the voter database. For numbers that were matched to only one record in the voter database, voter information for that match was used in the analysis (90% of survey respondents were matched to only one record). The remainder of the numbers had more than one match. For households that did not

[6] This assumption is based on the same computations used to estimate "e" in the response rate calculation. See the discussion of response rates in "About the Study."

respond to the survey, no additional steps were taken to try to select which of the records was the best match.[7]

For households that did respond, survey data was used to select which of the records best matched the data obtained from survey respondents on sex, age (the age of the survey respondent and person in the record had to differ by four years or less) and race (white/non-white). Finally, in cases where more than one possible match still existed, a match was accepted if the respondent's state of residence matched the state of residence in one of the voter records. A best match was chosen for 12,648 landline phone numbers, including 1,490 survey respondents. The voter database does not have party information on many respondents, since not all states collect that information in voter registration records. In addition, it is unclear how complete voting records are in the voting database, since the quality of voter registration records varies by state.

Comparing Survey Responses to Information in the Databases

The utility of the two national databases for judging the representativeness of the survey sample depends not only on the share of the survey sample for which database information is available for, but it also depends on the accuracy of the information in the databases. To assess the accuracy of the information in the databases, household information in the databases for survey respondents was compared with answers given during the survey.

Information from the voter database about voter registration, party registration and turnout in 2010 was fairly consistent with what respondents reported in the survey. Among those flagged as registered Republicans by the database, 80% said they are Republicans or

Validating Political Attributes in the Voter Database

	Characteristics in the voter database	
Data from survey respondents	% Republican	% Democrat
Rep/lean Rep	80	15
Dem/lean Dem	14	76
	Registered	No record of registration
Registered voter	93	60
Not registered	7	40
	Voted in 2010	No record of 2010 vote
Vote always/ nearly always	94	65
Vote less often	6	35

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Survey. Based on matched survey respondents. Columns read down within a category, representing the distribution of respondents within each database characteristic. N=1,490

[7] The conclusions drawn from the analysis are unaffected by the use of the assumptions. Alternative treatments of how matches were handled produced similar results.

lean to the Republican Party. Similarly, 76% of registered Democrats said they are Democrats or lean Democratic.

Those listed as registered in the voter database were overwhelmingly likely to report themselves as registered in the survey (93%). However, 60% of those for whom there was no record of active registration in the database said they are registered to vote.

Respondents to the survey were not asked if they voted in the 2010 congressional elections, but were asked how frequently they voted. Among those flagged in the database as having voted in 2010, 94% said in the survey that they always or nearly always voted. Those for whom the database shows no record of a 2010 vote were less likely to say they always or nearly always vote (65%), including only 41% who say they always vote.

The consumer database contained demographic and lifestyle information about households in the sample, including information on income, financial status, home value and a range of personal interests and traits not available in the voting database.

The financial characteristics of households according to the database comport reasonably well with financial information provided by respondents. About tw0-thirds (66%) of respondents in households the database categorizes as being in the top 20% of family incomes say their household earns over $75,000 a year. Comparably, 57% of respondents in households in the bottom 20% of family incomes report that they make $30,000 a year or less. About half of those in households categorized at both the top and bottom quintiles of net worth report being in a corresponding income category (52% of those in the top quintile report making $75,000 or

Validating Financial Measures in the Consumer Database

	Characteristics in the commercial database	
	%	%
Survey Respondents	*Household income*	
Family income	Top quintile (>$125k)	Bottom quintile (<$30k)
$75,000+	66	13
$30k-$74,999	27	31
<$30,000	7	57
	Net worth	
Family income	Top quintile	Bottom quintile
$75,000+	52	10
$30k-$74,999	33	31
<$30,000	14	59
N=696		
	Financial stability index	
Satisfaction with personal financial situation	Top quintile	Bottom quintile
Satisfied	77	53
Dissatisfied	21	43
N=2,572		
	Own home	*Rent*
Own home	86	15
Rent	11	78
N=2,154		

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Survey. Based on matched survey respondents. Columns read down within a category, representing the distribution of respondents within each database characteristic.

more and 59% of those in the bottom quintile make $30,000 or less).

The database also has a financial stability index. Respondents in 77% of households rated as within the top 20% of the index (the most stable households) say they are satisfied with their personal financial situation. Among those rated in the bottom 20% of the index, 53% of respondents report being satisfied with their financial situation while 43% are dissatisfied.

Measures of home ownership were also largely consistent with respondents' answers; 86% of those listed as owners said they owned their homes and 78% of those listed as renters in the database confirmed that they rented.

In addition, the database flags households considered to be interested in a variety of topics and activities. Many of these were not asked about in the survey, but for a few, comparisons can be made with questions in the survey that are similar. Of those the commercial database labels as interested in religious and inspirational topics, 62% report attending religious services weekly or more, compared with only 32% among those not labeled as interested.

Among people flagged as owning home computers, 86% identify as internet users in the survey; among those not flagged as computer owners in the database, 70% are internet users.

For those the consumer database identifies as interested in community or charity involvement, 64% said they had volunteered in the previous year. However, among those the database does not flag as interested, 58% said

Consumer Database Lifestyle Measures

	Characteristics in the consumer database	
	%	%
	Interested in religious and inspirational topics	
Attend relig. services	Yes	Unknown
At least weekly	62	32
Less than weekly	38	68
N=2,770		
	PC owner	
Internet user?	Yes	Unknown
Yes	86	70
No	14	30
N=2,785		
	Community/charity involvement	
Volunteered in last 12 months?	Yes	Unknown
Yes	64	58
No	36	42
N=2,785		
	Interested in current affairs and politics	
Enjoy keeping up with political news?	Yes	Unknown
A lot/Some	72	62
Not much/Not at all	28	38
N=2,760		
Regularly gets campaign news from internet?	Use internet	
	Likely	Unknown
Yes	72	42
No	28	58
N=884		

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Survey. Based on matched survey respondents. Columns read down within a category, representing the distribution of respondents within each database characteristic.

they volunteered in the last year, only slightly lower than among the flagged households.

An interest in current affairs or politics is also identified in the database. A 72% majority of those listed as interested in current affairs say they enjoy keeping up with political news a lot or some. This compares with 62% among those not flagged as interested in current affairs.

The standard survey also asked respondents about where they get news about the presidential election. Fully 72% of those identified in the database as in the top 30% of likely heavy internet users said the internet was a source for election news, compared with only 42% of those not identified as a heavy internet user. Those flagged as likely to be heavy newspaper readers and heavy watchers of primetime TV were more likely than those not flagged to say they get campaign news from the sources (38% vs. 25% for newspapers and 88% vs. 72% for primetime TV). However, there is no difference between those flagged and not flagged as heavy radio listeners or magazine readers.

