

**On a Scale of 1-5,
How Much Impact Do US Social Movements Have on Public Opinion?¹**

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ABSTRACT

Having the general public care about your issue while simultaneously supporting your position on the issue is something that many social movement scholars and activists regard as critical to achieving positive movement outcomes. While scholars sometimes incorporated public opinion into their models of policy outcomes, little research has explored the extent to which movements are able to alter issue salience and valence. This paper tests the relationship between social movements' actions and public opinion. We address whether social movement prominence, as measured by mentions of social movement organizations in the newspaper, and movement collective action, as measured by the number and type of collective action events, will impact the likelihood that people have any opinion about the movement's issue or are favorable to the movement's position. We aggregated 980 polling questions related to the issues of 11 US social movements to construct annual measures of opinion salience and favorability. Social movement prominence is based on data from the PONs project, and collective action data is from Dynamics of Collective Action project. In our cross-sectional time series models, we find no evidence that the prominence of movements or their collective action uniformly influences public opinion. We do find evidence, however, that the prominence and tactics of specific social movements have a significant effect on favorability and salience, suggesting that movement influence on public opinion is contextual.

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**On a scale of 1-5, how much influence
do social movements have on public opinion?**

While 60% of Americans considered themselves to be environmentalists in 2010 (Pew Research Center for the People 2010), the percentage of Americans reporting the environment as an important issue has never been over 5% (Baumgartner and Jones 2011). Having the general public care about your issue while simultaneously supporting your position on the issue is a challenge that many social movement scholars (e.g., Burstein 1998) and activists (Shaw 2001) regard as critical to achieving positive movement outcomes.

Despite the importance of both issue and position, the impact of social movements on public opinion is a largely neglected area of study. When scholars incorporate public opinion in their models of policy outcomes, they often conceptualize it as either a competing explanation to the impact of SMOs (Burstein 1998) or as a component of the political context that may interact with social movement actions (e.g., Soule and Olzak 2004; Giugni 2004; Soule and King 2006; Olzak and Soule 2009). We argue that public opinion should not be viewed as a factor independent of movement activities, but rather as an outcome that movements are likely to influence.

This paper tests the relationship of social movements' actions on public opinion. We examine whether or not social movement prominence (as measured by the newspaper coverage of both social movement organizations and protest) impacts the likelihood that people have any opinion about the movement's issue or are favorable to the movement's position. We aggregate 980 polling questions related to the issues of 11 US social movements to construct annual measures of salience and favorability. Social movement

prominence is based on data from the PONs project, and collective action data is from Dynamics of Collective Action project. In our cross-sectional time series models, we find no evidence that the prominence of movements or their collective action events uniformly influence public opinion. We do find evidence, however, that the prominence and tactics of specific social movements have a significant effect on favorability and salience, suggesting that movement influence on public opinion is contextual.

Social Movements and Public Opinion

In a democracy, self-interested elected officials are assumed to be responsive to their constituents, “third parties,” or “bystander publics” (Lipsky 1968) in order to win reelection (Page and Shapiro 1983; Burstein 1998). As Burstein notes, “the finding that opinion influences policy is amazingly robust” (2010: 72). This is not to say that public attention automatically yields Congressional attention, or that policies reflect the will of the majority. For example, there is a bias towards the status quo over policy changes (Gilens 2005), which disadvantages challengers to state policies. The ability to shape policy is unequal, and the opinions of the rich are more influential than those of the poor (Bartels 2009). Additionally, a simple majority of public opinion may not be sufficient to ensure legislation is passed—in the case of the civil rights movements, evidence suggests new legislation wasn’t passed until a supermajority of citizens favored specific aspects of the movement’s agenda (Burstein 1978).

Social movement scholars have not ignored the potential impact of public opinion in their models of state-related outcomes. In fact, 23% of articles on the impact of social movement organizations published between 1990 and 2007 included a measure of public

option (Uba 2009). Of those, roughly half found that public opinion had a statistically significant impact.

Research on social movements and public policy usually treats public opinion as a contextual variable that helps shape the movement's political environment, analogous to other dimensions in a movement's political opportunity structure. Scholars conceptualize the role of public opinion in explaining policy changes either an alternate hypothesis from movement activities, or as a contextual factor that interacts with movement activities. For example, Amenta, Caren and Olasky (2005) found that both movement activities and favorable opinion had independent effects on the likelihood that an elected official would support the movement in a roll call vote. Burstein and Linton (2002)'s meta analysis shows that omitting a direct effect of public opinion often led scholars to overstate the impact of movement variables.

The limited research on the impact of issue salience on policy outcomes is mixed. Whereas Burstein's (1979) bivariate analysis of the civil rights movement suggested the rise in the salience of civil rights was an important precursor to congressional action, King, Bentele and Soule (2007) found no relationship between issue salience and congressional hearings across multiple domains. Finally, for some new social movements and other multi-institutional movements, seeking symbolic cultural changes, which often involves issue salience and valence, may be the ultimate goal (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008).

A notable example of thinking about the interaction of public opinion and movements is Giugni's joint-effect's model (2007). In his analysis of multiple movements, he finds, "Social movements can be effective in producing policy changes

only when they can take advantage of favorable political opportunities and public opinion” (Giugni 2007). For Giugni, a sympathetic public is a necessary, but not sufficient, cause for positive movement impacts. Similarly, Agnone (2007) found a substantial interaction effect between public opinion and protest such that legislators passed the most environmental legislation when levels of both factors were high. In the case of ERA passage, public opinion was only relevant in the context of electoral competition (Soule and Olzak 2004).

The critical role that public opinion plays in shaping state policies (Shapiro 2011) creates a strong incentive for movement’s to attempt to influence public opinion. Movements can do this by either bringing attention to previously ignored issues (e.g., Mansbridge 1986; Meyer 2006) or by influencing bystander opinions on specific issues or broader cultural change (Rochon 1998). Influencing public opinion is important for social movements because it is one potential mechanism of social movement influence in democracies (McAdam and Su 2002), what Andrews (2004) refers to as the “persuasion” model.

