

Table 2.97

Attitudes toward laws regulating the distribution of pornography

By demographic characteristics, United States, selected years 1987-2002

Question: "Which of these statements comes closest to your feelings about pornography laws: There should be laws against the distribution of pornography whatever the age; there should be laws against the distribution of pornography to persons under 18; or there should be no laws forbidding the distribution of pornography?"

	1987			1988			1989			1990			1991			
	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	
	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	
National	40%	55%	4%	43%	50%	5%	40%	54%	5%	41%	52%	6%	40%	55%	4%	
Sex																
Male	26	67	5	33	59	6	29	63	7	33	59	6	26	66	6	
Female	50	46	3	51	43	4	49	46	3	47	47	5	49	47	3	
Race																
White	41	54	4	45	49	5	41	54	4	42	51	5	41	54	4	
Black/other	33	61	3	35	58	6	38	52	7	34	57	7	31	60	6	
Age																
18 to 20 years	26	74	0	23	71	6	36	56	8	17	65	13	16	79	0	
21 to 29 years	25	70	5	28	67	4	27	68	3	29	67	3	30	66	3	
30 to 49 years	32	63	4	38	57	4	30	65	4	36	60	4	33	63	4	
50 years and older	36	60	4	32	61	7	59	33	6	53	36	8	54	38	5	
Education^a																
College	32	63	4	37	58	4	34	59	5	36	57	7	36	59	4	
High school graduate	43	53	3	46	47	5	43	53	4	44	51	5	42	53	4	
Less than high school graduate	56	34	7	55	30	6	59	29	7	47	38	5	51	43	4	
Income																
\$50,000 and over	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
\$30,000 to \$49,999	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
\$20,000 to \$29,999	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Under \$20,000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Occupation																
Professional/business	35	59	4	40	54	4	37	58	4	38	55	6	35	60	4	
Clerical/support	51	46	3	53	44	2	48	48	3	47	50	4	45	51	4	
Manual/service	39	55	4	41	51	6	39	53	6	40	52	5	41	53	4	
Farming/agriculture	38	58	5	56	31	12	44	38	12	35	59	6	25	65	5	
Region																
Northeast	57	37	4	58	32	5	36	56	5	32	62	5	34	61	3	
Midwest	39	55	5	45	48	3	39	56	4	38	54	7	41	54	5	
South	43	52	4	48	45	5	44	49	6	49	44	5	39	54	5	
West	39	55	4	44	52	4	40	56	4	38	55	6	44	53	3	
Religion																
Protestant	43	53	3	48	46	4	46	50	4	46	48	5	43	52	3	
Catholic	40	56	3	40	55	3	34	61	2	39	56	4	38	58	4	
Jewish	20	65	15	13	65	17	24	71	6	20	53	20	4	82	9	
None	16	71	11	21	64	12	22	59	16	22	66	9	18	66	11	
Politics																
Republican	44	51	4	46	48	3	42	53	4	43	50	5	43	54	2	
Democrat	41	54	4	44	49	6	44	51	5	44	47	7	38	55	4	
Independent	34	61	4	39	54	5	34	58	5	34	60	5	38	56	5	

Note: See Note, table 2.15. 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 5.

Source: National Opinion Research Center, "General Social Surveys, 1972-2002," Storrs, CT: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. (Machine-readable data files.) Table constructed by SOURCEBOOK staff.

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

1993			1994			1996			1998			2000			2002		
Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws forbidding distribution
What-ever the age	To persons under 18		What-ever the age	To persons under 18		What-ever the age	To persons under 18		What-ever the age	To persons under 18		What-ever the age	To persons under 18		What-ever the age	To persons under 18	
42%	54%	3%	37%	60%	3%	38%	58%	4%	38%	57%	4%	36%	60%	3%	38%	56%	5%
32	62	5	26	68	5	25	70	4	27	67	5	24	72	3	31	62	7
48	48	2	45	52	2	48	48	4	47	49	3	45	51	3	43	52	4
44	53	3	38	58	3	39	56	4	39	56	4	36	60	3	39	56	5
31	60	6	31	65	3	31	64	3	32	63	3	34	59	5	32	60	6
28	59	10	15	79	3	23	70	6	30	66	3	18	77	4	29	59	12
24	72	3	25	72	2	25	72	2	17	79	4	17	78	4	17	75	8
33	64	3	28	69	3	30	66	3	33	64	3	29	68	2	32	64	4
60	34	3	54	41	4	54	39	5	54	39	5	52	43	4	54	40	5
36	60	3	30	66	3	32	63	4	32	64	3	31	65	3	34	61	4
46	49	3	42	56	2	41	57	2	44	51	4	41	55	3	40	52	8
55	39	4	54	34	9	48	43	6	44	49	6	42	52	3	48	48	3
35	60	5	32	65	2	31	65	3	34	63	3	30	67	3	35	60	5
37	60	2	34	63	3	34	62	3	39	57	4	32	66	2	39	54	6
41	53	4	35	60	4	39	56	4	32	65	2	34	61	4	35	58	6
47	49	2	41	55	3	39	54	4	42	51	6	44	51	3	41	54	4
38	58	3	32	64	3	34	62	4	35	61	4	31	65	3	34	61	4
48	48	4	43	55	1	41	56	3	45	50	4	46	50	3	40	55	5
42	54	3	35	61	4	38	57	3	35	60	3	34	61	3	38	55	6
42	53	5	38	52	5	45	47	3	52	48	0	49	49	3	61	39	0
38	56	5	32	63	4	34	60	5	32	62	5	31	66	3	35	59	6
40	56	3	34	63	2	40	56	3	40	57	3	35	61	4	38	57	4
47	49	2	43	53	3	42	53	3	41	54	4	43	53	2	44	51	4
38	57	4	32	64	3	30	65	4	36	60	4	27	66	5	30	62	7
49	47	2	43	54	2	45	51	3	46	50	3	44	53	2	46	50	4
35	62	3	32	66	2	30	65	4	33	62	4	31	66	2	34	61	4
20	80	0	20	76	5	24	63	11	19	72	6	19	79	2	10	75	15
15	75	9	17	75	7	18	73	6	18	74	6	16	76	7	21	68	11
52	45	3	43	55	2	43	53	4	43	53	3	42	56	2	47	50	3
41	55	3	36	61	2	36	59	4	37	58	4	36	59	4	32	62	5
35	60	4	33	63	4	35	61	3	36	59	4	32	63	4	37	57	7