



PRRI 2012 American Values Survey
September 13 – September 30, 2012
N=3,003

ASK ALL:

Q.1 Do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

34	Right direction
57	Wrong track
5	Mixed (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

48	Approve
43	Disapprove
6	Mixed/Approve and disapprove (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.3 How closely are you following news about the 2012 presidential election campaign?
[READ IN ORDER]

39	Very closely
34	Fairly closely
17	Not too closely
9	Not at all closely
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.4 How would you rate your chances of voting in the 2012 presidential election?
[READ IN ORDER]

71	Absolutely certain to vote
9	Probably will vote
10	Chances are 50-50
9	Less than 50-50 chance
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.5 If the 2012 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]** and **[INSERT]**, for whom would you vote?
IF OTHER, DK/REFUSED (Q5=3,9), ASK:

Q.6 As of today, do you lean more toward **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]** or **[INSERT]**?

53	Barack Obama, the Democrat
50	Obama
3	Leans Obama
40	Mitt Romney, the Republican
37	Romney
3	Leans Romney
<u>7</u>	Other candidate/Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.7 Of the following six issues, which one would you say is MOST important to your vote for President this year? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

59	The economy
5	Immigration
9	National security
18	Health care
2	Same-sex marriage
4	Abortion
1	Other [SPECIFY—VOL.]
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF 'THE ECONOMY' MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE (Q7=1), ASK: [N=1,801]

Q.8 And which economic issue is MOST important to your vote this year? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

8	Taxes
22	The budget deficit
39	Lack of jobs
3	Welfare
9	Social Security
16	The gap between rich and poor
<u>2</u>	Other/Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.9 Now we would like your views on some political leaders and groups. Please say whether your overall opinion of each of the following is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly Unfavorable, or very unfavorable. First **[RANDOMIZE LIST]**

a. Mitt Romney

17	Very favorable
26	Mostly favorable
24	Mostly unfavorable
29	Very unfavorable
1	Have not heard of (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Barack Obama

29	Very favorable
27	Mostly favorable
16	Mostly unfavorable
26	Very unfavorable
*	Have not heard of (VOL.)
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=1,503]:

c. The Democratic Party

19	Very favorable
34	Mostly favorable
22	Mostly unfavorable
21	Very unfavorable
*	Have not heard of (VOL.)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. The Republican Party

14	Very favorable
30	Mostly favorable
25	Mostly unfavorable
25	Very unfavorable
*	Have not heard of (VOL.)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=1,500]:

e. Paul Ryan

18	Very favorable
22	Mostly favorable
18	Mostly unfavorable
25	Very unfavorable
7	Have not heard of (VOL.)
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

f. Joe Biden

16	Very favorable
28	Mostly favorable
21	Mostly unfavorable
24	Very unfavorable
4	Have not heard of (VOL.)
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.10 Regardless of who you may support for president in 2012, which candidate better understands the problems of people like you? **[READ; ROTATE]**

55	Barack Obama
35	Mitt Romney
7	Neither (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.11 And from what you know, do you think that **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]** has RELIGIOUS BELIEFS that are very similar, somewhat similar, somewhat different or very different than your own RELIGIOUS BELIEFS? What about **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**?

REPEAT IF NECESSARY: Do you think that **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]** has religious beliefs that are very similar, somewhat similar, somewhat different or very different than your own religious beliefs?

a. Barack Obama

15	Very similar
26	Somewhat similar
15	Somewhat different
34	Very different
*	Never heard of him/her (VOL.)
<u>11</u>	Don't know what their religious beliefs are (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Mitt Romney

9	Very similar
25	Somewhat similar
18	Somewhat different
35	Very different
*	Never heard of him/her (VOL.)
<u>12</u>	Don't know what their religious beliefs are (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.12 We would like to get your views on some issues that are being discussed in the country today. Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose or strongly oppose **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**? What about **[INSERT NEXT]**?

a. Allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally

24	Strongly favor
25	Favor
18	Oppose
27	Strongly oppose
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Making marijuana legal in the United States

18	Strongly favor
25	Favor
24	Oppose
28	Strongly oppose
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. Increasing the tax rate on Americans earning more than \$250,000 a year

33	Strongly favor
28	Favor
19	Oppose
17	Strongly oppose
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=1,503]:

d. Repealing and eliminating the 2010 health care law

25	Strongly favor
16	Favor
22	Oppose
27	Strongly oppose
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=1,500]:

e. Allowing illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children to gain legal resident status if they join the military or go to college

25	Strongly favor
35	Favor
20	Oppose
17	Strongly oppose
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.13 Do you think abortion should be... **[RANDOMIZE LIST ORDER 1-4; 4-1]**

22	Legal in all cases
34	Legal in most cases
24	Illegal in most cases
15	Illegal in all cases
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.14 Which punishment do you prefer for people convicted of murder: **[INSERT; ROTATE OPTIONS]?**

IF AGREE WITH DEATH PENALTY OR LIFE IN PRISON (Q14=1,2), ASK:

Q.15 And do you feel strongly about that, or not?