Despite the empirical and theoretical importance of influencing public opinion as mechanism for achieving social change, the extent to which movements are able to increase the salience or favorability of their issues remains relatively understudied. Achieving prominence in the mass media, through movement initiated events or otherwise, is likely to increase the visibility of SMOs and their issues, even if the story’s framing is beyond the movement’s control (Gitlin 1980). Movements that engage in disruptive protest are thought to lose public support (McAdam and Su 2002), while those that are able to elicit violence from the police are thought to gain from it (Garrow 1978).

While movements may be able to increase attention to their issues, they may have more limited impact on whether or not the public agrees with them (Burstein 1985).

The few studies that have attempted to model the influence of movements on public opinion report mixed results. While studies of the women's movement (Costain and Majstorovic 1994; Banaszak and Ondercin 2011) find that the movement was successfully able to sway public opinion to be more favorable to its agenda, McAdam and Su (2002) find that neither movement-initiated events (violent or not) nor police repression had any significant effect on Americans' attitudes toward the war in Vietnam. Brulle, Carmichael and Jenkins (2012) find that an increased focus on climate change by both environmental and anti-environmental organizations, as measured by the count of times SMOs mentioned climate change in their periodicals, had no effect on the public opinion toward climate change.

In fact, there is some evidence that the media prominence of social movement organizations may actually *decrease* public support for their issue. Advocates for some marginalized groups may be viewed as self-interested and therefore not credible. Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey (1987) find that the presence of interest groups on TV decreased support for their issue, and that this effect was particularly strong for Vietnam War protesters in 1969-1970, anti-draft registration protesters in 1980 and nuclear freeze proponents in 1982. In contrast, they find that groups that were framed as "public interest" organizations, such as Common Cause, might have had a positive impact on opinion.

Despite the importance that movements may have in shaping public opinion, movements are not the only factor impacting attitudes. Shifts in public opinion are also

likely shaped by other factors such as media framing, the actions of political elites, notable events, and countermovements (Brulle, Carmichael and Jenkins 2012). For example, Mansbridge (1986) found that public support for the ERA in Oklahoma declined after legislators declined to ratify it.

Drawing on existing literatures on movement impacts and public opinion, we expect that under certain conditions, movements will be able to influence the favorability and salience of their issues. We expect that movements with events that are large, dramatic, frequent, non-violent and associated with established organizations are best able to increase the salience of their issue, especially when their actions are featured prominently in the media. These displays of worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment (Tilly 1999) are likely to convince those that are potentially sympathetic that the issue is relevant. These actions are likely to have more of an impact when the organizations sponsoring them are viewed as legitimate (Edwards and McCarthy 2004) or when the demonstrations lead to an increase in issue coverage.

We also hypothesize that movements with favorable regimes in power (Meyer and Minkoff 2004) or enforced policies in favor of a movement's constituency (Amenta et al. 2009) are likely to see increased issue valence. Further, we hypothesize that these conditions are likely to decrease salience, as the public feels appropriate parties are resolving the issue.

In sum, public opinion plays a significant role in the policy making process. While scholars often treat public opinion as independent of movement actions, how much people think about an issue and how their attitudes towards the issue may be a product of social movement activities. This movement influence on attitudes may be direct, but it

commonly indirect and filtered through the media and other elite discourses. In this project, we test the extent to which public opinion is an indirect mechanism by which social movements can influence the policy making process.

Data and Methods

This study looks at the relationship between movement activities and public opinion in the US between 1971 and 1995, a major era of social movement activity. The unit of analysis for our study is the movement-year. Amenta et al. (2009) identified 34 different movement industries or issue families, including three residual categories: “progressive,” “conservative” and “civil rights other,” and we adopted their strategy. The movement categories correspond to well-known ones used by movement scholars and with broad lines of policy change sought by movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977), and require a threshold of coverage to avoid being categorized with the residual industries and to ensure that our analyses are not dominated by many tiny movement industries. For each movement, we measured movement characteristics and the relevant public opinion data at the yearly level, and, in order to minimize the risk of measuring reverse causality, all of our explanatory variables are lagged by one year.

Dependent Variables

Our three outcome measures are all based on survey information. We aggregate poll data to measure how many people expressed an opinion about each movement’s major issue (*salience*) and how *favorable* the public was to the movement’s position. We

also measure *elite salience* by looking at the volume of questions being asked about the movement's issue.

To construct our favorability and salience measures, we searched the Roper Center Public Opinion Archives for questions related to each of the 34 movement families. In order to construct the annual measures, we looked for questions that were asked using identical or nearly identical wording over several years. There were not a sufficient number of these sorts of questions for 23 of the 34 movements. For some issues, like prisoner's rights, there were few or no questions. For other movements, like the AIDS movement, we found main questions, but few were asked over multiple years, as the questions were closely tied to particularly news events. But for 11 movement families, as shown in Table 1, we were able to a sufficient number of questions asked across multiple years in order to reliably estimate a single measure of favorability. For each question, we record the proportion of respondents who held an opinion that was similar to the movements' and the proportion of respondents who had no opinion about the issue.

For each of the 11 movements, we aggregated the multiple questions asked across multiple years using Stimson's (1999) dyad ratio algorithm. Which statistically complex, the process behind the method for combining survey data is quite straightforward. Polling data on a specific issue, like the environment, asks about multiple different questions at irregular intervals. Stimson's method uses an iterative process to estimate the relationship between specific questions (even though most are not asked in a given year) to estimate yearly trends. This is similar to methods of imputation for missing data, which assume that the missing values are a function of the observed values of other variables. In this

case, the other observed values are other questions about the same topic, and the model also assumes some inter-year correlations. The estimates were produced using the WCALC program.³

Figure 1 shows the estimated trends in support for each of the movements over time. Note that each graph has a separate Y-axis, as the size of the opinion shift varies across movements.

Our measure of elite salience includes all questions asked about the movement's issue in a given year. Since having questions repeat over time did not restrict us, this analysis includes a larger number of questions, a total of 28,864. To make the analysis comparable with favorability, we restrict ourselves to the same set of cases.

Movement Measures

We include two major measures of social movement activity. The first is movement prominence. As described in Amenta, Caren, and Stobaugh (2012), we count the times that U.S. SMOs are mentioned in articles in the *New York Times* in a given year and aggregate these "article mentions" to the SMO industry level (McCarthy and Zald 1977). We include only *politically* inflected organizations, and, like Gamson (1990), we include only organizations with *national* goals. We also include what McCarthy and Zald call an "established SMO," one that has won new benefits or achieved some degree of acceptance. Included as well in this definition is what others call "advocacy organizations" (Andrews and Edwards 2004) and "public interest" or "citizens" groups

³ Available at <http://www.unc.edu/~jstimson/>

(Berry 1999), but not all “interest groups,” such as political organizations representing business interests or professions, or the major parties.

