

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
AND PEW FORUM ON RELIGION & PUBLIC LIFE
2009 RELIGION & PUBLIC LIFE SURVEY**

FINAL TOPLINE

Survey A: August 11-17, 2009, N=2,010

Survey B: August 20-27, 2009, N=2,003

Combined N=4,013

NOTE: QUESTION NUMBERING IS NOT CONTINUOUS BECAUSE SOME ITEMS HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY RELEASED OR HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

On another subject...

Q.240 Do you think abortion should be [READ]

(PLEASE READ CATEGORIES IN REVERSE ORDER FOR HALF THE SAMPLE)

NOTE: THIS ITEM WAS ASKED AS Q.240 IN SURVEY B AND AS Q.125 IN SURVEY A. THE TWO ITEMS ARE PRESENTED TOGETHER HERE.¹

	Legal in all <u>cases</u>	Legal in most <u>cases</u>	Illegal in most <u>cases</u>	Illegal in all <u>cases</u>	[VOL. DO NOT READ] <u>DK/Ref</u>	NET <i>Legal in all/most</i>	NET <i>Illegal in all/most</i>
August 11-27, 2009	16	31	27	17	8	47	45
April, 2009	18	28	28	16	10	46	44
Late October, 2008	18	35	24	16	7	53	40
Mid-October, 2008	19	38	22	14	7	57	36
August, 2008	17	37	26	15	5	54	41
June, 2008	19	38	24	13	6	57	37
November, 2007	18	33	29	15	5	51	44
October, 2007	21	32	24	15	8	53	39
August, 2007	17	35	26	17	5	52	43
February, 2006 <i>AP/Ipsos-Poll</i>	19	32	27	16	6	51	43
December 2005 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	17	40	27	13	3	57	40
April 2005 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	20	36	27	14	3	56	41
December 2004 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	21	34	25	17	3	55	42
May 2004 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	23	31	23	20	2	54	43
January 2003 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	23	34	25	17	2	57	42
August 2001 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	22	27	28	20	3	49	48
June 2001 <i>ABC/BeliefNet</i>	22	31	23	20	4	53	43
January 2001 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	21	38	25	14	1	59	39
September 2000 <i>(RVs) ABC/Wash Post</i>	20	35	25	16	3	55	41
July 2000 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	20	33	26	17	4	53	43
September 1999 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	20	37	26	15	2	57	41
March 1999 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	21	34	27	15	3	55	42
July 1998 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	19	35	29	13	4	54	42
August 1996 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	22	34	27	14	3	56	41
June 1996 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	24	34	25	14	2	58	39
October 1995 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	26	35	25	12	3	61	37
September 1995 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	24	36	25	11	4	60	36
July 1995 <i>ABC/Wash Post</i>	27	32	26	14	1	59	40

¹ The introduction to Q.125 Survey A read, "Now thinking about the abortion issue..."

ASK SURVEY A IF Q.125<9:

Q.126 Which one of the following has had the biggest influence on your thinking on the issue of abortion...
[READ AND RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS WITH OPTION 6 ALWAYS LAST]

	Based on <u>Total</u>	---Views on Abortion---	
		<u>Illegal in most/all cases</u>	<u>Legal in most/all cases</u>
Your religious beliefs	29	53	11
Your education	19	12	30
A personal experience	13	9	20
The views of your friends and family	6	5	7
What you have seen or read in the media	4	4	6
OR Something else	18	16	25
Don't know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]	1	1	1
<i>No opinion on abortion</i>	<i>(10)</i>		
		[N=890]	[N=926]

ASK ALL SURVEY A:

Q.127 Over the past year or so, have your views on abortion changed, or have they pretty much stayed the same?

ASK IF VIEWS HAVE CHANGED (Q.127=1)

Q.128 And have you become **[READ AND RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 AND 2]**

BASED ON TOTAL

- 5 Changed
 - 1 More supportive of restricting access to abortion
 - 3 More supportive of a woman's right to choose an abortion
 - * Other **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
 - * Don't know/refused **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
- 93 Stayed the same
- 2 Don't know/refused **(VOL.)**

ASK IF Q.128=1,2 [N=77]:

Q.129 And just in your own words, what is the main reason that you have become **[IF Q.128=1, INSERT: more supportive of restricting access to abortion?; IF Q.128=2, INSERT: more supportive of a woman's right to choose an abortion?]** **[OPEN END. RECORD ONE MENTION?]**

Q.129 RESULTS NOT SHOWN; USED FOR QUALITATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.