Comparisons of Responding and Refusing Households

These tables show comparisons from the two databases, with non-respondents separated into two groups: refusals and breakoffs, which are confirmed households, and other working numbers for which no contact was made. The latter group likely includes eligible residential households as well as non-residential phone numbers.

Voter Database Comparisons

	Characteristics of landline households who…			
	Survey respondent	**Refusal / Breakoff**	**Other / Unknown**	**All sampled households**
	%	%	%	%
Registered voter	82	80	78	80
Voted in 2010	54	45	42	45
Party registration				
Republican	17	17	18	17
Democrat	23	22	21	22
Other	6	8	10	9
No record of party/ not a party registration state	54	52	50	52
N	593	2902	2070	5565

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Voter database information is based on public voter registration and turnout data. Database comparisons are for landline samples only. Comparisons are between all responding households, refusing households and other or unknown households in the landline sample for the standard survey.

Financial Characteristics

	Characteristics of landline households who…			
	Responding Households	**Refusal / Breakoff**	**Other / Unknown**	**All sampled households**
Overall financial status	%	%	%	%
Top 20%	24	22	20	22
Top 5%	8	7	6	7
Upper 20%	21	21	21	21
Middle 20%	16	17	18	17
Lower 20%	19	20	20	20
Bottom 20%	19	20	20	20
Bottom 5%	5	5	5	5
Estimated net worth				
$500,000+	23	21	23	22
$2,000,000+	5	5	7	6
$250-500,000	17	18	19	18
$100-250,000	25	24	22	23
$25-100,000	16	16	16	16
Under $25,000	19	21	21	21
Under $5,000	12	12	13	12
Homeowner	76	81	77	79
Home value				
$500,000+	9	10	12	11
$275-400,000	15	15	16	16
$175-275,000	21	20	22	21
$100-175,000	26	28	25	27
Under $100,000	29	27	24	26
Minimum N	695	3,490	2,689	6,874

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Household database information comes from a marketing services and information company that has household data on more than 124 million U.S. households. Comparisons are between all responding households, refusing households and other or unknown households in the landline sample for the standard survey.

Media Use, Lifestyle and Interests

	Characteristics of landline households who…			
Database identifies household as…	**Responding Households**	**Refusal / Breakoff**	**Other / Unknown**	**All sampled households**
	%	%	%	%
Computer owner	72	67	68	68
Cell phone owner	42	39	37	39
Media use Likely a heavy				
Internet user	26	25	34	28
Cell phone user	35	31	38	34
Newspaper reader	45	44	38	42
Primetime TV watcher	41	39	30	36
Magazine reader	20	22	29	24
Radio listener	23	21	27	23
Interests				
Community & charities	43	34	30	34
Politics/ current affairs	31	25	25	26
Religious/inspirational	29	23	20	23
Environmental issues	21	15	13	15
Reading	78	75	71	74
Cooking	62	55	50	54
Exercise/health	66	62	58	61
Sports	66	58	55	58
Travel	66	58	64	58
Outdoors	60	54	49	53
Investment/finance	56	49	45	48
Hunting and shooting	31	31	27	30
Camping and hiking	26	20	18	20
Fishing	25	20	19	20
Golf	28	24	23	24
NASCAR	14	10	10	10
Cat owner	23	17	16	17
Dog owner	31	25	23	25
Minimum N	718	3,622	2,796	7,136

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Household database information comes from a marketing services and information company that has household data on more than 124 million U.S. households. Comparisons are between all responding households, refusing households and other or unknown households in the landline sample for the standard survey.

ABOUT THE STUDY

This project was designed and conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The staff includes Andrew Kohut, Scott Keeter, Michael Dimock, Carroll Doherty, Michael Remez, Leah Christian, Jocelyn Kiley, Rob Suls, Shawn Neidorf, Alec Tyson, Danielle Gewurz and Mary Pat Clark. Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Center and director of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, originated this research project in 1997 and oversaw the replication studies in 2003 and 2012. In addition, Paul Taylor, executive vice president of the Pew Research Center and Greg Smith, senior researcher, Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life provided assistance.

The research design for the study was informed by the advice of an expert panel that included Jonathan Best, Mike Brick, Diane Colasanto, Larry Hugick, Courtney Kennedy, Jon Krosnick, Linda Piekarski, Mark Schulman, Evans Witt, and Cliff Zukin. Larry Hugick, Evans Witt, Jonathan Best, Julie Gasior and Stacy DiAngelo of Princeton Survey Research Associates, and the interviewers and staff at Princeton Data Source were responsible for data collection and management. The contribution of Survey Sampling International, which donated the telephone sample and demographic data for the project, is also gratefully acknowledged.

Survey Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on two telephone surveys conducted by landline and cell phone among national samples of adults living in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. One survey, conducted January 4-8, 2012 among 1,507 adults utilized Pew Research's standard survey methodology (902 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone and 605 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 297 who had no landline telephone). The other survey, conducted January 5-March 15, 2012 among 2,226 adults utilized additional methods to increase participation (1,263 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone and 963 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 464 who had no landline telephone). For more on the additional methods used in the high-effort survey, see interviewing section. The surveys were conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. Interviews for both surveys were conducted in English and Spanish.

Sample Design

Both the standard survey and the high-effort survey utilized the following sample design. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; samples for both surveys were provided by Survey Sampling International. Landline and cell phone numbers were sampled to yield a ratio of approximately two completed landline interviews to each cell phone interview.

The design of the landline sample ensures representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including those not yet listed) by using random digit dialing. This method uses random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of the area code, telephone exchange, and bank number. A bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers, for example 800-555-1200 to 800-555-1299. The telephone exchanges are selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within the county. That is, the

number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone numbers in the U.S. Only banks of telephone numbers containing three or more listed residential numbers are selected.

The cell phone sample is drawn through systematic sampling from dedicated wireless banks of 100 contiguous numbers and shared service banks with no directory-listed landline numbers (to ensure that the cell phone sample does not include banks that are also included in the landline sample). The sample is designed to be representative both geographically and by large and small wireless carriers.

Both the landline and cell samples are released for interviewing in replicates, which are small random samples of each larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of telephone numbers ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for all numbers dialed. The use of replicates also improves the overall representativeness of the survey by helping to ensure that the regional distribution of numbers called is appropriate.

