

**State of the First Amendment 2007**  
**Final Annotated Survey**  
**(N=1,003)**

1. As you may know, the First Amendment is part of the U.S. Constitution. Can you name any of the specific rights that are guaranteed by the First Amendment? (PROBE: Are there any others you can name?)

	1997	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Freedom of the press	11%	12%	12%	14%	14%	16%	15%	16%	13%	16%
Freedom of speech	49%	44%	60%	59%	58%	63%	58%	63%	56%	64%
Freedom of religion	21%	13%	16%	16%	18%	22%	17%	20%	17%	19%
Right to petition	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%
Right of assembly/association	10%	8%	9%	10%	10%	11%	10%	14%	11%	16%
DK/Ref. (to all questions/follow-ups)	N/A	N/A	37%	36%	35%	37%	35%	29%	36%	29%

2. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says: ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.’ Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Strongly agree	16%	10%	29%	41%	19%	19%	13%	8%	14%
Mildly agree	12%	12%	10%	8%	15%	11%	10%	10%	11%
Mildly disagree	22%	26%	19%	15%	18%	21%	16%	22%	15%
Strongly disagree	45%	48%	39%	32%	42%	44%	56%	54%	55%
DK/Ref.	5%	5%	3%	3%	7%	5%	5%	6%	4%

The U.S. Constitution protects certain rights, but not everyone considers each right important. I am going to read you some rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. For each, please tell me how important it is that you have that right. First, how important is it that you have ... (ROTATE QUESTIONS 3-9 BELOW) . . . Is it essential that you have that right, important but not essential, or not important?

3. .... the right to assemble, march, protest or petition the government

	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>
Essential	56%	61%	60%
Important	36%	31%	34%
Not important	7%	8%	5%
DK/Ref.	1%	0%	1%

4. ... the right to speak freely about whatever you want

	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Essential	72%	75%	66%
Important	27%	23%	32%
Not important	1%	2%	2%
DK/Ref.	*	1%	1%

5 ...the right to practice the religion of your choice

	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Essential	81%	83%	74%
Important	18%	15%	23%
Not important	1%	2%	2%
DK/Ref.	*	0%	0%

6. ... the right to practice no religion

	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Essential	66%	69%	57%
Important	24%	20%	32%
Not important	9%	8%	9%
DK/Ref.	1%	3%	2%

7. ... the right to be informed by a free press

	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Essential	60%	68%	62%
Important	33%	26%	31%
Not important	6%	5%	6%
DK/Ref.	1%	1%	2%

8. ...the right to own firearms

	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Essential	33%	48%	39%
Important	31%	31%	36%
Not important	33%	20%	23%
DK/Ref.	3%	2%	2%

9. ...the right to privacy

	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>
Essential	78%	81%	67%
Important	21%	18%	31%
Not important	1%	1%	1%
DK/Ref.	*	0%	1%

10. Overall, do you think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

	1997	1999	1999f	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Too much freedom	38%	53%	42%	51%	46%	42%	46%	42%	39%	40%	34%
Too little freedom	9%	7%	8%	7%	8%	8%	9%	12%	10%	10%	13%
About right	50%	37%	48%	41%	42%	49%	43%	44%	47%	47%	50%
DK/Ref.	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	4%	2%	4%

11. Even though the U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, government has placed some restrictions on it. Overall, do you think Americans have too much religious freedom, too little religious freedom, or is the amount of religious freedom about right?

	1997	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Too much freedom	6%	8%	5%	4%	6%	8%	7%	6%	6%
Too little freedom	21%	26%	29%	32%	20%	24%	27%	26%	24%
About right	71%	63%	63%	62%	70%	66%	64%	65%	66%
DK/Ref	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%

*Now please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:*

12. Journalists should be allowed to keep a news source confidential.

	1997	1999	2000	2004	2007
Strongly agree	58%	48%	52%	42%	43%
Mildly agree	27%	31%	25%	28%	32%
Mildly disagree	6%	10%	8%	13%	10%
Strongly disagree	6%	9%	10%	12%	11%
DK/Ref.	2%	3%	5%	5%	4%

13. Overall, the news media tries to report the news without bias.

	2004	2005	2007
Strongly agree	15%	13%	16%
Mildly agree	24%	20%	21%
Mildly disagree	19%	22%	21%
Strongly disagree	39%	42%	39%
DK/Ref.	3%	3%	3%

14. “The falsifying or making up of stories in the American news media is a widespread problem.”