ASK ALL SURVEY A:

Q.130 Which comes closer to your view about the abortion issue **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

		July <u>2006</u>
60	The country needs to find a middle ground on abortion laws, [OR]	66
29	There's no room for compromise when it comes to abortion laws	29
11	Don't know/refused (VOL.)	5

ASK ALL SURVEY A:

Q.135 As far as you know, what is Barack Obama's position on abortion? Is he PRO-CHOICE, that is, supports a woman's right to choose an abortion, or is he PRO-LIFE, that is, supports restricting access to abortion in most cases?

		<i>Trend for comparison</i> <i>(RVs)²</i> June <u>2008</u>
58	Pro choice / supports a woman's right to choose	52
14	Pro life / supports restricting access in most cases	10
28	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	38

ASK SURVEY A IF SAYS OBAMA IS PRO-CHOICE (Q.135=1):

Q.136 Do you [worry that Obama will go too far in supporting abortion rights], [worry that Obama won't go far ENOUGH in supporting abortion rights], OR think that Obama will handle the issue of abortion about right? **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS IN BRACKETS]**

BASED ON TOTAL SURVEY A

19	Worry that Obama will go too far in supporting abortion rights
4	Worry that Obama won't go far ENOUGH in supporting abortion rights,
29	Think he will handle the issue about right
6	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
(42)	<i>Pro-life/DK/Ref in Q.135</i>

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.241 Do you ever wonder whether your own position on abortion is the right one or not?

		<i>Gallup</i>	
		July <u>2006</u>	Dec <u>1988</u>
26	Yes	30	33
66	No	66	60
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	7

²

In June 2008, this question was asked about John McCain and Barack Obama among registered voters and those who plan to register.

ASK ALL SURVEY B:

Q.242 Do you think the issue of abortion is a critical issue facing the country, one among many important issues, or not that important compared to other issues?

		March
		<u>2006</u>
15	A critical issue facing the country	28
33	One among many important issues	38
48	Not that important compared to other issues	32
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2

ASK SURVEY B IF ABORTION SHOULD BE LEGAL (Q.240=1,2) [N=973]:

Q.243 And do you think the view that abortion should be against the law is a respectable opinion for someone to hold, or not?

50	Yes
42	No
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL)

ASK SURVEY B IF ABORTION SHOULD BE ILLEGAL (Q.240=3,4) [N=882]:

Q.244 And do you think the view that abortion should be legal is a respectable opinion for someone to hold, or not?

44	Yes
47	No
9	Don't know/Refused (VOL)

Now, on some issues...

RANDOMIZE Q.145 a-c AS A BLOCK WITH Q.146a-b AND 147 AS A SEPARATE BLOCK

Q.145 Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose [READ AND RANDOMIZE WITH ITEM a. ALWAYS FIRST]? And how about [INSERT NEXT ITEM]?

	----FAVOR----			----OPPOSE----			(VOL.) DK/Ref
	Total	<i>Strongly</i> <i>Favor</i>	<i>Favor</i>	Total	<i>Strongly</i> <i>Oppose</i>	<i>Oppose</i>	
ASK ALL SURVEY A:							
b. Making it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion							
August 11-17, 2009	41	19	22	50	23	27	9
January, 2007	35	17	18	56	27	29	9
March, 2006	37	15	22	56	24	32	7
December, 2004	36	19	17	55	29	26	9
Early February, 2004	36	17	19	58	30	28	6
November, 2003	35	19	16	57	29	28	8
August, 2003 ³	36	17	19	57	30	27	7
May, 1993	32	15	17	60	35	25	8
May, 1992	30	--	--	62	--	--	8
May, 1990	38	21	17	55	29	26	7
May, 1987	41	18	23	51	33	18	8
May, 1985	47	--	--	49	--	--	4

ASK ALL SURVEY A:

c. Requiring that women under the age of 18 get the consent of at least one parent before they are allowed to have an abortion

August 11-17, 2009	76	45	31	19	8	11	5
July, 2005	73	--	--	22	--	--	5
Sept, 1999	69	--	--	28	--	--	3
May, 1992	73	--	--	23	--	--	4

3 In August 2003 and earlier the question was worded: "Changing the laws to make it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion."