Respondent Selection

Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest male or female, 18 years of age or older who is now at home (for half of the households interviewers ask to speak with the youngest male first and for the other half the youngest female). If there is no eligible person of the requested gender at home, interviewers ask to speak with the youngest adult of the opposite gender, who is now at home. This method of selecting respondents within each household improves participation among young people who are often more difficult to interview than older people because of their lifestyles, but this method is not a random sampling of members of the household.

Unlike a landline phone, a cell phone is assumed in Pew Research polls to be a personal device. Interviewers ask if the person who answers the cell phone is 18 years of age or older to determine if the person is eligible to complete the survey. This means that, for those in the cell sample, no effort is made to give other household members a chance to be interviewed. Although some people share cell phones, it is still uncertain whether the benefits of sampling among the users of a shared cell phone outweigh the disadvantages.

Interviewing

Interviewing was conducted at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. Interviews for the both surveys were conducted in English and Spanish. For the standard survey, a minimum of 7 attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled landline and cell phone number. For the high-effort survey, a minimum of 25 attempts were made to complete an interview at every landline number sampled and a minimum of 15 attempts were made for every cell phone number. For both surveys, the calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week (including at least one daytime call) to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. Interviewing was also spread as evenly as possible across the field period. An effort was made to recontact most interview breakoffs and refusals to attempt to convert them to completed interviews.

In the standard survey, people reached on cell phones were offered $5 compensation for the minutes used to complete the survey on their cell phone. In the high-effort survey, a $10

monetary incentive was initially offered to everyone, regardless of what phone they were reached on. After the first five weeks of the field period, the monetary incentive was increased to $20 and all noncontacts and refusals in the landline frame for whom we could match an address to were sent a letter with a $2 incentive. Incentives and mailed letters were used in the high-effort survey because they have been shown to boost participation in many types of surveys. In the high-effort survey, interviewers also left voicemails when possible for both landlines and cell phones that introduced the study and mentioned the incentive. After the first five weeks of the high-effort survey, all calls were made by elite interviewers, who are experienced interviewers that have a proven record of persuading reluctant respondents to participate.

The combined response rate for the standard survey was 9%; 10% in the landline frame and 7% in the cell frame. This response rate is comparable to other surveys using similar procedures conducted by the Pew Research Center and other major opinion polls. The combined response rate for the high-effort survey was 22%; 27% in the landline frame and 16% in the cell frame. The response rate is the percentage of known or assumed residential households for which a completed interview was obtained. See table at end of methodology for full call dispositions and rate calculations. The response rate reported is the American Association for Public Opinion Research's Response Rate 3 (RR3) as outlined in their Standard Definitions.

Weighting

The landline sample is first weighted by household size to account for the fact that people in larger households have a lower probability of being selected. In addition, the combined landline and cell phone sample is weighted to adjust for the overlap of the landline and cell frames (since people with both a landline and cell phone have a greater probability of being included in the sample), including the size of the completed sample from each frame and the estimated ratio of the size of the landline frame to the cell phone frame.

The sample is then weighted to population parameters using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity, region, population density and telephone status and usage. The population parameters for age, education, race/ethnicity, and region are from the Current Population Survey's March 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement and the parameter for population density is from the Decennial Census. The parameter for telephone status and relative usage (of landline phone to cell phone for those with both) is based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The specific weighting parameters are: gender by age, gender by education, age by education, race/ethnicity (including Hispanic origin and nativity), region, density and telephone status and usage; non-Hispanic whites are also balanced on age, education and region. The weighting procedure simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters at once. The final weights are trimmed to prevent individual cases form having too much influence on the final results.

Sampling Error

Sampling error results from collecting data from some, rather than all, members of the population. The standard survey of 1,507 adults had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.9 percentage points with a 95% confidence interval. This means that in 95 out of every 100 samples of the same size and type, the results we obtain would vary by no more than plus or minus 2.9 percentage points from the result we would get if we could interview every member of the population. Thus, the chances are very high (95 out of 100) that any sample we draw will be

within 2.9 points of the true population value. The high-effort survey of 2,226 adults had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.7 percentage points. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost in the sample design and weighting procedures when compared with a simple random sample. The design effect for the standard survey was 1.30 and for the high-effort survey was 1.27.

The following table shows the survey dates, sample sizes, design effects and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for the total sample:

Survey	Dates	Total N	Design effect	Margin of Error Plus or minus…
Standard survey	Jan 4-8, 2012	1,507	1.30	2.9 percentage points
High-effort survey	Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012	2,226	1.27	2.7 percentage points

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Government Benchmarks

Comparisons were made to benchmarks from several government surveys throughout the report. Many of the comparisons are from the Current Population Survey, including the March 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, the September 2011 Volunteering Supplement, the November 2010 Voting Supplement and the Civic Engagement Supplement, as well as the October 2010 Computer and Internet Use Supplement. Comparisons are also made to the 2010 National Health Interview Survey. For most comparisons, an effort was made to match the question wording used in the survey to that used in the government survey. See the topline for full details about which survey a benchmark is from and whether there are any differences in the question wording.

Call Dispositions and Rate Calculations

	Standard survey		*High-effort survey*	
	Landline	**Cell**	**Landline**	**Cell**
	N	N	N	N
Completed interview	902	605	1263	963
Refusals, breakoffs and partials	4719	4836	2643	4020
Incomplete	31	10	17	5
Refusal	3657	3332	2036	3072
Hang up during intro (HUDI)	584	432	368	345
Dialer-nuisance hang-up/Bad reception	6	563	176	350
Callback/Not safe to talk	441	499	46	248
Noncontacts	2464	3114	330	869
Other	104	56	63	67
Language barrier	64	41	48	63
Hearing or health problem	40	15	15	4
Unknown Household eligibility	3305	361	1103	116
Busy	1365	313	496	108
No answer	1940	48	607	8
Not eligible	18427	6084	10367	4951
Not working	14982	5502	8312	4261
Non-residential	2202	214	1304	206
Fax/modem	1236	27	749	17
Cell phone/Child's cell phone	7	341	2	467
Contact rate	62%	62%	86%	84%
Cooperation rate	16%	11%	32%	19%
Response rate	10%	7%	27%	16%
e (proportion of households with unknown eligibility assumed to be eligible)	.31	.59	.29	.54

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Rates computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standard definitions for CON2, COOP3 and RR3.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
2012 METHODOLOGY STUDY
FINAL TOPLINE
Standard Survey: January 4-8, 2012; N=1,507
High-effort Survey: January 5-March 15, 2012; N=2,226

ASK ALL:
Q.1 Overall, how would you rate your community as a place to live? **[READ]**

	Excellent	Good	Only fair	Poor	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	38	43	14	5	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	39	44	13	4	*
FULL TREND:					
Jan 4-8, 2012	38	43	14	5	1
Pew Internet & American Life Project					
Jan 12-25, 2011	38	43	14	4	1
Nov 23-Dec 21, 2010	38	45	13	4	1
Pew Social & Demographic Trends					
October, 2005	41	41	14	4	1

ASK ALL:
Q.2 And, overall are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your personal financial situation?

