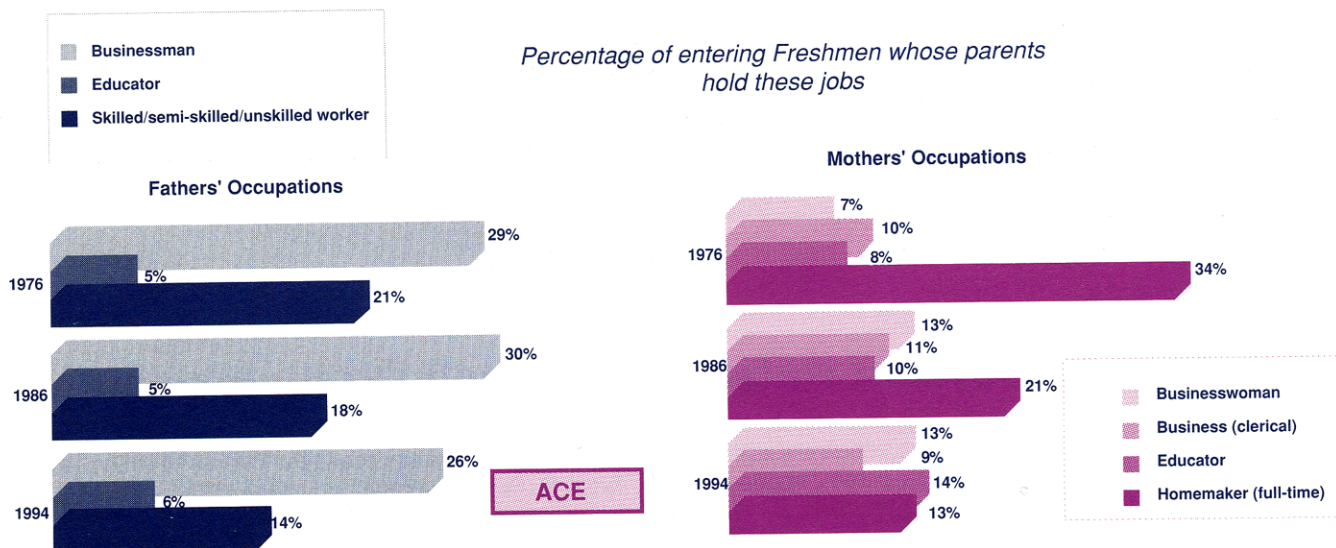


Education in America: College Students' Views and Values

Editor's Note: Just as the Gallup surveys for Phi Delta Kappa are a valuable longitudinal file tracking the general public's thinking about public school performance, so the American Council on Education (ACE) surveys of *entering college freshman*—conducted each year since 1966—give valuable insight both into changes in American values that impact on education, and changes in the college environment itself. On pp.18-20, Alexander Astin, director of the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles, which has conducted these surveys from their inception, discusses important shifts and other findings. Here, we review the data. We also draw briefly on a survey of undergraduates in all four years of training done in 1992-1993 by researchers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

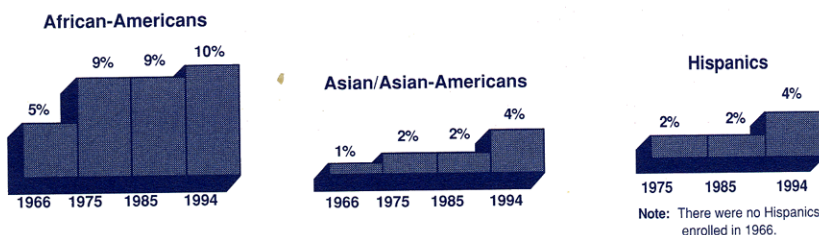
As the occupational mix of the country changes, so does that of students' parents. Over the last two decades, the proportion coming from families where the father was a skilled or unskilled worker has dropped sharply, as has the proportion where the mother was a full-time homemaker.



Social Experience Mirrored



More Ethnic Minorities Enrolled

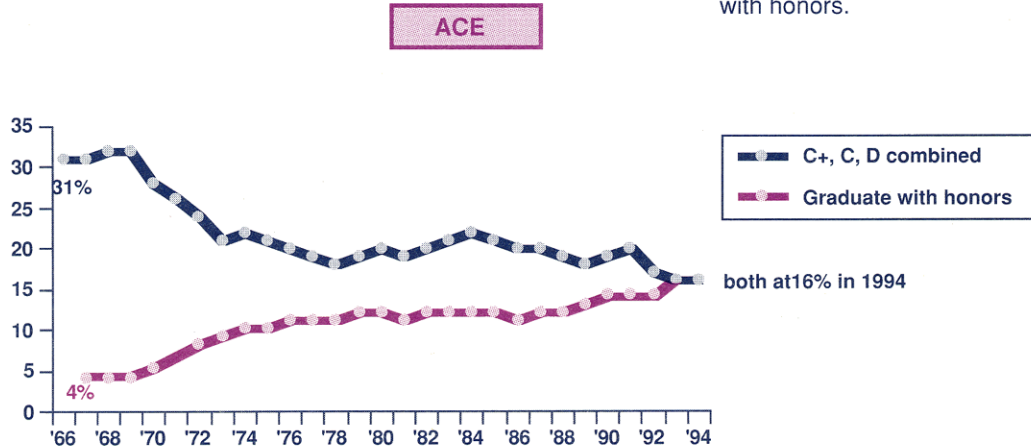


Education in America: College Students' Views & Values

Students' Reports Track the Surge of Grade Inflation in the 1970s

Question: What was your average grade in high school?

Question: [Students estimate chances are very good that they will]...graduate with honors.



Today's Student Rates Him/Herself Pretty Highly

Question: Rate yourself on each of the following traits as compared with the average person your age. We want the most accurate estimate of how you see yourself? [Highest 10%, Above Average, Average, Below Average, or Lowest 10%]

Percent responding "above average" or "highest 10%"

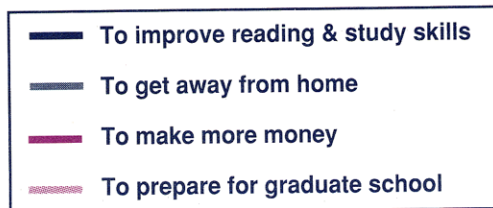
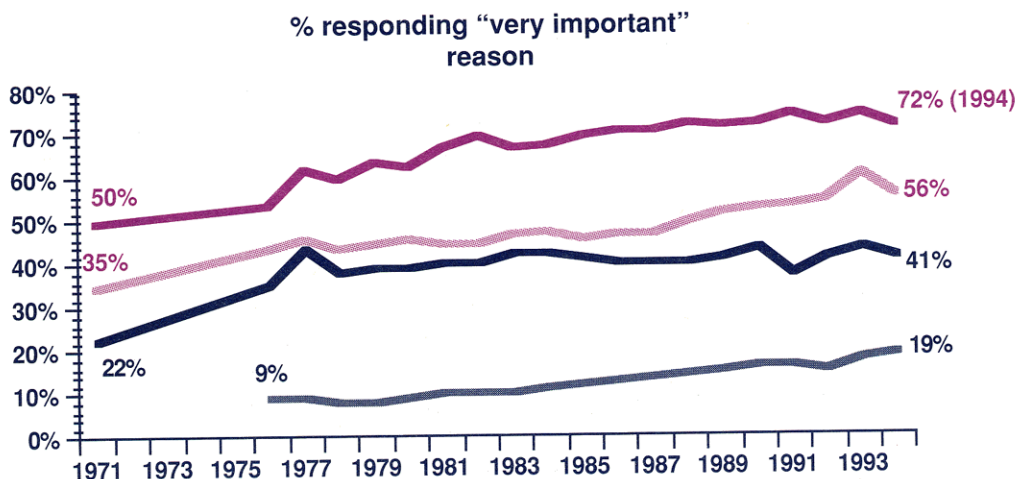
	1966	1976	1986	1994
Academic ability	57%	51%	55%	54%
Drive to achieve	57%	62%	61%	64%
Leadership ability	38%	43%	52%	51%
Mathematical ability	36%	34%	40%	38%
Intellectual self-confidence	36%	42%	55%	50%
Social self-confidence	30%	36%	48%	44%
Understanding of others	60%	66%	N/A	68%
Writing ability	27%	33%	39%	38%

ACE

Education in America: College Students' Views and Values

Why Go to College?

Question: In deciding to go to college, how important to you was each of the following reasons?

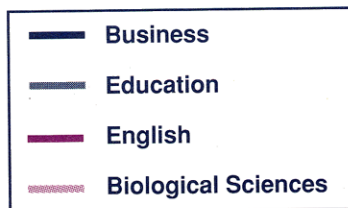
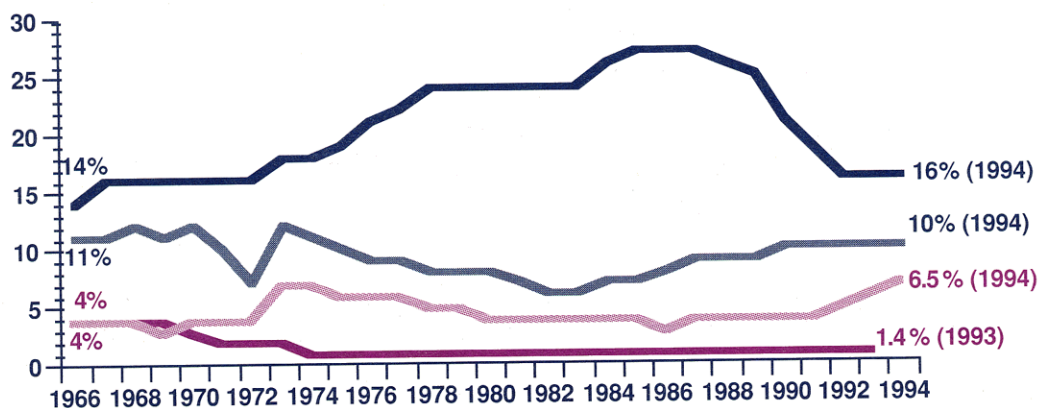


ACE

What to Study?

“Business” surged, then fell back

Question: []Indicate your probable field of study.

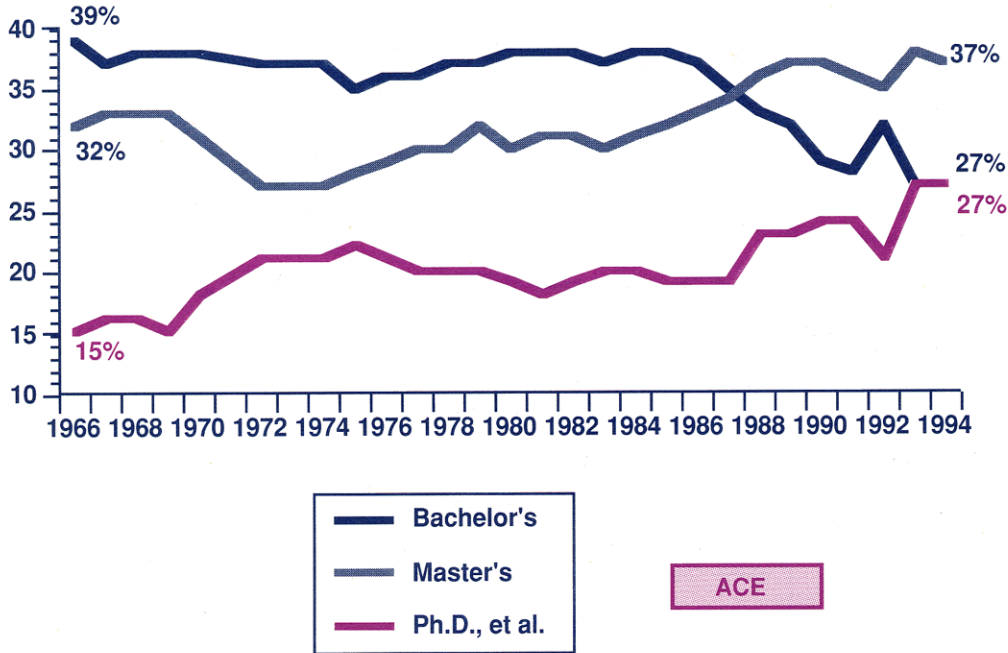


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Education in America: College Students' Views & Values