46	The death penalty
39	Feels Strongly
7	Feels not strongly
*	Don't know/Refused
47	Life in prison with no chance of parole
35	Feels Strongly
11	Feels not strongly
1	Don't know/Refused
2	Other (VOL.)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.16 Next, I'm going to read you a series of statements about personal behavior. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that it is morally acceptable or morally wrong. First... **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**? Is this morally acceptable, or morally wrong? Next...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=1,503]:

a. Having an abortion

39	Morally acceptable
51	Morally wrong
7	Depends on the situation (VOL.)
*	Not a moral issue (VOL.)
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. The death penalty

60	Morally acceptable
35	Morally wrong
3	Depends on the situation (VOL.)
*	Not a moral issue (VOL.)
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=1,500]:

c. Sex between two adults of the same gender

42	Morally acceptable
52	Morally wrong
1	Depends on the situation (VOL.)
1	Not a moral issue (VOL.)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. Smoking marijuana

48	Morally acceptable
45	Morally wrong
3	Depends on the situation (VOL.)
2	Not a moral issue (VOL.)
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK ALL:

e. Using artificial birth control methods also known as contraceptives

87	Morally acceptable
10	Morally wrong
1	Depends on the situation (VOL.)
*	Not a moral issue (VOL.)
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.17 There is currently a debate over what kinds of health care plans some religious organizations should be required to provide. Do you think **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]** should be required to provide their employees with health care plans that cover contraception or birth control at no cost, or not? What about **[INSERT]**?

IF NECESSARY: Should they be required to provide their employees with health care plans that cover contraception or birth control at no cost, or not?

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=1,503]:

a. Religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals

56	Yes, should have provide
40	No, should not have to provide
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Churches and other places of worship

45	Yes, should have provide
50	No, should not have to provide
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=1,500]:

c. Religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals, even if they have religious objections

56	Yes, should have provide
39	No, should not have to provide
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. Churches and other places of worship, even if they have religious objections

48	Yes, should have provide
48	No, should not have to provide
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.18 Now, as I read a pair of statements, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views – even if neither is exactly right.

63	Government policies aimed at helping the poor serve as a critical safety net, which help people in hard times get back on their feet OR
32	Government policies aimed at helping the poor create a culture of dependency where people are provided with too many handouts
4	Neither/Both Equally (VOL.)
<u>2</u>	Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.19 In your view, are most people who receive welfare payments genuinely in need of help or are they taking advantage of the system?

44	In need of help
46	Taking advantage of the system
3	Other (VOL.)
<u>7</u>	Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.20 Now, as I read some statements on a few different topics, please tell me if you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with each one. (First/Next) **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**.

READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree?

a. Women are naturally better suited to raise children than men

14	Completely agree
40	Mostly agree
29	Mostly disagree
15	Completely disagree
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. The right of religious liberty is being threatened in America today

26	Completely agree
31	Mostly agree
24	Mostly disagree
18	Completely disagree
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK ALL:

Now a few different questions...

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?]

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

IF NOTHING IN PARTICULAR (RELIG=12), ASK [N=292]:

SECULAR In general would you describe yourself more as a religious person or as secular, that is someone who is NOT religious?

31	Religious
63	Secular, not religious
2	Spiritual, not religious (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Other/Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF SOMETHING ELSE OR DK/REF (RELIG = 11, 99) ASK [N=138]:

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

IF R NAMED A NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGION IN PREVIOUS QUESTION (e.g. Native American, Wiccan, Pagan, etc.), DO NOT READ (ENTER "NO" CODE 2)

50	Yes
41	No
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF CHRISTIAN (RELIG=1-4, 13 OR CHR=1), ASK [N=2,353]:

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

45	Yes
50	No
<u>4</u>	Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ASK ALL:

RELIG2 Thinking about when you were a child, in what religion were you raised, if any? Were you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox such as Greek or Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, something else, or nothing in particular

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

IF CHRISTIAN (RELIG2=1-4, 11, 13), ASK [N=2,682]:

BORN2 Would you describe the religion you were raised in as a "born-again" or evangelical Christian religion, or not?

42	Yes
51	No
<u>7</u>	Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF RAISED AFFILIATED (RELIG2=1-8,11,13,14) BUT NOW UNAFFILIATED (RELIG = 9,10,12), ASK [N=364]:

FRMREL In just a few words, what is the single most important reason that you no longer identify as **[INSERT RELIG2 RESPONSE; IF RELIG2=11 INSERT “the faith you were raised in”]**?

23	Don't believe in God/Teachings
16	Dislike organized religion/Religion causes problems
11	Personal experience/grew out of it
8	Goes against science and logic
8	Hypocritical
5	Judgmental/Controlling
5	No reason/Not sure
4	Social/Sexuality issues
2	Sex abuse scandal
5	Busy/Not interested
6	Other
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF AFFILIATED OR ATHEIST, AGNOSTIC (RELIG = 1-10, 13, 14 OR SECULAR=1,2,3), ASK [N=2,853]:

Q.21 How important is being **[INSERT RELIG; IF RELIG=1 INSERT “Christian”; IF SECULAR=1 INSERT: “Religious”; IF SECULAR=2 INSERT: “Secular” IF SECULAR=3 INSERT: “Spiritual”]** in your life?