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	65	33	2
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	65	33	2

TREND FOR COMPARISON
Pew Research Center's Social and Demographic Trends
On the whole, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your personal financial situation?
[IF SATISFIED/DISSATISFIED: Would you say you are VERY satisfied/dissatisfied or SOMEWHAT satisfied/dissatisfied?**]**

	--------Satisfied--------			------Dissatisfied------			(VOL.) Other/
	Total	*Very*	*Somewhat*	Total	*Very*	*Somewhat*	DK/Ref
Dec 6-19, 2011	65	*27*	*38*	33	*17*	*16*	2
Sept 1-15, 2011	60	*25*	*35*	37	*18*	*19*	2
Mar 15-29, 2011	67	*28*	*39*	31	*14*	*17*	2
Oct 1-21, 2010	69	*29*	*40*	28	*14*	*14*	2
Feb 23-Mar 23, 2009	66	*23*	*43*	31	*13*	*18*	3

NO QUESTIONS 3-4

ASK ALL:
Q.5 During a typical month in the past year, how often did you talk with any of your neighbors **[READ]**?

	Basically every day	A few times a week	A few times a month	Once a month	Not at all	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods						
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	20	38	20	10	11	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	21	37	20	10	10	1
Nov 2010 Current Population Survey	13	28	23	13	19	4

ASK ALL:

Q.6 In an average week, about how many days, if any, do you go out in the evenings, either for work or for fun? **[INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ CATEGORIES; PROBE FOR SINGLE BEST GUESS; IF R INSISTS ON A RANGE, CODE LOWER NUMBER IN RANGE.]**

	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(VOL.) DK/Ref	*Mean*
2012 methods										
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	20	17	19	14	7	7	3	11	1	*2.58*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	16	19	18	15	10	9	3	9	2	*2.69*
2003 methods										
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	15	21	20	17	8	8	3	7	1	*2.52*
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	14	20	20	16	10	8	2	9	1	*2.62*

ASK ALL:

INT1 Do you use the internet, at least occasionally?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	80	20	*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	80	20	*
Oct 2010 Current Population Survey[1]	74	26	--

ASK ALL:

INT2 Do you send or receive email, at least occasionally?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	73	27	*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	74	26	*

ASK ALL:

INT3 Do you access the internet on a cell phone, tablet or other mobile handheld device, at least occasionally?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	54	46	*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	52	47	*

INT1/INT2/INT3 COMBINED:

	Internet user	Not an internet user
2012 methods		
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	83	17
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	83	17

[1] For the 2010 Current Population Survey, an internet user is defined as someone who said yes to either of the following questions: "At home, do you access the Internet?" and "Do you access the Internet at any location outside the home?".

ASK ALL INTERNET USERS (INT1=1 OR INT2=1 OR INT3=1):
Q.9 Do you ever... **[INSERT ITEM IN ORDER]**?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref	*Not an internet user*	N
a. Use Twitter					
2012 methods					
Based on internet users:					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	14	86	*	--	1,260
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	12	87	*	--	1,843
Based on total:					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	12	71	*	*17*	1,507
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	10	72	*	*17*	2,226
b. Use social networking sites, such as Facebook, Google+ or LinkedIn					
2012 methods					
Based on internet users:					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	68	32	*	--	1,260
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	67	32	*	--	1,843
Based on total:					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	56	26	*	*17*	1,507
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	56	27	*	*17*	2,226

NO QUESTION 10

ASK ALL:
We are interested in volunteer activities for which people are not paid, except perhaps expenses. We only want you to include volunteer activities that you did through or for an organization, even if you only did them once in a while.
Q.11 In the last 12 months, that is since January 1st of last year, have you done any volunteer activities through or for an organization?
ASK IF HAVE NOT VOLUNTEERED (Q.11=2,9):
Q.12 Sometimes people don't think of activities they do infrequently or activities they do for children's schools or youth organizations as volunteer activities. Since January 1st of last year, have you done any of these types of volunteer activities?

BASED ON TOTAL:

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	55	44	*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)[2]	56	44	*
Sep 2011 Current Population Survey	27	73	*

NO QUESTIONS 13-16

[2] For the High-effort survey, the month changed from January to February to March when each new month began. In the September 2011 Current Population Survey, both questions read "Since September 1st of last year, have you done…"

ASK ALL:

ATTEND Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

	More than once a week	Once a week	Once or twice a month	A few times a year	Seldom	Never	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods							
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	12	23	12	16	14	21	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	13	21	13	17	17	19	*
2003 methods							
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	13	24	16	20	17	9	1
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	13	23	16	19	18	11	*
1997 methods							
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	12	26	17	20	15	10	*
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	11	26	17	22	15	9	*

ASK ALL:

Q.17 Here are some pairs of statements. For each please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right. The first pair is... **[INSERT FIRST PAIR; RANDOMIZE PAIRS BUT NOT STATEMENTS WITHIN EACH PAIR]**. The next pair is **[INSERT NEXT PAIR]**.

a.