	2004	2005	2007
Strongly agree	37%	40%	36%
Mildly agree	24%	25%	26%
Mildly disagree	24%	20%	22%
Strongly disagree	12%	11%	12%
DK/Ref.	6%	5%	4%

15. Newspapers should be allowed to freely criticize the U.S military about its strategy and performance.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Strongly agree	33%	32%	32%	36%	39%
Mildly agree	24%	22%	24%	23%	21%
Mildly disagree	18%	14%	12%	12%	12%
Strongly disagree	24%	30%	29%	26%	25%
DK/Ref.	1%	1%	4%	4%	3%

16. Demonstrators should be allowed to express themselves through protest while standing on public sidewalks or streets as a funeral procession passes by.

	2007
Strongly agree	20%
Mildly agree	18%
Mildly disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	46%
DK/Ref.	4%

*Please also tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:*

17. Public school students should be allowed to wear a T-shirt with a message or picture that others might find offensive.

	1997	1999	2004	2005	2007
Strongly agree	9%	10%	13%	13%	10%
Mildly agree	17%	17%	11%	14%	12%
Mildly disagree	22%	23%	21%	17%	20%
Strongly disagree	48%	48%	51%	50%	54%
DK/ref	4%	2%	4%	7%	3%

ROTATE 18 & 19

18. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Public school students should be allowed to report on controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	20%	25%
Mildly agree	20%	22%
Mildly disagree	22%	18%
Strongly disagree	36%	33%
DK/Ref	2%	3%

19. Do you favor or oppose allowing student newspapers at public colleges to report on controversial subjects without the approval of school authorities?

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly favor	33%	34%
Somewhat favor	23%	27%
Somewhat oppose	18%	14%
Strongly oppose	21%	23%
Dk/Ref	5%	3%

20. Do you feel that the freedom to worship as one chooses...applies to all religious groups regardless of how extreme their beliefs are, or was never meant to apply to religious groups that most people would consider extreme or fringe?

	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Applies to all religious groups regardless of how extreme their beliefs are	69%	72%	56%
Was never meant to apply to religious groups that the majority of the people consider extreme or on the fringe	24%	19%	28%
Neither	2%	3%	6%
DK/Ref.	5%	6%	10%

21. Each December, many public schools present seasonal programs. Which of these views best represents your views about such programs? READ CHOICES

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>
Public schools should be allowed to put on Nativity re-enactments with Christian music.	36%	43%
Public schools should have assembly programs in December that have music from the Christian tradition, but religious music should not dominate.	33%	31%
Public school programs in December should be entirely secular.	20%	18%
None of the above (Vol.)	6%	5%
DK/ref	4%	4%

Now please also tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

22. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Strongly agree	23%	27%	32%	34%	31%	35%	34%	31%	41%	32%
Mildly agree	28%	29%	27%	27%	26%	26%	25%	25%	22%	23%
Mildly disagree	16%	15%	12%	9%	14%	10%	12%	14%	11%	12%
Strongly disagree	31%	26%	28%	28%	27%	26%	26%	24%	23%	30%
DK/Ref.	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	7%	3%	2%

23. People should be allowed to say things in public that might be offensive to religious groups.

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Strongly agree	22%	25%	29%	26%	23%	31%	32%
Mildly agree	24%	22%	28%	23%	25%	24%	28%
Mildly disagree	15%	16%	14%	14%	15%	16%	12%
Strongly disagree	38%	35%	28%	36%	35%	27%	27%
DK/Ref.	1%	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%	3%