Amenta et al. (2009) identified 1,440 qualifying SMOs, of which 1,258 receiving coverage in the *Times*. Altogether they identified 356,380 article mentions of SMOs.

The article-mention counts of SMOs – when aggregated to the year - industry level – provide a useful indicator of movement presence, by which we mean size and activity. These counts correlate closely with some other measures used to approximate movement presence by scholars testing movement theories. For instance, from 1955 through 1986, the number of articles in the *New York Times* mentioning national feminist SMOs correlates at .97 with the number of protest and advocacy organizations existing in that movement issue family, and from 1954 through 1999, the number of articles mentioning organizations in the labor movement correlates .80 with unionization (for more, see Amenta et al. 2009).

The second measure of movement activity is the number and type of collective action events. This is based on data from the Dynamics of Collective Action project (DoCA).⁴ Collective action events are public protests by more than one person for the explicit purpose of making a claim against, or in support of, a target. Data were collected by a team of research assistants who read each page of each issue of the *New York Times* between 1960 and 1995. Each event was coded along multiple dimensions. Of interest to us, is the issue, the number of participants, and the tactics used. We constructed an issue crosswalk file to match the issue classification schemes used in DoCA with the PONS movement families. We summed the total number of events per year per issue to get of

⁴ <http://www.dynamicsofcollectiveaction.com>.

the number of collective action events. To measure the size of the demonstration, we summed the count of the number of people listed as attending the event, using the mid-points of categories for the events where coders estimated. Finally, we grouped tactics into five theoretically relevant categories: large, public, nonviolent events; violence/threat of violence; non-disruptive, public events; withholding obligations; and other.

Control Variables

In order to establish a baseline level of issue favorability and salience, we include a number of control variables in the models. Associated with political opportunity theories, we employ Democratic White House and congressional ideology, using the D-W nominate “median representative ideology” score of each Congress (Poole and Rosenthal 2011), based on roll call votes, ranging from one to minus one. To control for the fact that economic grievances may overshadow other issues (McVeigh 2006; Caren, Gaby and Herrold 2011), we include a measure of the annual unemployment rate. As a measure of the resources potentially available to the social movement sector, we include the logged number of foundations in existence, (Foundation Center 2011). The Foundation Center surveyed 21,506 grant-making foundations in 2005 and report the number of foundations established in each decade prior to 1970 and for each year after that. Our foundation measure captures the cumulative total number of foundations existing in each time period, although small foundations and foundations that failed prior to 2005 are excluded from the total. Finally, to control for the changing volume of coverage in the *New York Times*, which may effect the event or organizational counts independently of the movement’s actions, we include a measure for the volume of political coverage in the paper, based on the number of articles that mentioned either of

the two major political parties in a given year. Likewise, in our models of the count of number of issue questions asked in a year, we include the total number of items in the Roper Archive for that year as control variable.

Analytic Strategy

Standard least-squares regression modeling is inappropriate for our data because we assume that attitudes in one year influence the subsequent year's attitudes, and because we assume that there are unmeasured attributes associated with each issue that are likely to influence public opinion on the topic. In our analysis of aggregated public opinion data, we employ fixed-effect, cross-sectional time-series regression models. The "fixed-effect" aspect of the model controls for the unmeasured issue-specific factors. In order to control for year-to-year correlations, the model's disturbance term assumed to be is first-order autoregressive. These models were estimated in Stata using the xtregar command.

We employ a conditional fixed-effects overdispersion model with lagged dependent variable in our analysis of number of survey questions asked in a given year. Since the outcome measure is a count with the variance exceeding the mean, we employ negative binomial regression models with fixed effects applied to the distribution of the dispersion parameter. In order to control for year-to-year correlation, we include the lagged number of issue questions in these models, since other strategies, such as the ones described above, are not available for count models. These models were estimated in Stata using the xtnbreg command.

Findings

Table 2 examines the relationship between coverage of social movement organizations and collective action events and favorable public opinion. The first model includes just the control variables. Among those, only the number of foundations has a significant impact on public opinion. While this may be suggestive of a link between resources and attitudes, we would urge some hesitation in this interpretation as this variable increases fairly linearly with time, and so is tough to disambiguate from a linear increase.

Model 2 includes measures of social movement organizations and activities. Neither the mention of social movement organizations in the *New York Times* nor the measure of the number of social movement collective action events is significantly correlated with favorable public opinion. Model 3 adds a measure of the reported number of participants, which is also not significant. Finally, Model 4 disaggregates the collective action events by tactics used at the event. Again, we find no significant relationship between any of the different specific tactics and favorable public opinion. In sum, there is no support for the hypotheses that being mentioned more frequently or holding protest events is likely to sway public opinion toward the side of the social movement.

Table 3 examines the relationship between social movement activity and the proportion of the population that expresses an opinion about the movement's issue. Similar to the case of favorable public opinion, SMO mentions in the *New York Times* and collective action events are not correlated with expressing an opinion. Likewise, the number of participants is not significant. Decomposing the collective action events, however, shows that two types of events are significantly likely to impact the proportion

of people who have an opinion about the issue. Violent events decrease the proportion of people that will have an opinion on the issue, while non-public events, such as lawsuits, increase the proportion.

Table 4 examines issue salience through a more elite lens: how often are pollsters likely to ask about the relevant issue. In our negative binomial models, we find that no variable besides the lagged dependent variable is significantly correlated with the number of questions asked in a given year.

Taken together, these findings suggest that there is no general relationship between social movement visibility and public opinion. Despite this general trend, it is possible that specific movements have been able to influence public opinion. In order to test the possibility that certain movements are more effective at influencing public opinion, we examine the relationship between social movement visibility and public opinion separately for each movement. We estimate these parameters using a generalized least-squares method in a linear regression model in which the errors are assumed to follow a first-order autoregressive process. Because there are only a small number of time periods available for each movement, we include the two main social movement variables in the model but without any of the control variables.