What Degree to Get?: More Looking to Graduate Training

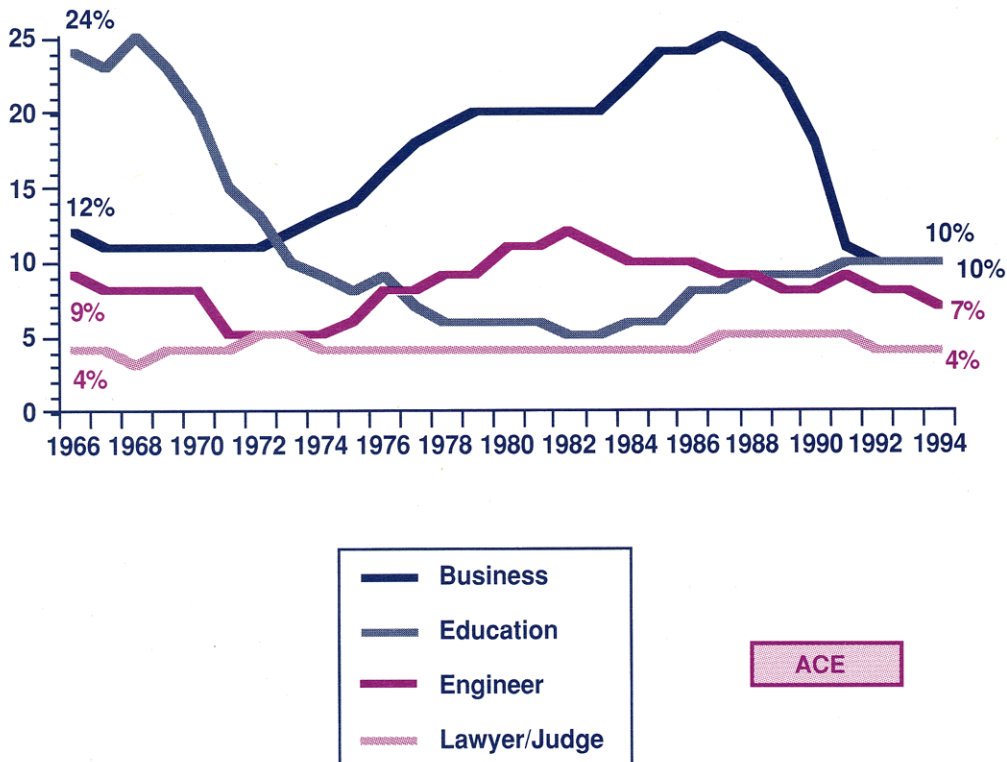
Question: What is the highest academic degree that you intend to obtain?



What Job Do You Want?

Question: [Indicate] your probable career occupation.

“Education” Plunged After the Mid-1960s

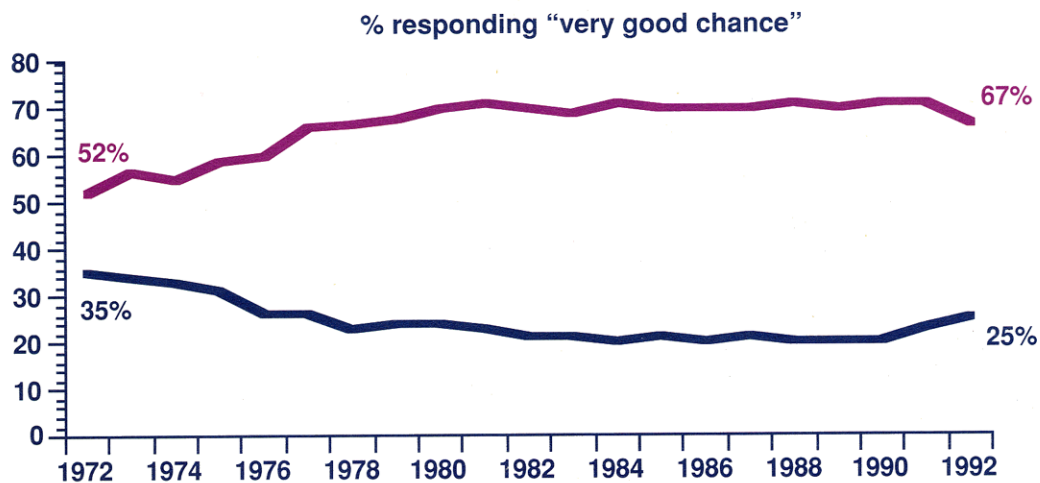


Education in America: College Students' Views and Values

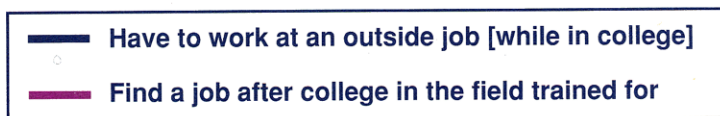
The Question of Jobs: Today...and Tomorrow

No Shift to Pessimism Seen Here

Question: What is your best guess as to the chances that you will...?