24. People should be allowed to say things in public that might be offensive to racial groups.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Strongly agree	8%	8%	15%	16%	14%	18%	17%	21%	22%	21%
Mildly agree	15%	13%	17%	18%	20%	20%	18%	22%	20%	20%
Mildly disagree	14%	16%	15%	15%	16%	14%	14%	14%	13%	12%
Strongly disagree	61%	62%	52%	49%	48%	47%	49%	39%	42%	44%
DK/Ref.	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%

25. Teachers and other public school officials should be allowed to lead prayers in public school.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2007</u>
Strongly agree	37%	44%	48%	35%	42%
Mildly agree	20%	21%	17%	17%	16%
Mildly disagree	15%	15%	13%	16%	14%
Strongly disagree	25%	18%	19%	30%	25%
DK/Ref.	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%

ROTATE 26 & 27

*Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

26. The nation’s founders intended the United States to be a Christian nation.

	2007
Strongly agree	46%
Mildly agree	19%
Mildly disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	19%
DK/Ref.	4%

27. The U.S. Constitution establishes a Christian nation.

	2007
Strongly agree	38%
Mildly agree	17%
Mildly disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	26%
DK/Ref.	4%

28. School officials should be allowed to discipline students who, while off-campus, post entries on social networking sites like “MySpace.com” that may be disruptive to school classes.

	2007
Strongly agree	30%
Mildly agree	20%
Mildly disagree	17%
Strongly disagree	29%
DK/Ref.	5%

29. The government should be able to place restrictions on the amount of money a political candidate can contribute to his or her own election campaign.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	36%	46%
Mildly agree	17%	16%
Mildly disagree	18%	11%
Strongly disagree	26%	24%
DK/Ref	3%	3%

30. The government should be able to place restrictions on the amount of money a private individual can contribute to someone else's election campaign.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	40%	48%
Mildly agree	17%	16%
Mildly disagree	17%	11%
Strongly disagree	24%	22%
DK/Ref	2%	3%

31. The government should be able to place restrictions on the amount of money a private corporation or a union can contribute to an election campaign.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	52%	57%
Mildly agree	16%	14%
Mildly disagree	12%	9%
Strongly disagree	18%	17%
DK/Ref	2%	3%

Now I'm now going to read you some ways that the Bible might be used in public school classrooms. For each, please tell me if you agree or disagree that a public school teacher should be allowed to use the Bible in this way. First ...

32. A public school teacher should be allowed to use the Bible as a form of literature in an English class.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	48%	57%
Mildly agree	27%	23%
Mildly disagree	12%	5%
Strongly disagree	12%	13%
DK/Ref.	1%	2%

33. A public school teacher should be allowed to use the Bible as a text in a comparative religion class.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	61%	71%
Mildly agree	24%	17%
Mildly disagree	6%	3%
Strongly disagree	9%	7%
DK/Ref.	1%	2%



34. A public school teacher should be allowed to use the Bible as a factual text in a history or social studies class.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2007</b>
Strongly agree	35%	33%
Mildly agree	21%	17%
Mildly disagree	18%	14%
Strongly disagree	25%	33%
DK/Ref.	2%	3%

*Now please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:*

35. The government should be allowed to require broadcasters to report a specified amount of “positive” news in return for the granting of licenses to use the public airwaves

	2007
Strongly agree	21%
Mildly agree	19%
Mildly disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	38%
DK/Ref.	6%

36. In your view, who should be primarily responsible for keeping inappropriate material on television away from children: Parents, Government officials or Broadcasters?

	2004	2005	2007
Parents	87%	82%	74%
Government officials	1%	2%	6%
Broadcasters	10%	15%	19%
Nobody (vol.)	0%	0%	0%
DK/Ref.	2%	1%	1%

37. The government currently has some authority to regulate content on broadcast television. Should that authority be extended to allow the regulation of programs available by subscription to cable or satellite television systems?

	2005	2007
Yes, it should be extended	35%	38%
No	60%	57%
DK/ref	5%	5%

Now please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

ROTATE 38-40

38. The government should be allowed to require television broadcasters to offer an equal allotment of time to conservative and liberal commentators.