	Immigrants today strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents	Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care	(VOL.) Neither/DK
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	48	37	15
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	52	35	13
2003 methods			
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	46	44	10
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	45	44	11
1997 methods			
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	41	48	11
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	40	52	8
FULL TREND:			
Jan 4-8, 2012	48	37	15
Feb 22-Mar 14, 2011	45	44	12
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 *(RVs)*	44	42	14
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	42	45	13
Jun 16-20, 2010	39	50	11
Oct 28-Nov 30, 2009	46	40	14
October, 2006	41	41	18
March, 2006	41	52	7
December, 2005	45	44	11
December, 2004	45	44	11
June, 2003	46	44	10
September, 2000	50	38	12
August, 1999	46	44	10
October, 1997	41	48	11
June, 1997	41	48	11
April, 1997	38	52	10

Q.17 CONTINUED…

	Immigrants today strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents	Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care	(VOL.) Neither/DK
June, 1996	37	54	9
July, 1994	31	63	6

b.	Homosexuality should be accepted by society	Homosexuality should be discouraged by society	(VOL.) Neither/DK
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	56	32	12
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	56	34	10
2003 methods			
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	47	45	8
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	51	43	6
1997 methods			
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	45	50	5
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	48	46	6
FULL TREND:			
Jan 4-8, 2012	56	32	12
Feb 22-Mar 14, 2011	58	33	8
October, 2006[3]	51	38	11
December, 2004	49	44	7
June, 2003	47	45	8
September, 2000	50	41	9
August, 1999	49	44	7
October, 1997	46	48	6
June, 1997	45	50	5
October, 1996	44	49	7
April, 1996	44	49	7
October, 1995	45	50	5
April, 1995	47	48	5
October, 1994	46	48	6
July, 1994	46	49	5

c.	Racial discrimination is the main reason why many black people can't get ahead these days	Blacks who can't get ahead in this country are mostly responsible for their own condition	(VOL.) Neither/DK
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	21	60	19
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	23	61	15
2003 methods			
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	24	64	12
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	25	62	13
1997 methods			
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	33	54	13
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	29	61	10

[3] In 2006 and before, both answer choices began "Homosexuality is a way of life that should be…"

Q.17 CONTINUED…

FULL TREND:	Racial discrimination is the main reason why many black people can't get ahead these days	Blacks who can't get ahead in this country are mostly responsible for their own condition	(VOL.) Neither/DK
Jan 4-8, 2012	21	60	19
Feb 22-Mar 14, 2011	26	60	14
Oct 28-Nov 30, 2009	18	67	15
September, 2005	26	59	15
December, 2004	27	60	13
June, 2003	24	64	12
September, 2000	31	54	15
August, 1999	28	59	13
October, 1997	25	61	14
June, 1997	33	54	13
October, 1996	28	58	14
October, 1995	37	53	10
April, 1995	34	56	10
October, 1994	34	54	12
July, 1994	32	59	9

d.	Wall Street helps the American economy more than it hurts	Wall Street hurts the American economy more than it helps	(VOL.) Neither/DK
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	36	48	16
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	37	47	16
FULL TREND:			
Jan 4-8, 2012	36	48	16
Dec 7-11, 2011	36	51	13
Mar 8-14, 2011	38	47	15

ASK ALL:

Q.18 Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

	Most people can be trusted	Can't be too careful in dealing w/ people	(VOL.) Other/ Depends	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	40	56	2	2
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	42	55	2	1
General Social Survey 2010[4]	33	62	5	*
2003 methods				
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	35	58	4	3
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	31	62	5	2
1997 methods				
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	42	54	3	1
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	43	54	2	1
FULL TREND:				
Jan 4-8, 2012	40	56	2	2

[4] See General Social Survey for complete trend.

Q.18 CONTINUED…

	Most people can be trusted	Can't be too careful in dealing w/ people	(VOL.) Other/ Depends	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	35	61	3	2
Mar 11-21, 2010[5]	36	60	2	1
Jan 14-17, 2010 *Social & Demographic Trends*	31	64	4	1
Oct, 2006	41	54	3	2
Jun, 2003	35	58	4	3
Mid-Nov, 2001	42	55	2	1
Nov, 1998	36	57	6	1
Jun, 1997	42	54	3	1
Feb, 1997	45	52	2	1

ASK ALL:

Q.19 If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing fewer services, or a bigger government providing more services?

	Smaller government, fewer services	Bigger government, more services	(VOL.) Depends	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	52	39	2	7
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	49	43	1	7
FULL TREND:				
Jan 4-8, 2012	52	39	2	7
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	48	41	2	8
Mar 8-14, 2011	50	42	3	5
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	50	42	3	5
Apr 1-5, 2010	50	39	4	8
Feb 3-9, 2010	50	40	3	7
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	51	40	4	6
Mar 9-12, 2009	48	40	3	9
Late October 2008	42	43	4	11
November 2007	47	42	4	7
January 2007	45	43	4	8
LA Times/Bloomberg: January 2006	49	38	--	13
LA Times: January 2005	52	36	--	12
ABC/Wash Post: June 2004	50	46	--	4
CBS/NYT: November 2003	45	42	4	9
CBS/NYT: July 2003	48	40	5	7
ABC: November 2002 *(Likely voters)*	60	35	--	5
Wash Post: September 2002	54	39	--	7
ABC/Wash Post: July 2002	53	42	--	6
ABC/Wash Post: January 2002	54	41	--	5
CBS/NYT: January 2002	46	40	3	11
LA Times: November 2001	48	41	--	11
CBS/NYT: October 2001	48	39	3	11
LA Times: March 2001	59	29	--	12
CBS: January 2001	51	36	5	8
CBS: November 2000	54	31	5	10
CBS: October 2000	57	32	5	6

[5] In March 2010, question began, "Thinking about people more generally…"

Q.19 CONTINUED…

	Smaller government, fewer services	Bigger government, more services	(VOL.) Depends	(VOL.) DK/Ref
ABC/Wash Post: October 2000 *(RV)*	58	32	--	10
ABC/Wash Post: Early October 2000 *(RV)*	58	33	--	9
LA Times: September 2000 *(RV)*	59	26	--	15
ABC/Wash Post: July 2000	59	34	--	7
ABC/Wash Post: April 2000	56	38	--	7
CBS: September 1999	46	43	5	6
ABC/Wash Post: August 1998	59	35	--	6
ABC/Wash Post: August 1996	63	32	--	5
LA Times: April 1996	62	28	--	10
CBS/NYT: February 1996	61	30	4	5
LA Times: October 1995	68	23	--	9
LA Times: September 1995	62	27	--	11
LA Times: January 1995	63	27	--	10
LA Times: June 1993	60	29	--	11
ABC/Wash Post: February 1993	67	30	--	2
ABC/Wash Post: July 1992	55	38	--	7
CBS/NYT: October 1991	42	43	7	8
CBS/NYT: January 1989[6]	41	48	4	7
CBS/NYT: October 1988 *(Likely voters)*	47	37	7	9
ABC/Wash Post: July 1988	49	45	--	6
CBS/NYT: May 1988	43	44	5	8
ABC/Wash Post: July 1984	49	43	--	7
CBS/NYT: March 1980	54	32	--	14
CBS/NYT: June 1978	53	36	--	11
Wash Post: January 1978	40	39	--	21
CBS/NYT: November 1976	42	45	--	13
CBS/NYT: October 1976 *(RV)*	49	37	--	14
CBS/NYT: September 1976 *(RV)*	48	41	--	11
CBS/NYT: June 1976	42	43	--	15
CBS/NYT: May 1976	41	43	--	16
CBS/NYT: April 1976	40	44	--	16

ASK ALL:

And a few questions about you…

Q.20 In the last 12 months, that is between January 2011 and now, have you contacted or visited a public official - at any level of government - to express your opinion?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	31	69	*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)[7]	29	71	*
Nov 2010	10	88	2

[6] In 1989 and earlier, CBS/NYT question read, "In general, government grows bigger as it provides more services. If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing less services or a bigger government providing more services?"

[7] For the High-effort survey, the month changed from January to February to March when each new month began. In the November 2010 Current Population Survey, question read "I am going to read a list of things some people have done to express their views. Please tell me whether or not you have done any of the following in the last 12 months, that is between November 2009 and now: Contacted or visited a public official – at any level of government – to express your opinion?"

Current Population Survey

ASK ALL:

Q.21 Do you currently have a valid United States passport, or not?

	Yes	No	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods			
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	45	54	1
Jan 5-Feb 29, 2012 (High-effort)	43	56	1
FULL TREND:			
Jan 4-8, 2012	45	54	1
Apr 7-10, 2011[8]	42	57	*
CBS/NYT: November, 2004	36	64	--
CBS/NYT: May, 1993	20	79	1
CBS/NYT: May, 1989	23	77	1

NO QUESTION 22

ASK ALL:

HH1 How many people, including yourself, live in your household?
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO THINK OF THIS HOUSEHOLD AS THEIR PRIMARY PLACE OF RESIDENCE, INCLUDING THOSE WHO ARE TEMPORARILY AWAY ON BUSINESS, VACATION, IN A HOSPITAL, OR AWAY AT SCHOOL. THIS INCLUDES INFANTS, CHILDREN AND ADULTS.]

	One	Two	Three-Four	Five or more	Mean
2012 methods[9]					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	15	31	39	15	2.99
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	15	32	38	15	2.94
March 2011 Current Population Survey	14	33	36	16	2.54
2003 methods					
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	18	31	38	12	2.44
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	23	31	36	11	2.35
1997 methods					
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	19	32	35	13	2.42
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	11	34	40	15	2.60

[8] In April 2011 item was asked as part of a list. In May 1993 survey asked whether respondents had a "valid passport."

[9] Results have been repercentaged to exclude those who did not provide a response.

ASK IF MORE THAN ONE PERSON IN HH (HH1>1):

HH3 How many, including yourself, are adults, age 18 and older?

BASED ON TOTAL:

	One	Two	Three-Four	Five or more	Mean
2012 methods[10]					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	18	52	26	3	2.11
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	20	52	25	4	2.09
March 2011 Current Population Survey	17	53	26	4	2.17
2003 methods[10]					
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	25	53	21	2	2.00
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	29	54	17	1	1.89
1997 methods					
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	29	53	16	2	1.90
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	15	59	24	3	2.15

ASK ALL:

Q.23 At any time during 2011, did **[IF HH1=1:** you**; IF HH1>1:** anyone in this household**]** receive any State or Federal unemployment compensation?

	Yes	No
2012 methods[11]		
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	11	89
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	13	87
March 2011 Current Population Survey	11	89

ASK ALL:

Q.24 During 2011, did **[IF HH1=1:** you**; IF HH1>1:** anyone in this household**]** receive any Social Security payments from the U.S. Government?

	Yes	No
2012 methods[12]		
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	32	68
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	33	67
March 2011 Current Population Survey	27	73

[10] In 2003 and 1997 question read "How many of these, including yourself, are adults 18 years of age or older?"

[11] Results have been repercentaged to exclude those who did not provide a response.

ASK ALL:

Q.25 At any time during 2011, even for one month, did **[IF HH1=1:** you**; IF HH1>1:** anyone in this household**]** receive any food assistance from a supplemental nutrition or food stamp program or a food assistance benefit card, such as an EBT card? **[INTERVIEWER NOTE:** do not include benefits from WIC, the Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program**]**

	Yes	No
2012 methods[12]		
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	17	83
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	18	82
March 2011 Current Population Survey[12]	10	90
2003 methods[13]		
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	6	94
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	7	93

NO QUESTION 26

ASK ALL:

Q.27 Would you say your health in general is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods						
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	20	30	31	12	5	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	23	27	30	13	5	*
March 2011 Current Population Survey[14]	26	32	27	10	4	--
2010 National Health Interview Survey[15]	29	31	27	10	3	*

[12] In the March 2011 Current Population Survey, question read "At any time during 2010, even for one month, did (you/anyone in this household) receive any food assistance from [State program name] or a food assistance benefit card [such as State EBT card name)?"

[13] In 2003 question read "Did you/anyone in this household get food stamps at any time during 2002?"

[14] In the March 2011 Current Population Survey, question was preceded by "An important factor in evaluating a person's or family's health insurance situation is their current health status and/or the current health status of other family members."

[15] In the 2010 National Health Interview Survey, this question came after a series of questions asking about various illnesses and ailments.

ASK ALL:
Q.28 The next question is about cigarette smoking. Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your ENTIRE LIFE **[INTERVIEWER NOTE:** 5 packs=100 cigarettes**]**?
ASK IF HAS SMOKED 100 CIGARETTES (Q.28=1):
Q.29 Do you NOW smoke cigarettes every day, some days, or not at all?

	Yes, have smoked 100 cig.	----------*Now smoke…*---------- *Every day*	*Some days*	*Not at all*	*(VOL.) DK/Ref*	No, have not smoked 100 cig.	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods							
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	47	*16*	*6*	*24*	*0*	53	*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	45	*15*	*6*	*24*	*	54	1
2010 National Health Interview Survey	41	*15*	*4*	*22*	*0*	59	1
2003 methods							
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	50	*20*	*6*	*24*	*0*	50	*
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	50	*18*	*5*	*27*	*0*	50	*

NO QUESTIONS 30-38

ASK ALL:
Q.39 And how much do you enjoy keeping up with political news about campaigns and elections – a lot, some, not much, or not at all?

	A lot	Some	Not much	Not at all	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	23	34	26	17	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	27	35	21	16	1
FULL TREND:					
Jan 4-8, 2012	23	34	26	17	1
December, 2007	26	39	23	11	1
Early January, 2004	17	37	29	16	1

ASK ALL:

REGIST These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district or haven't you been able to register so far?
[INSTRUCTION: IF RESPONDENT VOLUNTEERS THAT THEY ARE IN NORTH DAKOTA AND DON'T HAVE TO REGISTER, PUNCH 1 FOR REGIST AND REGICERT]

ASK IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' YES IN REGIST:

REGICERT Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote, or is there a chance that your registration has lapsed because you moved or for some other reason?