Note: Not asked in 1993 and 1994.

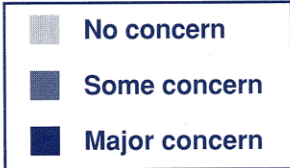
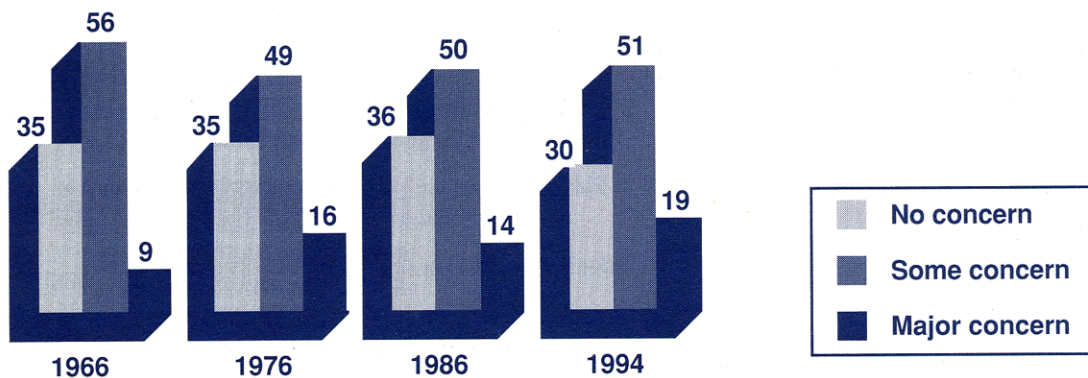


ACE

Concerned About What It Costs to Get There?

Modest Increases Reported

Question: Do you have any concern about your ability to finance your college education?



ACE

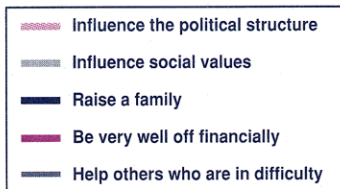
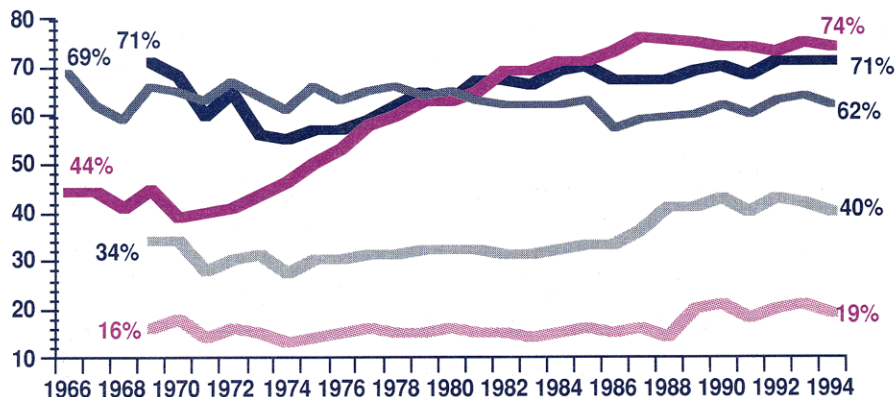
Education in America: College Students' Views & Values

What Matters?

—Being Well Off is Way Up—
 —But Raising of Family and Shaping Social Values Are High Too—

Question: ...[I]ndicate the importance to you personally of each of the following?

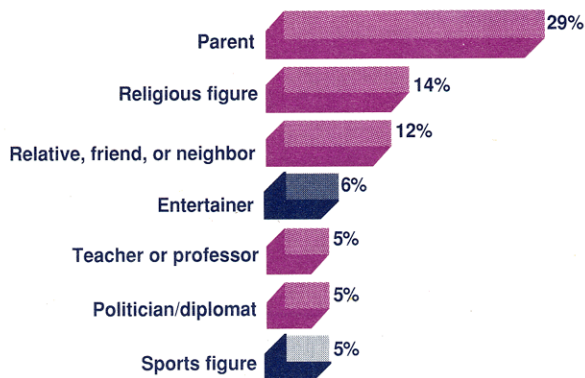
% responding "essential/very important"



ACE

Heroes are "Traditional" Ones

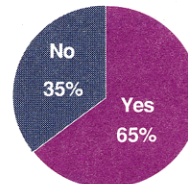
Question: Which of the following best describes your hero?