Figure 2 shows the relationship between movement visibility and having favorable public opinion for each of the 11 movement families. For no movement is the count of collective action events correlated with favorable public opinion. For two movements, however, abortion rights and welfare rights, SMO mentions in the *New York Times* are positively and significantly correlated with favorable attitudes.

Movement visibility is also significantly and positively correlated with more people expressing an opinion about the movement's issue for several movements. As shown in Figure 3, *both* SMO mentions in the *New York Times* and collective action events are positively associated with opinion-having for the women's rights movement. Events are positively associated with opinion-having for the LGTB movement, while SMO mentions are positively associated with opinion-having for the African American Civil Rights and welfare rights movements.

As shown in Figure 4, visibility is significantly correlated with the number of questions asked about an issue for three movements. SMO mentions in the times is positively associated with questions for environmental movement, while the number of collective action events is positively associated with question for the women's movement, but negatively associated for the anti-war movement.

Disaggregating the analysis by movement shows that actions of a handful of movements seem to sway the public. In particular, in three of the six movements, the coefficient associated with the feminist movement was significant, and welfare rights movement had two statistically significant effects. In contrast, the other nine movements either had only 1 significant coefficient (four movements) or no significant coefficients (five movements). Taken together, these findings strongly suggests that either some unmeasured characteristic of the feminist movement, such as organizational resources, was associated with an increase in favorable opinion, or something about the issue of gender inequality provided an opportunity for the movement to shift attitudes and awareness favorably.

Conclusion

Overall, we found little evidence that prominence or tactics of movements had a general effect on public's opinion of the movement. This suggests that simply "doing more" won't necessarily make the public care or sympathize with your issue. Findings around specific movements, such as the women's movement, however, suggest that additional research is needed to tease out the conditions when protest is likely to have an effect. Likewise, an analysis of the anti-war movement may help explain when movements are likely to face negative sanctions by the public.

To date, we have not been able to test all of our hypotheses about the characteristics of movements and their events that are likely to have an impact. In particular, we plan to look more closely at variation in the characteristics of organizations that organize protest events. One key omitted variable may be the perceived legitimacy of the organizations sponsoring the events. As noted above, we suspect that established and well-financed organizations are more likely to influence the public. We also hope to explore further the relationship between movements and elites in shaping political opinion. Research has, in general, found that movements are more likely to be successful when there is a favorable political climate, and this is likely also true for influencing public opinion.

An additional possible explanation for the lack of a general relationship between protest and public opinion is the complicated issue of the appropriate lag structure. For example, over the last decade, there has been a rather remarkable shift in US public opinion towards marriage equality. In 2004, 31% of Pew Research Respondents favored

allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally.⁵ By 2014, this number had risen to 54%. It is hard to imagine this growth in support for marriage equality, or even the issue of marriage equality, is unrelated to forty years of lesbian and gay activism. On the other hand, this recent ten-year span saw only one major lesbian and gay protest march, 2009's National Equality March. The movement's primary focus during this time has to use the more institutional tactics focusing on courts, ballot initiatives, and legislation, and the eras of confrontational tactics and large marches are long past. As it is with other aspects of movement outcomes (Amenta 2014), it is tricky to statistically link between movements and their cultural impact, even when the larger picture suggests that a relationship exists.

⁵ <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/03/10/graphics-slideshow-changing-attitudes-on-gay-marriage/>

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Table 1. Summary statistics on public opinion data. “% explained” is the percent of total variance between question topics explained by the summary estimate.

Issue	Question Topics	Questions	First Year	Last Year	% Explained
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	3	65	1977	2012	71%
Animals	8	39	1989	2012	91%
Anti-War	4	30	1971	2010	89%
Christian Right	5	62	1988	2012	64%
Civil Liberties	12	173	1972	2012	67%
Civil Rights, Black	8	118	1972	2012	42%
Environment/Conservation	7	100	1973	2012	80%
Feminism/Women's Rights	22	248	1967	2012	69%
Gun Control	4	56	1959	2013	84%
LGBT Right	5	51	1977	2013	81%
Welfare Rights	4	38	1973	2012	94%

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

	Count	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<i>Outcome measures</i>					
Favorable Opinion	238	50.49	13.54	19.94	73.59
Has opinion	206	93.99	2.33	87.14	98.33
Roper Questions	238	125.48	183.19	0	1774
<i>Movement Visibility</i>					
SMO mentions in the Times	229	4.40	1.52	0	6.46
<i>Collective Action</i>					
DoCA events	238	20.39	25.48	0	219
Participants (logged)	238	7.27	3.85	0	14.79
<i>Event types</i>					
Large, public, nonviolent	238	7.76	13.20	0	123
Violence/threat of violence	238	1.18	3.23	0	27
Non-disruptive, public	238	3.89	5.43	0	46
Withholding obligations	238	0.80	1.89	0	16
Non-public/other	238	6.74	7.39	0	36
<i>Control Variables</i>					
Unemployment rate	229	6.66	1.30	3.50	9.70
Democratic President	229	0.31	0.47	0	1
Congressional Conservatism	229	-0.10	0.08	-0.18	0.19
Foundations ln	229	8.73	0.37	8.13	9.32
Times political articles	229	6.99	0.21	6.67	7.53
Observations	238				

Table 3. Fixed-effect cross-sectional time-series regression models of support movement issue. All dependent variables lagged one year and model disturbance term is first-order autoregressive.

Public support				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SMO mentions in the Times		0.253 (0.46)	0.250 (0.45)	0.105 (0.19)
Participants (logged)			0.00387 (0.04)	
Large, public, nonviolent				-0.00177 (-0.06)
Violence/threat of violence				-0.0471 (-0.57)
Non-disruptive, public				0.0770 (1.01)
Withholding obligations				0.129 (1.10)
Non-public/other				0.0687 (1.43)
Unemployment rate	-0.0218 (-0.10)	-0.0430 (-0.20)	-0.0441 (-0.20)	-0.0238 (-0.11)
Democratic President	-0.986 (-1.67)	-1.148 (-1.94)	-1.148 (-1.93)	-1.192* (-1.98)
Congressional Conservatism	-3.753 (-1.47)	-3.819 (-1.49)	-3.827 (-1.49)	-3.709 (-1.44)
Foundations ln	8.865*** (5.53)	8.843*** (5.55)	8.843*** (5.55)	9.426*** (5.69)
Times political articles	-1.908* (-2.31)	-1.945* (-2.31)	-1.941* (-2.28)	-1.675 (-1.91)

DoCA events		0.0156 (1.15)	0.0155 (1.11)	
Constant	-14.47* (-2.55)	-15.19* (-2.58)	-15.23* (-2.58)	-22.14*** (-3.59)
Observations	218	218	218	218

Fixed-effect cross-sectional time-series regression models when the disturbance term is first-order autoregressive.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4. Fixed-effect cross-sectional time-series regression models of having an opinion on movement issue. All dependent variables lagged one year and model disturbance term is first-order autoregressive.

