

Appendix table 7-4

Feeling informed about selected policy issues: 1979–2001

Issue	1979	1981	1983	1985	1988	1990	1992	1995	1997	1999	2001
	Mean index score										
Local schools.....	44	55	54	54	55	55	55	59	61	58	59
Economy and business conditions	42	55	54	48	50	53	56	52	51	50	51
New medical discoveries	—	—	—	53	52	53	51	52	56	53	51
Environmental pollution	—	—	—	—	—	60	57	52	51	48	47
New scientific discoveries.....	36	38	40	43	42	42	39	42	48	44	42
Military and defense policy	—	—	46	45	43	51	49	40	39	44	39
Use of new inventions and technologies.....	35	35	42	39	38	38	38	40	44	43	38
Agricultural and farming	33	35	—	41	46	36	—	35	38	33	35
International and foreign policy	35	44	40	42	42	51	46	36	36	40	35
Space exploration	—	37	39	42	39	37	33	33	41	37	32
	Number										
Sample size	1,635	3,195	1,631	2,005	2,041	2,033	2,001	2,006	2,000	1,882	1,574
—	not asked										

NOTES: Responses are to the following statement: *Now, I'd like to go through this list with you again, and for each issue I'd like you to tell me if you are very well informed, moderately well informed, or poorly informed.* Responses are converted to a 0–100 scale, with 100 for “very well informed,” 50 for “moderately well informed,” and 0 for “poorly informed.” Indices were obtained by adding all the values for each policy issue and computing the average.

SOURCE: National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Statistics, Survey of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology, various years.

Science & Engineering Indicators – 2004