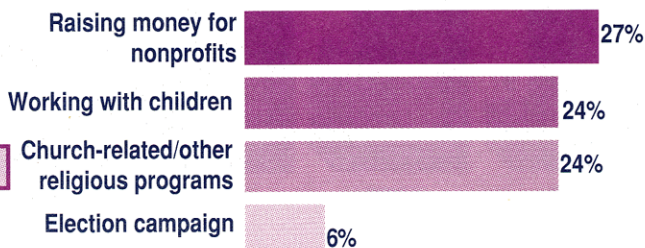
HARVARD
1992-93

Volunteerism is High

Question: Have you participated in any volunteer activities this past year?



Question: ...[W]hich of the following volunteer activities [have] you...participated in this past year...?

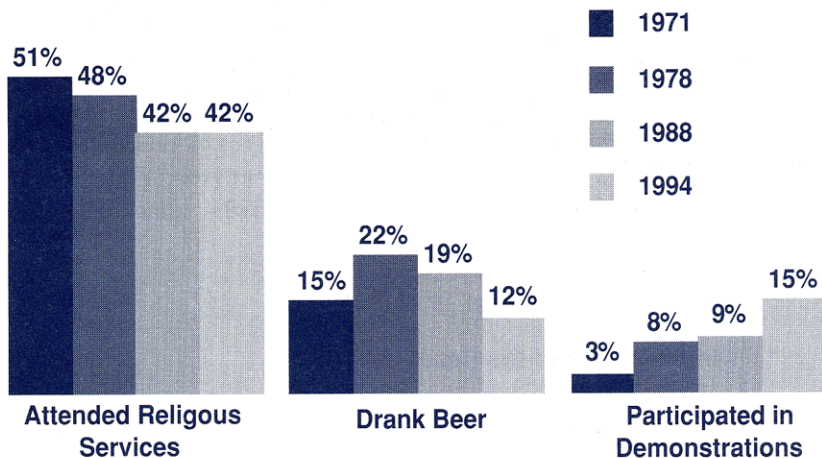


Education in America: College Students' Views and Values

Beer Drinking Down Frequent Church Attendance Down Activism Up

Question: ...[I]ndicate which activities you did during the past year?

Percent responding they participated in the activity "frequently"



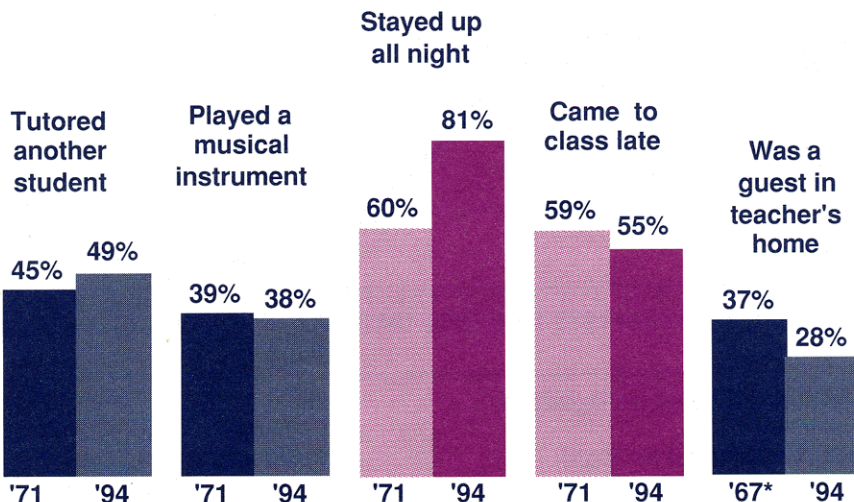
ACE

Everyday Student Life

Question: ...[I]ndicate which activities you did during the past year?

Percent responding they participated in the activity "frequently or occasionally"