26	The most important thing
37	Very important
21	Somewhat important
9	Not too important
7	Not at all important
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF NOTHING IN PARTICULAR/SOMETHING ELSE OR DK (RELIG = 11,99 OR SECULAR=4,9), ASK [N=150]:

Q.22 How important is your religious identity in your life?

15	The most important thing
28	Very important
17	Somewhat important
14	Not too important
17	Not at all important
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

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?

15 More than once a week
24 Once a week
14 Once or twice a month
19 A few times a year
15 Seldom
11 Never
1 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100 Total

Q.23 Which statement comes closest to your view of God: God is a person with whom people can have a relationship, God is an impersonal force, or I do not believe in God?

64 God is a person
24 God is an impersonal force
7 I do not believe in God
3 Both/Neither/Other (VOL.)
3 Don't know/refused (VOL.)
100 Total

Q.24 Which comes closest to your view? **[READ, IN ORDER]**
[Holy book: If Christian or no religion (RELIG=1-4, 9, 10, 12, 13 OR CHR=1) insert "the Bible"; If Jewish (RELIG=5), insert "the Torah"; If Muslim (RELIG=6), insert, "the Koran"; If other non-Christian affiliations (RELIG=7,8,14 OR (RELIG=11 AND CHR=2,9)), insert "the Holy Scripture"; IF DK/REF IN RELIGION (RELIG=99) AND CHR=2,9, insert "the Bible"]
IF BELIEVE HOLY BOOK IS WORD OF GOD (Q.24=1), ASK:

Q.25 And would you say that **[READ, IN ORDER]**?

66 **[Holy book]** is the word of God, OR
34 **[Holy book]** is to be taken literally, word for word, OR
30 Not everything in **[Holy book]** should be taken literally, word for word.
2 Other/Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
28 **[Holy book]** is a book written by men and is not the word of God.
2 Other (VOL.)
4 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100 Total

IF HAS A RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION (RELIG=1-8, 13-14), ASK [N=2,387]:

Q.26 Thinking about your religion, which of the following statements comes CLOSEST to your view? My church or denomination should **[READ IN ORDER]**

- 53 Preserve its traditional beliefs and practices OR
- 28 Adjust traditional beliefs and practices in light of new circumstances OR
- 14 Adopt modern beliefs and practices.
- 6 Other (VOL.)
- 100 Don't know/refused (VOL.)

Q.27 Now, as I read some statements on a few different topics, please tell me if you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with each one. (First/Next) **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**.

READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree?

a. The main cause of America's problems is moral decay

- 34 Completely agree
- 38 Mostly agree
- 16 Mostly disagree
- 10 Completely disagree
- 1 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100 Total

b. The primary cause of America's problems is an economic system that results in continuing inequality and poverty

- 19 Completely agree
- 43 Mostly agree
- 24 Mostly disagree
- 11 Completely disagree
- 4 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100 Total

c. It is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values

- 25 Completely agree
- 26 Mostly agree
- 21 Mostly disagree
- 25 Completely disagree
- 1 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100 Total

d. If enough people had a personal relationship with God, social problems would take care of themselves

21	Completely agree
35	Mostly agree
24	Mostly disagree
18	Completely disagree
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

IF CATHOLIC OR RAISED CATHOLIC (RELIG=2 OR RELIG2=2), ASK [N=960]:

Q.28 As I read a pair of statements, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views – even if neither is exactly right.

62	In its statements about public policy, the Catholic Church should focus more on social justice and the obligation to help the poor, even it means focusing less on issues like abortion and the right to life OR
29	In its statements about public policy, the Catholic Church should focus more on issues like abortion and the right to life, even it means focusing less on social justice and the obligation to help the poor
4	Neither/Both equally (VOL.)
<u>5</u>	Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

CLASS If you were asked to use one of these five names for your social class, which would you say you belong in? **[READ IN ORDER]**

(FORM 1 READ CATEGORIES IN ORDER, FORM 2 READ IN REVERSE ORDER)

2	Upper class
12	Upper-middle class
41	Middle class
34	Working class
10	Lower class
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

FINC4 Would you say your financial situation is better, worse, or not any different than it was 4 years ago?

29	Better
37	Worse
33	No Different
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Note: Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding

Survey Methodology

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute and funded by the Ford Foundation with additional support from the Nathan Cummings Foundation. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) telephone interviews conducted between September 13, 2012 and September 30, 2012, by professional interviewers under the supervision of Directions in Research. Interviews were conducted by telephone among a random sample of 3,003 adults 18 years of age or older in the continental United States (1,201 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone). The landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International and the final sample was weighted to ensure proper representativeness.

The weighting was accomplished in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns. In the second stage, sample demographics were balanced by form to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race and Hispanic ethnicity, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density and telephone usage. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2000 data. The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2010 National Health Interview Survey. All other weighting parameters were derived from an analysis of the Census Bureau's 2010 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

The sample weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample-weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations.

The margin of error is +/- 2.0 percentage points for the general sample at the 95% confidence interval. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects.