Considering Alternative Lifestyles

**Question:** Here is a list of things some people today find acceptable behavior if people choose to do them, and others find unacceptable. For each one would you tell me whether you find it acceptable for anyone, or acceptable for others but not for yourself, or not acceptable for anyone?

Percent responding NOT acceptable for anyone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People living in a homosexual relationship</th>
<th>People who are not married having children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986: 71%</td>
<td>1986: 51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent change</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People of different races marrying each other</th>
<th>Single people having sex with different partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986: 28%</td>
<td>1986: 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998: 18%</td>
<td>1998: 43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People living together outside of marriage</th>
<th>Married people having sexual relations with people other than their spouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986: 34%</td>
<td>1986: 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998: 26%</td>
<td>1998: 77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Survey by Roper Starch Worldwide, latest that of July 1998.

**Question:** Do you feel that homosexuality should be considered as an accepted alternative lifestyle or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Homosexuality should be accepted</th>
<th>Homosexuality should be discouraged</th>
<th>Neither (vol.)/Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**A Way of Life?**

**Question:** Please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right.... Homosexuality is a way of life that should be accepted by society, or homosexuality is a way of life that should be discouraged by society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homosexuality should be accepted</th>
<th>Homosexuality should be discouraged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gay Takes on the Straight World

**Question:** However much actual discrimination there is, do you think there is more homophobia or less homophobia than there was five years ago?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>More Homophobia</th>
<th>Less Homophobia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Asked of gay and lesbian adults.


**Question:** ...Which one of the following two statements, if any, do you agree with?... More people are homophobic today than ever, but they may be less willing to show it, or, there are not more homophobic people today, but those who are seem more outspoken and activist in their opposition to gays.

**Note:** Asked of gay and lesbian adults.


**Question:** I'm going to read you some different reasons why straight people might dislike gays and lesbians. Please tell me if you think each is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why straight people dislike gays.

**Ignorance of gays**

- **Major reason:** 83%
- **Minor reason:** 11%
- **Not a reason:** 5%

**Fear of being uncomfortable**

- **Major reason:** 41%
- **Minor reason:** 41%
- **Not a reason:** 15%

**Bible says it's wrong**

- **Major reason:** 58%
- **Minor reason:** 32%
- **Not a reason:** 8%

**Bad personal experience**

- **Major reason:** 20%
- **Minor reason:** 45%
- **Not a reason:** 33%

**Note:** Asked of gay and lesbian adults.


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Data shown on pp. 25 and 27-30 referencing a gay and lesbian sample are from a study conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates for Newsweek. Respondents were randomly drawn from a masterfile of approximately 750,000 names—compiled by Strubco, Inc.—of Americans who associated themselves with gay or lesbian interests and activities. Those who clearly identified themselves as heterosexual were excluded from the survey sample.
Homosexuality as a Moral Issue

**Question:** Thinking about your own values and morals, would you say that homosexuality is always acceptable, acceptable for some people but not for others, unacceptable but should be tolerated by society, or unacceptable and should not be tolerated?


**Question:** What is the main reason you personally think homosexuality is unacceptable?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible forbids it/ Homosexuality is a sin</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church condemns it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other religious objections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not natural/ Against laws of nature</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object to lifestyle</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find homosexuality disgusting/obscene</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Asked of those who said homosexuality is unacceptable (57%). Survey by the Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University, August 10-27, 1998.

**Question:** Do you personally believe homosexual behavior is morally wrong or is not morally wrong?


**Question:** Do you personally think that homosexual relationships between consenting adults is morally wrong, or not a moral issue?


**Death Penalty**

**Question:** Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about AIDS. Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree that... AIDS came from God to punish homosexual behavior?

**Question**: In your opinion, is homosexuality something a person is born with or is homosexuality due to other factors such as upbringing or environment?

**National adults**

- **Born with**: 33%
- **Upbringing/environment**: 44%
- **Neither*/ D’ont know**: 13%
- **Both***: 10%

**Gay and lesbian adults**

- **Born with**: 75%
- **Upbringing/environment**: 8%
- **Neither*/ D’ont know**: 6%
- **Both***: 11%

*Volunteered responses.


**Question**: Some people believe gays’ and lesbians’ sexual preference is something that cannot be changed. Others believe their sexual preference can be changed through will power, therapy, or religious conviction. Which comes closer to your view?