ASK ALL SURVEY A:

Thinking again about abortion...

ASK SURVEY A FORM 1 [N=1011]:

Q.151 Regardless of whether or not you think abortion should be legal, do you think it would be a good thing to reduce the number of abortions performed in the United States, or don't you feel this way?

		July <u>2005</u>
65	Good thing to reduce the number of abortions	59
26	Don't feel this way	33
10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	8

ASK SURVEY A FORM 1 [N=1011]:

Q.152 And from what you know, does Barack Obama think it would be a good thing to reduce the number of abortions performed in the United States, or doesn't he feel this way?

38	Obama thinks it would be good thing to reduce the number of abortions
19	Obama doesn't feel this way
44	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK SURVEY A FORM 2 [N=999]:

Q.153 As you may know, Barack Obama has said that he favors reducing the number of abortions. What about you? Regardless of whether or not you think abortion should be legal, do you think it would be a good thing to reduce the number of abortions performed in the United States, or don't you feel this way?

69	Good thing to reduce the number of abortions
20	Don't feel this way
11	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL SURVEY A:

On another subject...

Q.180 Do you personally believe that [INSERT ITEM AND RANDOMIZE] is morally acceptable, morally wrong, or is it not a moral issue. [IF NECESSARY] And is [INSERT ITEM] morally acceptable, morally wrong, or is it not a moral issue?

		Morally <u>Acceptable</u>	Morally <u>Wrong</u>	Not a Moral <u>Issue</u>	(VOL.) Depends on <u>the Situation</u>	(VOL.) Don't know/ <u>Refused</u>
a.	Having an abortion					
	August 11-17, 2009	10	52	25	8	4
	February, 2006	12	52	23	11	2

ASK ALL:

RELIG What is your present religion, if any? Are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox such as Greek or Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, something else, or nothing in particular?

[INTERVIEWER: IF R VOLUNTEERS “nothing in particular, none, no religion, etc.” BEFORE REACHING END OF LIST, PROMPT WITH: And would you say that’s atheist, agnostic, or just nothing in particular?]

IF SOMETHING ELSE, NOTHING IN PARTICULAR OR DK/REF (RELIG=11, 12, 99) ASK:

CHR Do you think of yourself as a Christian or not?

- 40 Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, Non-denominational, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Episcopalian, Reformed, Church of Christ, Jehovah’s Witness, etc.)
- 23 Roman Catholic (Catholic)
- 2 Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints/LDS)
- * Orthodox (Greek, Russian, or some other orthodox church)
- 2 Jewish (Judaism)
- * Muslim (Islam)
- 1 Buddhist
- * Hindu
- 2 Atheist (do not believe in God)
- 3 Agnostic (not sure if there is a God)
- 2 Something else (**SPECIFY**)
- 12 Nothing in particular
- 11 Christian (**VOL.**)
- * Unitarian (Universalist) (**VOL.**)
- 2 Don’t Know/Refused (**VOL.**)

IF CHRISTIAN (RELIG=1-4, 13 OR ((RELIG=11 OR RELIG=99) AND CHR=1)):

BORN Would you describe yourself as a "born again" or evangelical Christian, or not?

BASED ON TOTAL

- 34 Yes, would
- 40 No, would not
- 4 Don’t know/Refused (**VOL.**)
- 78% Christian

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 <u>once a week</u>	Once <u>a week</u>	Once or twice <u>a month</u>	A few times <u>a year</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
August 11-27, 2009	14	23	16	18	16	11	1
August, 2008	13	26	16	19	15	10	1
Aug, 2007	14	26	16	18	16	9	1
July, 2006	15	25	15	18	14	12	1
July, 2005	14	27	14	19	14	11	1
Aug, 2004	13	25	15	20	15	11	1
July, 2003	16	27	15	18	14	10	*

ATTEND CONTINUED...