BASED ON TOTAL:	Yes, registered	*Absolutely certain*	*Chance has lapsed*	*(VOL.) DK/Ref*	No, not registered	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods						
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	74	*71*	*3*	*	26	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	74	*69*	*5*	*	24	1
2003 methods						
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	76	*72*	*4*	*	24	*
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	73	*67*	*5*	*1*	27	*
1997 methods						
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	77	*73*	*3*	*1*	22	1
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	77	*72*	*4*	*1*	22	*
BASED ON CITIZENS:						
2012 methods						
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	78	*75*	*3*	*	21	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	79	*74*	*5*	*	19	1

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

November 2010 Current Population Survey

ASK IF CITIZEN: In any election, some people are not able to vote because they are sick or busy or have some other reason, and others do not want to vote. Did you vote in the election held on Tuesday, November 2, 2010? IF DID NOT VOTE: Were you registered to vote in the November 2, 2010 election?

BASED ON CITIZENS:	Yes, registered	No, not registered	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Nov 2010 Current Population Survey[16]	75	21	5

[16] For the November 2010 Current Population Survey, those who did not answer the voting supplement are excluded from the analysis.

ASK ALL:
OFTVOTE How often would you say you vote...**[READ IN ORDER]**?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1,165/1,598]:

	Always	Nearly always	Part of the time	Seldom	(VOL.) Never vote	(VOL.) Other	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods							
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	60	24	8	6	1	1	*
Jan 5-Feb 29, 2012 (High-effort)	56	28	10	5	1	*	*
2003 methods							
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	48	36	11	3	1	*	0
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	51	34	10	3	1	1	0
1997 methods							
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	54	30	10	4	1	*	*
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	52	32	10	4	1	*	*

Full OFTVOTE trend available at http://www.people-press.org/files/2012/04/OFTVOTE-full-trend.pdf

NO QUESTIONS 40-77

DEMOGRAPHICS FOR HH1, HH3, SEX, AGE, EDUC, RACE, NATIVITY, CITIZENSHIP AND REGION ARE REPERCENTAGED BASED ON THOSE WHO PROVIDED A RESPONSE. DEMOGRAPHICS FOR SEX, AGE, EDUC, RACE, AND REGION ARE WEIGHTED TO ACCOUNT ONLY FOR PROBABILITY OF SELECTION. ALL OTHER DEMOGRAPHICS ARE BASED ON FULLY WEIGHTED DATA THAT ALSO INCLUDES THE POSTSTRATIFICATION ADJUSTMENTS.

ASK ALL:
Now, just a few questions for statistical purposes only.
SEX **[ENTER RESPONDENT'S SEX:]**

	Male	Female
2012 methods		
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	48	52
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	48	52
March 2011 Current Population Survey	49	51
2003 methods		
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	47	53
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	43	57
1997 methods		
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	45	55
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	42	58

ASK ALL:
AGE What is your age?

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
2012 methods[17]				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	21	29	31	20
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	18	29	31	22
March 2011 Current Population Survey	22	35	25	17
2003 methods				
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	20	39	24	17
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	16	38	26	19
1997 methods				
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	21	45	17	17
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	17	46	19	19

ASK ALL:
EDUC What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received? **[DO NOT READ]**

	Less than high school	High school graduate	Some college	College graduate
2012 methods[18]				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	9	25	27	39
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	9	27	31	33
March 2011 Current Population Survey	13	30	28	28
2003 methods[18]				
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	8	33	24	35
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	11	33	25	32
1997 methods				
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	11	38	23	28
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	9	34	24	33

[17] Results have been repercentaged to exclude those who did not provide a response and based on data weighted to account for probability of selection but not any additional poststratification.

[18] 2003 and earlier question read "What was the last grade or class that you completed in school?"

ASK ALL:

HISP Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?

RACE Which of the following describes your race? You can select as many as apply. **[READ LIST. RECORD UP TO FOUR RESPONSES IN ORDER MENTIONED BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS]**

	----------Non-Hispanic----------				
	White	Black or African American	Asian or Asian American	Other	Hispanic[19]
2012 methods[20]					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	73	10	2	5	11
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	66	14	3	5	13
March 2011 Current Population Survey[21]	68	12	5	2	14
2003 methods					
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	76	11	2	4	7
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	74	11	2	3	11
1997 methods					
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	76	12	2	4	7
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	81	8	2	3	6

ASK IF NOT HISPANIC (HISP=2,9):

USBORN1 Were you born in the United States or in another country?

ASK IF HISPANIC (HISP=1):

BIRTH_HISP Were you born in the United States, on the island of Puerto Rico, or in another country?

	Born in U.S.[22]	Born in another country
2012 methods[23]		
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	88	12
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	87	13
March 2011 Current Population Survey	84	16

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Were you, either of your parents, or any of your grandparents born in a country other than the United States or Canada?

	Born in U.S. or Canada	Born in another country	**(VOL.)** DK/Ref
2003 methods			
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	93	6	1
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	92	7	1
1997 methods			
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	94	4	2
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	96	3	1

[19] Spanish language interviewing was offered on both the standard and High-effort surveys in 2012 and on the High-effort survey in 2003 but not on the standard survey or on either the standard or High-effort surveys in 1997.

[20] Results have been repercentaged to exclude those who did not provide a response and based on data weighted to account for probability of selection but not any additional poststratification.

[21] In the March 2011 Current Population Survey, race question read "I am going to read you a list of five race categories. Please choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, OR Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander?" In 2003, Hispanic question read "Are you, yourself, of Hispanic origin or descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or some other Spanish background?" and race question read "What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian or some other?"; if respondent was Hispanic, race question read "Are you white Hispanic, black Hispanic, or some other race?". In 1997, Hispanic and race questions were the same except Asian was not read.

[22] Includes those born in Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories.

[23] Results have been repercentaged to exclude those who did not provide a response.

ASK IF NOT BORN IN US, PUERTO RICO OR US TERRITORIES (USBORN1=2,9 OR BIRTH_HISP=3,9):
CITIZEN Are you a citizen of the United States, or not?