**National adults**

- **Cannot change**: 34%
- **Can change**: 56%
- **D’ont know**: 10%

**Gay and lesbian adults**

- **Cannot change**: 86%
- **Can change**: 11%
- **D’ont know**: 3%


**Question**: Do you think a person’s homosexual orientation can be changed in most cases, in some cases, in just a few cases, or never?

- **Most**: 18%
- **Some**: 27%
- **Just a few**: 24%
- **Never**: 22%

**Source**: Survey by the Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University, August 10-27, 1998.

**Medical Perspective**

**Question**: Do you think homosexuality is a physical or mental illness, or not?

- **No, not an illness**: 59%
- **Yes, an illness**: 32%
- **No opinion**: 9%

**Source**: Survey by the Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University, August 10-27, 1998.
Comfort Levels

**Question:** We’re interested in how much, if at all, you are personally bothered by some things gay men and women might do. What about this... Does this bother you very much, somewhat, only a little, or not at all?


**Question:** ...Do you think this bothers most straight people very much, somewhat, only a little, or not at all?


**Out of the Closet, Into the Culture**

**Question:** Do you think popular entertainment media—such as movies, television, and books—are including too many gay themes and characters these days, not enough, or about the right amount?


**Question:** In general, do you think the images of gays and lesbians portrayed in popular entertainment media, such as movies, television, and books, are mostly positive or mostly negative?

Question: I have some questions about the situation in this country for gay men and women. In this country today, do you think there is a lot of discrimination against gays and lesbians, some discrimination, or not much discrimination?


Question: As you know, there has been considerable discussion in the news lately regarding the rights of homosexual men and women. In general, do you think homosexuals should or should not have equal rights in terms of job opportunities?

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of February 8-9, 1999.

Question: Now, I'd like to ask you about the hiring of homosexuals in specific occupations. Do you think homosexuals should or should not be hired for the following occupations?

**Certain Inalienable Rights**

**Question:** In general, do you think too much attention is being paid to homosexual rights these days, not enough attention, or about the right amount?

![Graph showing responses to the question](image1)

**Source:** Survey by Yankelovich Partners for Time/CNN, October 14-15, 1998.

**Hate Crimes**

**Question:** As you may know, a federal law mandates increased penalties for people who commit crimes against blacks or other minorities out of prejudice against them. Do you favor or oppose a federal law that would mandate the same treatment for people who commit crimes against homosexuals out of prejudice against them?

![Graph showing responses to the question](image2)

**Source:** Survey by Yankelovich Partners for Time/CNN, October 14-15, 1998.

**Question:** Some people believe this country has made about the right amount of effort to protect the rights of gays and lesbians. Others believe more effort is needed. Still others think this country has gone too far in its efforts to protect gay rights. Which comes closest to your view?

![Graph showing responses to the question](image3)

Familiarity Encourages Acceptance

**Question:** Please tell me whether or not each of the following applies to you. Do you...

...work with someone you know is gay or lesbian?  
**Yes:** 31%  
**No:** 67%  
**Don’t know:** 2%

...has someone in your family who is gay or lesbian?  
**Yes:** 21%  
**No:** 76%  
**Don’t know:** 3%

...have a friend or acquaintance who is gay or lesbian?  
**Yes:** 55%  
**No:** 44%  
**Don’t know:** 1%


The familiarity score in the following table is calculated on the basis of responses to the above three questions. A score of 0 means the respondent replied “no” to all three questions; a score of 1 indicates an affirmative response to one question; a score of 2 means the respondent said “yes” to at least two questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Response</th>
<th>Familiarity Score 0</th>
<th>Familiarity Score 1</th>
<th>Familiarity Score 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong> Thinking again about what might be done to protect gay rights, do you think there should or should not be...</td>
<td><strong>Percent responding should</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal rights for gays and lesbians in terms of job opportunities?</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal rights for gays and lesbians in terms of housing?</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance rights for gay spouses?</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health insurance and other employee benefits for gay spouses?</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gays and lesbians serving openly in the military?</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security benefits for gay spouses?</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special legislation to guarantee equal rights for gays and lesbians?</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption rights for gay spouses?</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally sanctioned gay marriages?</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Responses of don’t know and refusals were calculated out.  