	<u>More than once a week</u>	<u>Once a week</u>	<u>Once or twice a month</u>	<u>A few times a year</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
March, 2003	15	24	15	21	15	9	1
March, 2002	15	25	17	18	15	9	1
Mid-Nov, 2001	16	26	14	17	16	10	1
March, 2001	17	26	17	17	15	7	1
Sept, 2000 (<i>RVs</i>)	17	28	16	17	13	8	1
June, 1997	12	26	17	20	15	10	*
June, 1996	14	25	17	21	13	9	1

ASK ALL:

Q.280 How important is religion in your life – very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

NOTE: THIS ITEM WAS ASKED AS Q.280 IN SURVEY B AND AS Q.185 IN SURVEY A. BOTH ITEMS ARE PRESENTED HERE.

		<u>August 2008</u>	<u>August 2007</u>
57	Very important	58	61
25	Somewhat important	27	24
8	Not too important	7	8
8	Not at all important	7	6
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	1

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY, ASK:

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
August 20-27, 2009	26	32	36	3	*	3	14	16
August 11-17, 2009	23	33	38	3	*	3	16	15
July, 2009	22	34	37	5	*	2	15	14
June, 2009	25	34	34	3	*	3	11	16
May, 2009	23	39	29	4	*	4	9	14
April, 2009	22	33	39	3	*	3	13	18
March, 2009	24	34	35	5	*	2	12	17
February, 2009	24	36	34	3	1	2	13	17
January, 2009	25	37	33	3	*	2	11	16
December, 2008	26	39	30	2	*	3	8	15
Late October, 2008	24	39	32	2	*	3	11	15
Mid-October, 2008	27	35	31	4	*	3	9	16
Early October, 2008	26	36	31	4	*	3	11	15
Late September, 2008	25	35	34	3	1	2	13	15
Mid-September, 2008	28	35	32	3	*	2	12	14
August, 2008	26	34	34	4	*	2	12	17
July, 2008	24	36	34	3	*	3	12	15
June, 2008	26	37	32	3	*	2	11	16
Late May, 2008	25	35	35	2	*	3	13	15
April, 2008	24	37	31	5	1	2	11	15
March, 2008	24	38	29	5	*	4	9	14
Late February, 2008	24	38	32	3	*	3	10	17
Early February, 2008	26	35	31	5	*	3	11	14
January, 2008	24	33	37	4	*	2	12	18
Yearly Totals								
2008	25.3	35.8	31.7	3.8	.3	3.1	10.5	15.4
2007	25.4	32.9	33.7	4.6	.4	3.1	10.7	16.7
2006	27.6	32.8	30.3	5.0	.4	3.9	10.2	14.5
2005	29.2	32.8	30.3	4.5	.3	2.8	10.2	14.9
2004	29.7	33.4	29.8	3.9	.4	2.9	11.7	13.4
2003	29.8	31.4	31.2	4.7	.5	2.5	12.1	13.0
2002	30.3	31.2	30.1	5.1	.7	2.7	12.6	11.6
2001	29.2	33.6	28.9	5.1	.5	2.7	11.7	11.4
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28.2	34.6	29.5	5.0	.5	2.1	11.7	12.5
2000	27.5	32.5	29.5	5.9	.5	4.0	11.6	11.6
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.5	33.2	31.9	4.6	.4	2.4	11.8	13.5
1997	28.2	33.3	31.9	4.0	.4	2.3	12.3	13.8
1996	29.2	32.7	33.0	5.2	--	--	12.7	15.6
1995	31.4	29.7	33.4	5.4	--	--	14.4	12.9
1994	29.8	31.8	33.8	4.6	--	--	14.3	12.6
1993	27.4	33.8	34.0	4.8	--	--	11.8	14.7
1992	27.7	32.7	35.7	3.9	--	--	13.8	15.8

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)		
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No <u>preference</u>	Other <u>party</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>	<i>Lean</i> <u>Rep</u>	<i>Lean</i> <u>Dem</u>
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	4.5	--	--	14.6	10.8
1990	31.0	33.1	29.1	6.8	--	--	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--