BASED ON TOTAL:

	Yes	*Born in U.S*	*Naturalized citizen*	No
2012 methods[24]				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	95	*88*	*7*	5
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	94	*87*	*7*	6
March 2011 Current Population Survey	92	*85*	*7*	8

ASK ALL:
MARITAL Are you now married, widowed, divorced, separated, never married or living with a partner? **[IF R SAYS "SINGLE," PROBE TO DETERMINE WHICH CATEGORY IS APPROPRIATE]**

	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Never married	Living w/ partner[25]	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods							
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	50	7	9	2	22	7	2
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	48	6	11	3	23	7	1
2010 National Health Interview Survey	54	6	9	2	21	7	*
2003 methods							
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	53	9	13	3	22	--	*
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	52	9	15	2	22	--	*
1997 methods							
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	54	7	13	3	23	--	*
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	60	7	11	2	20	--	*

ASK ALL:
PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?
ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):
PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Rep	Dem	Ind	(VOL.) No pref.	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	*Lean Rep*	*Lean Dem*
2012 methods								
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	26	31	35	4	*	4	*14*	*14*
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	27	32	32	5	*	4	*12*	*14*
2003 methods								
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	32	31	30	5	1	1	*13*	*13*
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	26	30	35	6	*	3	*14*	*13*
1997 methods								
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	28	32	35	3	*	2	*13*	*15*
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	29	34	32	3	*	2	*11*	*15*
FULL TREND:								
March 7-11, 2012	24	34	36	3	1	2	*16*	*17*
Feb 8-12, 2012	26	32	36	4	1	2	*13*	*17*
Jan 11-16, 2012	22	31	42	3	*	2	*17*	*16*
Jan 4-8, 2012	26	31	35	4	*	4	*14*	*14*

[24] Results have been repercentaged to exclude those who did not provide a response.
[25] In 2003 and 1997, "living with a partner" was not offered as an option.

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED…

Yearly Totals	Rep	Dem	Ind	(VOL.) No pref.	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	*Lean Rep*	*Lean Dem*
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	0.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	0.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	0.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36	31.5	3.6	0.3	3	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	0.4	2.9	10.9	17
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	0.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	0.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30	33.5	29.5	3.8	0.4	3	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	0.5	2.5	12	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5	0.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29	33.2	29.5	5.2	0.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	*30.9*	*31.8*	*27.9*	*5.2*	*0.6*	*3.6*	*11.7*	*9.4*
2001 Pre-Sept 11	*27.3*	*34.4*	*30.9*	*5.1*	*0.6*	*1.7*	*12.1*	*13.5*
2000	28	33.4	29.1	5.5	0.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	0.5	1.9	13	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	0.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28	33.4	32	4	0.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3	0.4	2	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30	33.7	2.4	0.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

ASK ALL:
IDEO In general, would you describe your political views as... **[READ]**

	Very conservative	Conservative	Moderate	Liberal	Very liberal	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods						
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	7	28	34	15	8	7
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	6	30	34	17	5	7
2003 methods						
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	6	33	36	14	7	4
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	5	30	40	13	5	7
1997 methods						
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	7	30	40	14	5	4
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	5	30	41	15	5	4

ASK ALL:

TEAPARTY2 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

	Agree	Disagree	No opinion either way	(VOL.) Haven't heard of	(VOL.) Refused	*Not heard of/DK*
2012 methods						
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	18	25	52	2	3	--
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	18	22	54	2	3	--
FULL TREND:						
March 7-11, 2012	19	29	48	2	2	--
Feb 8-12, 2012	18	25	53	2	2	--
Jan 11-16, 2012	20	24	52	2	2	--
Jan 4-8, 2012	18	25	52	2	3	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	19	27	50	2	2	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	20	27	51	1	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	19	27	51	2	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	20	27	50	1	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	20	24	53	1	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	20	26	50	3	2	--
May 25-30, 2011	18	23	54	2	2	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	22	29	47	1	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	19	25	54	1	1	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	20	25	52	2	2	--
Feb 2-7, 2011[26]	22	22	53	2	2	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	24	22	50	2	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	22	26	49	2	2	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	27	22	49	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 *(RVs)*	29	25	32	--	1	*13*
Oct 13-18, 2010 *(RVs)*	28	24	30	--	1	*16*
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 *(RVs)*	29	26	32	--	1	*13*
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	22	18	37	--	1	*21*
Jun 16-20, 2010	24	18	30	--	*	*27*
May 20-23, 2010	25	18	31	--	1	*25*
Mar 11-21, 2010	24	14	29	--	1	*31*

[26] In the February 2-7, 2011 survey and before, question read "…do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement…" In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May 2010 through October 2010, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March 2010 it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."

ASK ALL:
OWNRENT Do you own or rent your home?

	Own	Rent	(VOL.) Other arrangement	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	63	33	3	1
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	61	34	4	1
March 2011 Current Population Survey	69	29	1	--
2010 National Health Interview Survey[27]	62	33	3	2
2003 methods				
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	70	26	4	*
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	65	29	5	1

ASK ALL:
Q.78 How long have you lived at this address **[OPEN END; DO NOT READ PRECODE LIST]**?

BASED ON TOTAL:	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-4 years	5 years or more	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods					
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	16	13	13	56	2
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	14	14	13	59	1
BASED ON CITIZENS:					
November 2010 Current Population Survey[28]	13	13	12	59	2

ASK ALL:
ZIPCODE What is your zipcode?

Region that respondent lives in, based on self-reported zipcode:

	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
2012 methods[29]				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	16	24	36	25
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	18	22	40	21
March 2011 Current Population Survey	18	22	37	23
2003 methods				
Jun 4-8, 2003 (Standard)	18	26	38	18
Jun 4-Oct 30, 2003 (High-effort)	17	23	39	20
1997 methods				
Jun 18-22, 1997 (Standard)	20	26	35	19
Jun 18-Aug 12, 1997 (High-effort)	21	24	36	18

[27] In the 2010 National Health Interview survey, question read "Is this (house/apartment) owned or being bought, rented, or occupied by some other arrangement by you (or someone in your family)?"

[28] In November 2010 Current Population Survey, question asked only of citizens; those who did not answer the voting supplement are excluded from the analysis.

[29] Results are based on data weighted to account for probability of selection but not any additional poststratification.

ASK ALL:
Q.79 And thinking about this interview, would you say that you enjoyed the interview **[READ]**?

	A lot	A little	Not at all	(VOL.) DK/Ref
2012 methods				
Jan 4-8, 2012 (Standard)	37	51	10	2
Jan 5-Mar 15, 2012 (High-effort)	46	43	7	3