

Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1996, pages 162, 163

Table 2.69

Attitudes toward the death penalty for persons convicted of murder

By demographic characteristics, United States, selected years 1976-96

Question: "Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?"

	1976		1977		1978		1980		1982		1983		1984		1985	
	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose
National	66%	30%	67%	26%	66%	28%	67%	27%	74%	20%	73%	22%	70%	24%	76%	19%
Sex																
Male	73	24	75	22	74	24	75	21	80	16	80	16	77	19	80	17
Female	60	34	61	30	61	31	61	32	69	24	68	27	66	27	72	22
Race																
White	68	28	70	24	69	25	70	24	77	18	76	19	75	20	79	17
Black/other	44	51	46	47	44	48	40	51	51	42	49	44	46	46	53	35
Age																
18 to 20 years	55	42	69	30	63	33	70	27	68	26	64	29	68	27	69	29
21 to 29 years	58	38	62	31	64	31	66	31	74	20	74	22	76	19	75	20
30 to 49 years	69	27	67	27	67	28	69	26	74	21	76	19	70	24	76	18
50 years and older	68	26	70	23	68	25	66	25	74	20	71	25	67	26	76	20
Education^a																
College	63	33	66	29	66	29	67	30	71	21	75	22	73	22	73	22
High school graduate	68	27	69	24	68	26	71	23	78	17	75	20	71	23	78	17
Less than high school graduate	61	30	65	29	60	31	56	33	64	26	61	29	59	33	72	21
Income																
\$50,000 and over	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
\$30,000 to \$49,999	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
\$20,000 to \$29,999	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Under \$20,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Occupation																
Professional/business	67	30	64	28	68	28	68	28	72	23	73	23	75	20	76	19
Clerical	66	27	64	26	72	23	69	26	79	17	78	18	71	23	76	19
Manual	68	29	71	25	65	28	68	26	73	21	71	23	69	25	76	19
Farmer	70	20	74	20	76	20	71	15	77	15	85	10	61	39	76	22
Region																
Northeast	70	26	64	31	67	28	68	26	74	22	70	25	74	20	74	21
Midwest	65	31	68	25	69	24	66	26	72	21	75	21	65	28	73	20
South	63	31	64	28	64	30	66	28	74	21	70	25	68	27	76	19
West	65	32	77	20	64	31	70	25	76	18	79	16	78	16	79	17
Religion																
Protestant	65	30	67	26	67	27	67	26	73	21	74	22	70	24	76	19
Catholic	68	27	70	25	68	27	71	23	76	20	72	22	72	23	78	19
Jewish	74	26	66	26	79	21	75	22	73	19	67	26	85	4	62	31
None	55	41	64	34	58	38	54	39	73	16	72	26	68	26	75	20
Politics																
Republican	73	23	74	21	73	23	77	18	79	16	85	13	80	16	83	13
Democrat	65	30	67	27	63	31	63	31	71	24	67	28	64	30	70	24
Independent	62	34	64	29	66	27	66	28	73	20	72	22	70	23	75	19

Note: The "don't know" category has been omitted; therefore percents may not sum to 100. Readers interested in responses to this question for previous years should consult previous editions of SOURCEBOOK. For a discussion of public opinion survey sampling procedures, see Appendix 6.

Source: National Opinion Research Center, "General Social Surveys, 1972-94," "General Social Surveys, 1996," Storrs, CT: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. (Machine-readable data files.) Table constructed by SOURCEBOOK staff.

^aIn 1996, education categories were revised slightly and therefore are not directly comparable to data presented for prior years.

1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1993		1994		1996	
Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose
71%	23%	70%	24%	71%	22%	74%	20%	74%	19%	72%	22%	72%	21%	74%	20%	71%	22%
79	17	73	22	77	18	81	16	79	18	77	19	78	16	79	17	79	17
66	28	67	26	66	26	69	24	71	21	67	25	67	24	71	22	65	25
75	20	74	21	76	18	77	18	78	16	75	19	75	18	78	16	75	18
49	43	46	43	46	44	57	36	58	36	53	37	54	38	56	34	54	35
68	24	64	36	61	35	69	25	66	34	60	33	70	23	73	21	70	22
72	23	69	27	73	24	71	24	79	16	74	23	69	26	72	21	72	22
70	27	74	21	72	21	76	20	74	21	71	22	73	20	75	20	71	22
74	20	66	26	70	22	74	19	74	18	71	21	73	20	75	18	71	21
72	23	70	26	71	23	72	22	73	21	69	25	69	24	73	21	69	24
73	23	73	20	73	20	77	18	77	18	74	20	75	18	77	17	76	17
64	26	54	38	59	27	69	24	70	21	72	21	71	18	67	25	68	23
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	73	22	77	18	75	20
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	74	18	76	18	74	18
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	81	14	75	19	72	24
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	67	25	71	22	64	25
76	21	72	25	72	21	75	19	72	20	67	25	70	23	75	20	70	22
70	25	74	19	72	21	73	21	81	14	73	22	72	21	74	19	73	20
69	25	68	24	71	24	74	21	74	22	75	20	74	19	75	19	72	21
83	17	65	28	67	29	91	4	78	7	81	11	74	21	74	18	72	20
70	26	72	23	66	26	72	19	75	20	71	23	65	26	70	24	66	26
69	26	67	26	70	24	72	22	76	20	70	24	72	18	72	20	72	22
67	26	67	26	72	21	75	21	72	20	71	22	75	19	76	19	72	20
83	13	76	19	76	17	76	19	76	16	76	20	72	24	78	16	74	19
72	23	70	24	72	22	75	20	75	19	72	22	74	20	75	18	72	20
69	26	70	24	73	21	73	20	76	18	75	21	68	22	75	19	70	23
79	16	80	10	63	23	87	13	74	15	53	34	70	21	72	26	63	28
73	24	65	28	67	26	71	24	72	24	65	28	72	23	73	20	69	22
80	15	83	14	81	12	82	14	83	12	84	13	81	13	84	12	85	12
66	30	61	32	62	32	68	26	68	24	63	29	64	30	65	28	61	30
72	23	69	24	72	20	73	21	74	21	69	23	71	20	76	17	70	21