ACE



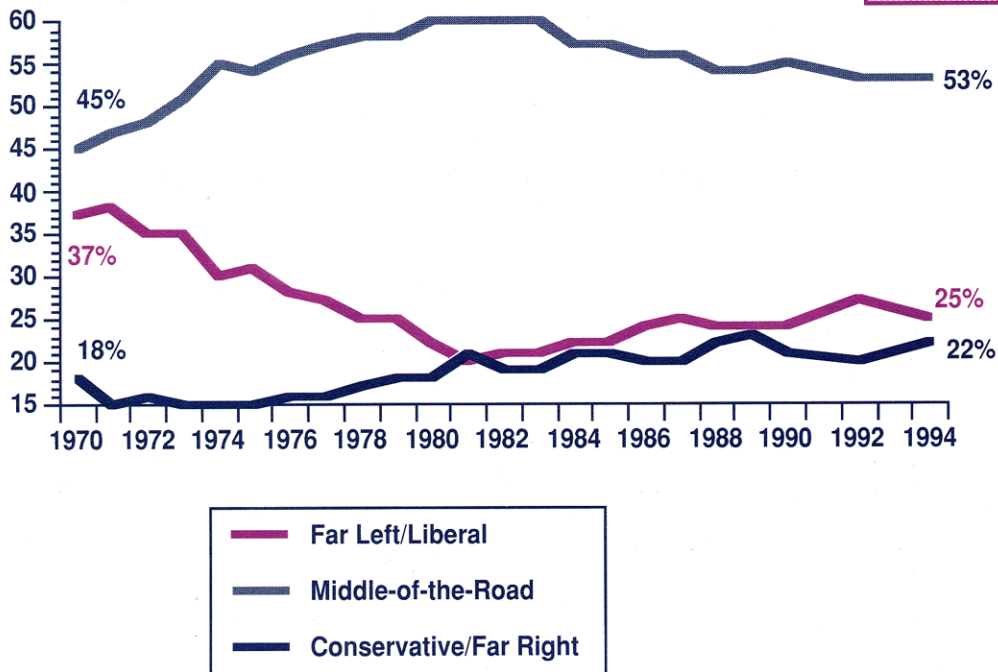
* Not asked in 1971.

Education in America: College Students' Views & Values

Ideology: Students Are in the Middle

Question: How would you characterize your political views?

ACE

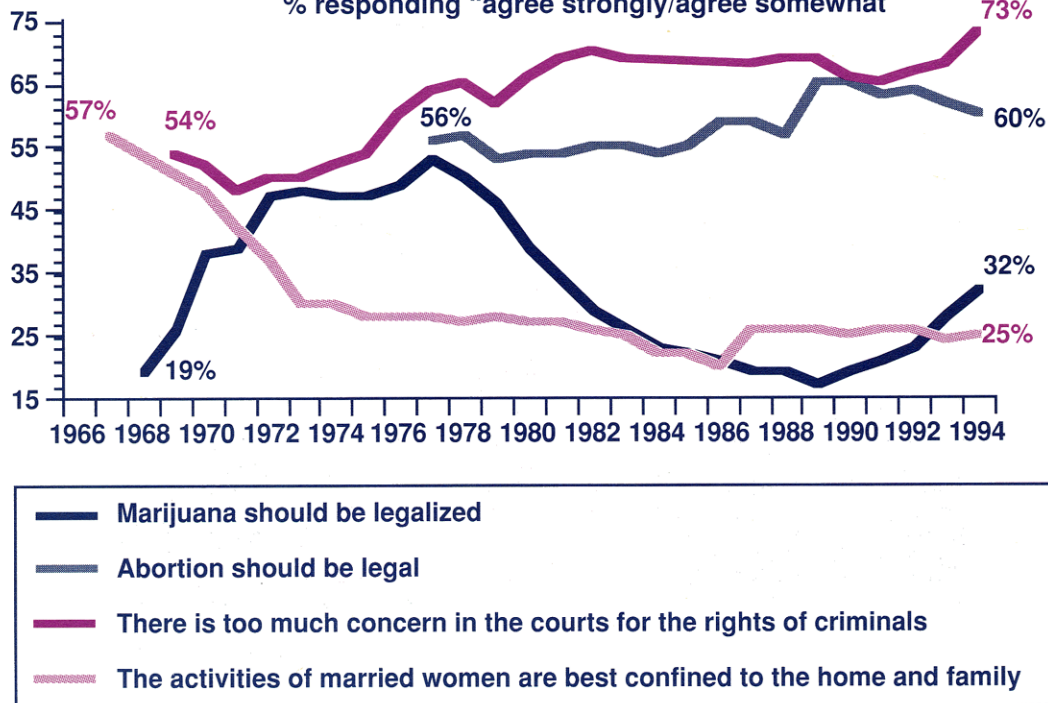


On the Issues: Growing Support for a Harder Line on Crime

Marijuana Legalization Support Drops Sharply, Then Recovers Some

[Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?]

% responding "agree strongly/agree somewhat"



ACE