Have opinion.				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SMO mentions in the Times		0.375 (1.60)	0.394 (1.68)	0.0923 (0.44)
DoCA events		-0.00313 (-0.32)	-0.000246 (-0.02)	
Participants (logged)			-0.0384 (-0.86)	
Large, public, nonviolent				-0.0101 (-0.70)
Violence/threat of violence				-0.175*** (-4.70)
Non-disruptive, public				0.0722 (1.88)
Withholding obligations				-0.0859 (-1.75)
Non-public/other				0.0893*** (4.53)
Unemployment rate	0.0188 (0.20)	0.00814 (0.08)	0.0192 (0.20)	0.0324 (0.39)
Democratic President	0.212 (0.81)	0.194 (0.75)	0.191 (0.74)	0.0353 (0.15)
Congressional Conservatism	-3.112* (-2.57)	-3.111* (-2.57)	-3.010* (-2.47)	-2.553* (-2.37)
Foundations ln	0.512 (0.97)	0.144 (0.26)	0.178 (0.32)	1.097* (2.27)

Times political articles	-0.779 (-1.89)	-0.841* (-1.98)	-0.870* (-2.03)	-0.170 (-0.43)
Constant	94.37*** (31.06)	96.51*** (28.74)	96.49*** (28.53)	84.00*** (25.51)
Observations	188	188	188	188

Fixed-effect cross-sectional time-series regression models when the disturbance term is first-order autoregressive.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5. Conditional fixed-effects overdispersion models with lagged dependent variable of number of survey questions asked. All dependent variables lagged one year and model includes lagged dependent variable.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SMO mentions in the Times		-20.86 (-0.90)	-15.38 (-0.65)	-17.67 (-0.72)
DoCA events		-0.383 (-0.57)	-0.141 (-0.20)	
Participants (logged)			-6.445 (-1.21)	
Large, public, nonviolent				-0.138 (-0.08)
Violence/threat of violence				5.331 (1.03)
Non-disruptive, public				-6.058 (-1.39)
Withholding obligations				-1.334 (-0.18)
Non-public/other				0.833 (0.32)
Roper issue questions	0.0124*** (3.84)	0.0133*** (3.67)	0.0131*** (3.60)	0.0125** (3.22)
Unemployment rate	-18.45 (-1.93)	-18.45 (-1.93)	-17.08 (-1.77)	-18.18 (-1.88)
Democratic President	-31.92 (-1.23)	-32.63 (-1.25)	-32.22 (-1.23)	-37.27 (-1.41)
Congressional Conservatism	-118.0 (-0.87)	-116.8 (-0.85)	-112.7 (-0.82)	-124.9 (-0.90)
Times political articles	-71.14	-70.84	-77.60	-78.28

	(-1.32)	(-1.31)	(-1.43)	(-1.42)
Constant	626.7 (1.95)	715.1* (2.16)	774.6* (2.35)	765.1* (2.29)
Observations	218	218	218	218

Conditional fixed-effects overdispersion models with lagged dependent variables.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure 1. Trends in % of US public favorable to movement's position by issue. Based on authors' analysis of 980 survey questions, 1959 – 2012. Time-period points estimated using Stimson's (1998) dyad ratios algorithm.

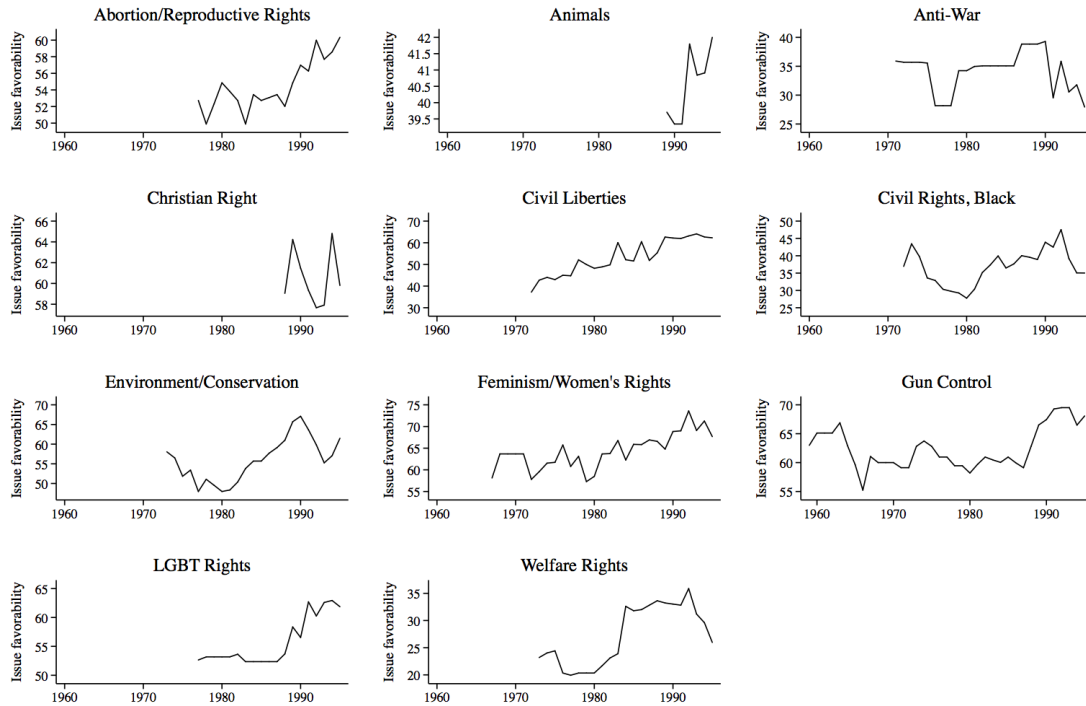


Figure 2. Parameter estimates from time-series regression models by movement of movement activity on favorable public opinion. Significant ($p < .05$) coefficients noted with * around movement names.

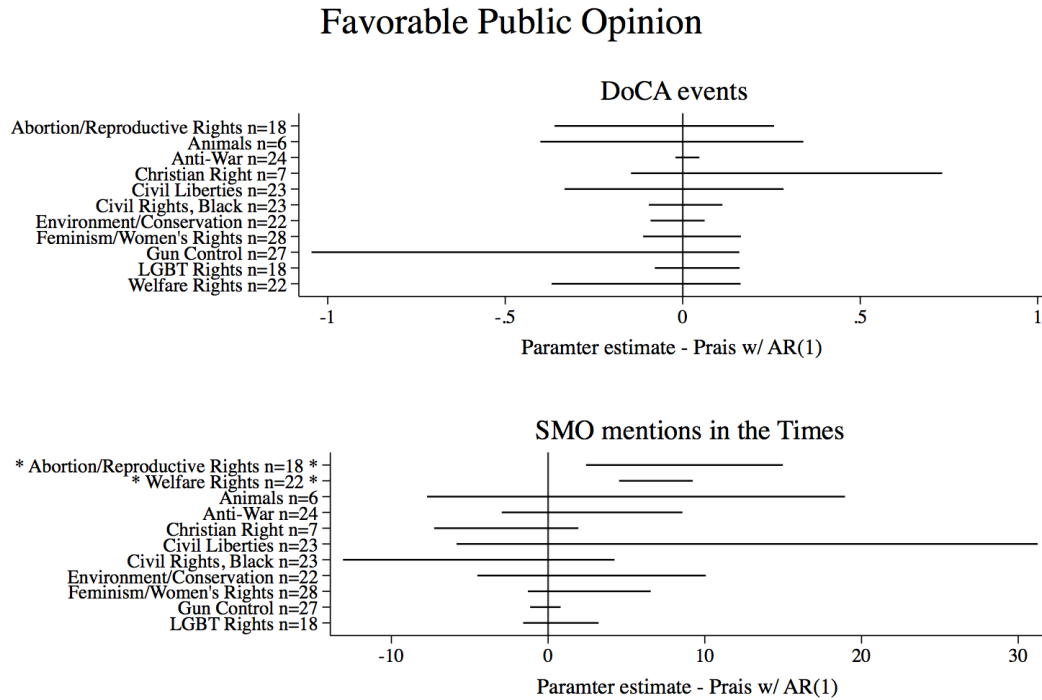


Figure 3. Parameter estimates from time-series regression models by movement of movement activity on having an opinion on a movements issue. Significant ($p < .05$) coefficients noted with * around movement names.

Have Opinion

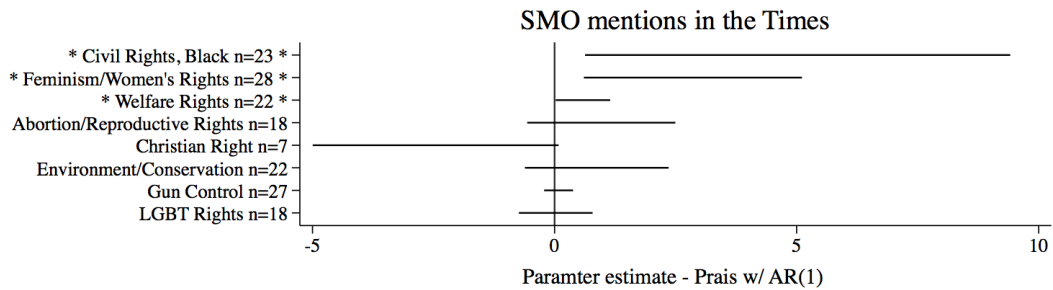
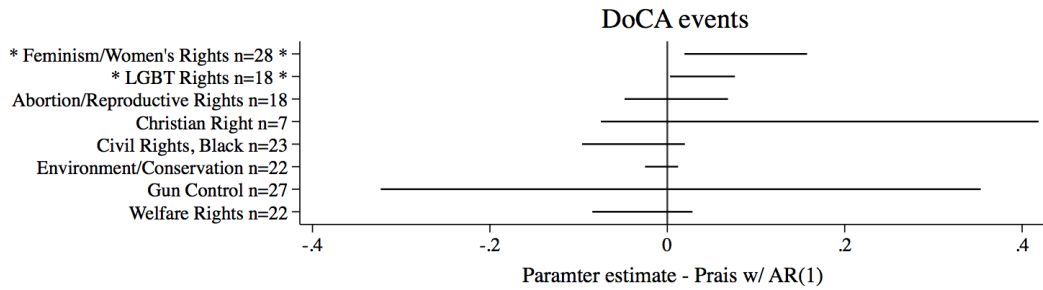
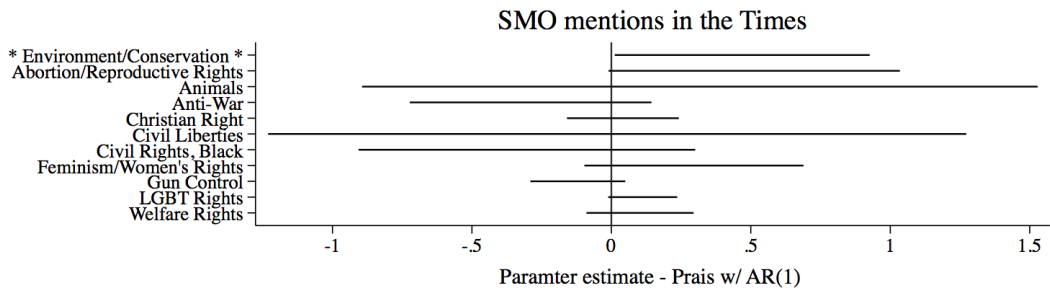
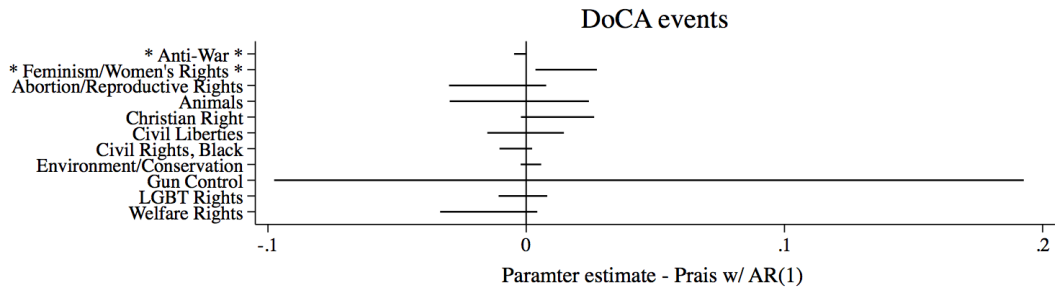


Figure 4 Parameter estimates from negative binomial regression models by movement of movement activity on number of survey questions asked in subsequent year. Significant ($p < .05$) coefficients noted with * around movement names.

Questions Asked



Appendix A

Questions used in computed favorability toward movement issue.

Issue	Survey Question
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	"A pregnant woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion for any reason whatsoever..."
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	"do you think abortion should be legal under any circumstances..."
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	"do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases or i..."
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	"what is your impression of how most americans feel about abortion--do you think most americans feel..."
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	"would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life..."
Abortion/Reproductive Rights	"do you personally believe that having an abortion is morally wrong" (How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements--strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)...It is right to use animals for medical testing if it might save human lives.
Animals	Do you believe that the use of animals in medical research is necessary for progress in medicine, or not?
Animals	(I'd like to know if you personally have already done any of the following)...refuse to buy products where ethical treatment of animals may be called into question.
Animals	(Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong.) How about...buying and wearing clothing made of animal fur?
Animals	(Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong.) How about...medical testing on animals?
Animals	Here are some specific proposals concerning the treatment of animals. For each one, please say whether you strongly support this proposal, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose this proposal. How about...banning all medical research on laboratory animals?
Animals	(Here are some specific proposals concerning the treatment of animals. For each one, please say whether you strongly support this proposal, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose this proposal.) How

Animals	<p>about...banning all product testing on laboratory animals? (Here are some specific proposals concerning the treatment of animals. For each one, please say whether you strongly support this proposal, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose this proposal.) How about...banning all types of hunting?</p>
Animals	<p>(Here are some specific proposals concerning the treatment of animals. For each one, please say whether you strongly support this proposal, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose this proposal.) How about...passing strict laws concerning the treatment of farm animals?</p>
Animals	<p>Do you think there are some circumstances where it's perfectly okay to kill an animal for its fur or do you think it's always wrong to kill an animal for its fur?</p>
Animals	<p>Which of these statements comes closest to your view about the treatment of animals--animals deserve the exact same rights as people to be free from harm and exploitation, animals deserve some protection from harm and exploitation, but it is still appropriate to use them for the benefit of humans, or animals don't need much protection from harm and exploitation since they are just animals?</p>
Anti-War	<p>(Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following....Agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly)...Under some conditions, war is necessary to obtain justice.</p>
Anti-War	<p>Some people feel that war is an outmoded way of settling difference between nations. Others feel that wars are sometimes necessary to settle differences. Which point of view do you agree with?</p>
Anti-War	<p>"(below is a list of present federal government programs. for each, please select whether you feel it should be expanded, cut back or kept about the same.)...defense spending"</p>
Anti-War	<p>The best way to ensure peace is through military strength. Of course, we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that, would you be willing to fight for your country?</p>
Christian Right	<p>would you consider yourself a born-again or evangelical christian, or not?</p>
Christian Right	<p>(I'd like your views on some people and things in the news. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of who or what I name.) Would you say your overall opinion of...the Christian Coalition...is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?</p>

Christian Right

Christian Right
Civil Liberties

Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties

Civil Liberties

Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties

Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties
Civil Liberties

Civil Rights, Black

Civil Rights, Black

Civil Rights, Black
Civil Rights, Black

(now please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements....strongly agree, mildly agree, mildly disagree, strongly disagree)...the nation's founders intended the united states to be a christian nation.

do you consider yourself part of the conservative christian political movement, also known as the religious right?

do you favor or oppose the death penalty for murder?
the first amendment guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right of people to assemble peaceably, and to petition the government for redress of grievances. do you think the first amendment should be left as

should communists be allowed to make speeches?

should homosexuals be allowed to make speeches?

should racists be allowed to make speeches?

(when it comes to each of the following rights, please tell me if you think we have gone too far as a society in expanding this right, if we have restricted it too much, or if things are ok the way they are.)...freedom of religion

even though the u.s. (united states) 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

should militarists be allowed to make speeches?

should socialists be allowed to make speeches?

the universal declaration of human rights is a document that the us and other members of the united nations helped to develop and strongly supported. it outlines a full set of rights and freedoms for all human beings. some of the most basic rig

do you approve or disapprove of wiretapping?

should people be allowed to make speeches against church/religion?

Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves. What do you think?

Some think Blacks/Negroes have been discriminated against for so long that government has a special obligation to improve their living standards. Others believe that government should not be giving special treatment. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on improving the conditions of Blacks?

Do you believe that where there has been job discrimination

Civil Rights, Black	<p>against blacks in the past, preference in hiring or promotion should be given to blacks today?</p> <p>Suppose there is a community wide vote on the general housing issue. There are two possible laws to vote on: A. One law says that a homeowner can decide for himself whom to sell his house to, even if he prefers not to sell to Negroes/Blacks/African Americans. B. The second law says that a homeowner cannot refuse to sell to someone because of their race or color. Which law would you vote for?</p>
Civil Rights, Black	<p>Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it gives blacks advantages they haven't earned. What about your opinion { are you FOR or AGAINST preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?</p>
Civil Rights, Black	<p>In general, do you favor or oppose the busing of negro/black and white school children from one district to another?</p>
Civil Rights, Black	<p>do you think the government should do more to help blacks, or has it done enough, or has it done too much already?</p>
Environment/Conservation	<p>With which one of these statements about the environment and the economy do you most agree? Protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of curbing economic growth. Or, Economic growth should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent.</p>
Environment/Conservation	<p>With which one of these statements about the environment and energy production do you most agree protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of limiting the amount of energy supplies {such as oil, gas and coal which the United States produces or development of U.S. energy supplies such as oil, gas and coal should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent?</p>
Environment/Conservation	<p>Now I am going to read you another series of statements on some different topics. For each statement, please tell me if you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it or completely disagree with it...People should be willing to pay higher prices in order to protect the environment.</p>
Environment/Conservation	<p>Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on improving and protecting the environment?</p>
Environment/Conservation	<p>Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Protecting the environment is so important that requirements and standards cannot be too high, and</p>