	2007
Strongly agree	36%
Mildly agree	26%
Mildly disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	24%
DK/Ref.	4%

39. The government should be allowed to require radio broadcasters to offer an equal allotment of time to conservative and liberal commentators.

	2007
Strongly agree	35%
Mildly agree	26%
Mildly disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	24%
DK/Ref.	4%

40. The government should be allowed to require newspapers to offer an equal allotment of time to conservative and liberal commentators.

	2007
Strongly agree	35%
Mildly agree	26%
Mildly disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	23%
DK/Ref.	3%

41. Some people feel that the U.S. Constitution should be amended to make it illegal to burn or desecrate the American flag as a form of political dissent. Others say that the U.S. Constitution should not be amended to specifically prohibit flag burning or desecration. Do you think the U.S. Constitution should or should not be amended to prohibit burning or desecrating the American flag?

	1997	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Should not → Go to Q43	49%	48%	51%	59%	51%	55%	53%	63%	59%
Should --> Go to Q42	49%	51%	46%	39%	46%	44%	45%	35%	38%
DK/Ref. → Go to Q43	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%

42 [If “should”:] If an amendment prohibiting burning or desecrating the American flag were approved, it would be the first time any of the freedoms in the First Amendment have been amended in over 200 years. Knowing this, would you still support an amendment to prohibit burning or desecrating the flag?

	1997	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007
Yes	88%	90%	87%	81%	83%	87%	82%	86%	83%
No	9%	8%	12%	15%	15%	12%	16%	11%	15%
DK/Ref.	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%

43. Please finish the following statement: Overall, where would you say you get most of your news from – television, newspapers, radio, magazines, the Internet, or some other source?

	1997	2007
Newspapers	26%	20%
Television	50%	52%
Radio	15%	9%
Magazines	2%	1%
Internet	2%	15%
Other	1%	4%

44. Please also tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
Any group that wants to should be allowed to hold a rally for a cause or issue even if it may be offensive to others in the community.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2007</u>
Strongly agree	38%	30%	34%	39%
Mildly agree	34%	32%	32%	30%
Mildly disagree	10%	16%	12%	10%
Strongly disagree	15%	20%	19%	18%
DK/Ref.	3%	3%	4%	4%

Now I'd like to ask you some questions for classification purposes only...

45. In what year were you born? (Enter two digits: "76" for 1976)

18-30 years old 18%  
 31-44 years old 27%  
 45-61 years old 32%  
 62 years old + 19%  
 DK/Ref 4%

46. What was the last grade of school you completed? Grade school or less, some high school, high school, some college, college grad, post graduate.

Grade school or less	1%
Some high school	5%
High school grad	25%
Trade school (vol.)	2%
Some college	24%
College graduate	27%
Post-graduate	16%
DK/Ref	1%

47. Are you White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, or something else?

White	79%
Black	7%
Hispanic	4%
Asian	1%
Bi-racial (vol.)	3%
Other	3%
DK/Ref	3%

47. For classification purposes only, is the total yearly income of all the members of your family now living at home \$40,000 or more, or would it be less than \$40,000?

Less than \$40,000	30%
\$40,000 or more	62%
DK/Ref	8%

48. Are you Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or some other religion?

Catholic	23%
Protestant	50%
Jewish	2%
Other (specify)	8%
No religious affiliation	12%
DK/Ref	4%

49. Would you describe yourself as either a fundamentalist or evangelical Christian, or would you not describe yourself that way?

Fundamentalist/Evangelical	26%
Neither	66%
Not sure (vol.)	4%
DK/Ref	4%

50. In politics TODAY, are you a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent or what?

Democrat	30%
Republican	28%
Independent	26%
No preference (vol.)	9%
Other (vol.)	4%
Dk/Ref	4%

51. Do you have any children under the age of 18?

Yes	33%
No	65%
Dk/Ref	2%

RESPONDENT'S SEX:

Male	49%
Female	51%