	continuing environmental improvements must be made regardless of cost.
Environment/Conservation	Should federal spending on ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?
Feminism/Women's Rights	Do you generally favor or oppose a rma- tive action programs for women and mi- norities?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...obtaining top jobs in the arts?
Feminism/Women's Rights	It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have one herself.
Feminism/Women's Rights	It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...getting a college education?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you agree or disagree with this statement? women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country up to men.
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you approve or disapprove of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her?
Feminism/Women's Rights	Because of past discrimination, employers should make special efforts to hire and promote qualified women.
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you favor or oppose the equal rights amendment--also known as the e.r.a.--the constitutional amendment concerning women?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...obtaining executive positions in business?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...obtaining top jobs in government?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you believe that where there has been job discrimination against women in the past, preference in hiring or promotion should be given to women today?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you feel that women in your country have equal job opportunities with men or not?
Feminism/Women's Rights	do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...being given leadership responsibility in groups with both men and women?
Feminism/Women's Rights	tell me if you agree or disagree with this statement: most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women.
Feminism/Women's Rights	(Next, we'd like to know how you feel about the state of the nation in each of the following areas. For each one, please say whether you are--very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied. If you don't have

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Feminism/Women's Rights

Gun Control

Gun Control

Gun Control

Gun Control

Gun Control

LGBT Rights

LGBT Rights

LGBT Rights

enough information about a particular subject to rate it, just say so.) How about...the position of women in the nation? do you think america is ready to elect a woman president, or not?

do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...getting skilled labor jobs?
there has been much talk recently about changing women's status in society today. on the whole, do you favor or oppose most of the efforts to strengthen and change women's status in society today?

do you think women should stay at home if they have young (pre-school) children?

do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...obtaining top jobs in the professions?

do you feel women are discriminated against or not in ...getting white collar and clerical jobs?

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

(now i'm going to read several more statements. as i read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.)... a preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works

To what extent do you agree or disagree?...Strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree...A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

Most states require a special license to allow people to carry a concealed firearm. Should licenses to carry concealed firearms be issued to any adult who has passed a criminal background check and a gun safety course or only to people with a special need to carry a concealed gun such as private detectives?

WOULD YOU FAVOR OR OPPOSE A LAW WHICH WOULD REQUIRE A PERSON TO OBTAIN A POLICE PERMIT BEFORE HE OR SHE COULD BUY A GUN?

What do you think is more important: to protect the right of Americans to own guns, OR, to control gun ownership?

Would you like to see gun laws in this country made more strict, less strict, or remain as they are?

School boards ought to have the right to re teachers who are known homosexuals.

Do you think marriages between homosex- uals should or should not be recognized by the law as valid, with the same rights as traditional marriages?

In general, do you think homosexuals should or should not

LGBT Rights

have equal rights in terms of job opportunities?
Do you think it should be legal or illegal for homosexual couples to get married (If legal/Illegal, ask:) (Is that strongly or somewhat?)

LGBT Rights

Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose allowing gays and lesbians couples to enter into legal agreements with each other that would give them many of the same rights as married couples?

LGBT Rights

Now I'm going to read you some statements. As I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right....First statement: Some Democrats say allowing same sex couples to enter into civil unions help make sure that everyone in this country has equal rights and is treated with the same dignity and respect. Same sex couples, who are in committed relationships, should be afforded the same rights as married couples such as access to healthcare and retirement benefits and inheritance. Second statement: Some Republicans say we should think of marriage as being between a man and a woman. Republicans say there is little difference between calling it a civil union and gay marriage. We should continue to recognize heterosexual marriage as ensuring, promoting, and supporting a tested social structure for the bearing and raising of children. (If First/Second statement, ask:) Do you feel strongly about that or not so strongly?

Welfare Rights

Some people have said that instead of providing welfare and relief payments, the federal government should guarantee every American family a minimum yearly income of about \$3,000. Would you personally favor or oppose such an income guarantee?

Welfare Rights

(if you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, for which of the following programs would you like to see spending increased and for which would you like to see spending decreased?) (should federal spending on)...welfare programs..

Welfare Rights

please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following proposals.... ending increases in welfare payments to women who give birth to children while on welfare

Welfare Rights

Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans, they are at point 1 on this card. Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself, they are at point 5. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?

Welfare Rights	<p>(We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount.) Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on...welfare?</p>
Veterans	<p>(All veterans who served while the war in Vietnam was going on are entitled to benefits from the federal government. Some people say that the federal government should provide more benefits to certain groups of veterans than to others. Other people don't think the government should do this.) Do you think the government should provide more help to... unemployed veterans of the Vietnam Era... than to other veterans who served at the same time, less help to this group, or should this group be treated pretty much like all other veterans who served while the war in Vietnam was going on?</p>
Veterans	<p>Do you think that the American people give enough support to soldiers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, or not? (As you know, Congress may try to cut federal programs in order to reduce the budget deficit. For each of the following programs, please tell me whether you think it is more important to reduce the federal budget deficit, or more important to prevent that program from being significantly cut.)...Veterans benefits</p>
Veterans	<p>(Do you think the political leaders in Washington pay too much attention, about the right amount, or too little attention to the needs of each of the following groups?) How about...military veterans?</p>
Veterans	<p>Do you think the federal government is doing all that it could be expected to do to care for the needs and problems facing the US (United States) military personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, or not?</p>
Veterans	<p>Do you think the US (United States) government gives enough support to soldiers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, or not?</p>
Veterans	<p>If you were making up the budget for the federal government this year, would you increase spending for...veterans benefits and services, decrease spending for...veterans benefits and services, or keep spending the same for this?</p>
Veterans	<p>(Do you think the federal government should commit more or less resources and manpower to each of the following?)...Veterans' assistance</p>