

Trends in Confidence in Institutions, 1973-2006

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Introduction

On July 15, 1979 in what became known as his malaise speech, President Jimmy Carter spoke of “a crisis of confidence...that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will.” Many scholars have picked up his refrain and extended it to the present (Lipset and Schneider, 1987; Blendon et al., 1997; Shribman, 1997; Moy and Pfau, 2000; Newton and Norris, 2000; Rosenthal et al., 2007). For example, Moy and Pfau (2000) contend that “this nation is in the throes of a crisis of confidence in democratic institutions” and that there have been “three decades of unparalleled cynicism towards public institutions.” Rosenthal et al. (2007) describes a “crisis of leadership” and Shribman (1997) finds that confidence in “all institutions” has fallen.

First, this paper considers the construct of institutional confidence. Second, it describes the data from the General Social Survey and the items used to measure institutional confidence. Third, the level of confidence and the ranking of institutions is considered. Fourth, factor analysis is used to study the structure of institutional confidence. Fifth, trends in a) confidence scales, b) individual institutions, and c) the ranking of institutions are examined. Sixth, cohort analysis is used to help illuminate the trends. Seventh, the correlates of institutional confidence are investigated, including a) how experiences concerning specific institutions are related to confidence in the institutions, b) party-in-power effects, c) the role of education, d) misanthropy, e) opinionation, f) a general demographic model, and g) the relationship between institutional confidence and support for government programs and political matters. Lastly, the state and role of institutional confidence in contemporary society is assessed.

Institutional Confidence

As Cooper (1999) has noted, “public trust is a complex and layered entity, not a simple and uniform one.” First, there are different levels or foci of confidence. At the highest and most abstract level there are broad systems – democracy in the political realm, capitalism in the economic, American culture in the social, etc. Next, there are the institutions that make up these systems - the Presidency and Congress in the political, corporations and labor unions in the economic, the media, universities, etc. Then, there are the people running these institutions – the party in power in the White House and Congress, CEOs and union leaders, media executives, university presidents, etc. Finally, there are the policies and products that emerge from these leaders and institutions – laws and executive orders, corporate strategies and initiatives, editorial output and programs, curriculums, etc. Confidence can be directed to any and all of these levels. Second, as the above examples illustrate, there are different sectors such as the political, economic, social, etc. They may or may not be closely tied together. Moreover, within a sector evaluations may be uniform or differentiated. For example, people could have a general view on corporations that they apply across the board or sharply distinguish between types of enterprises (e.g. multi-nationals, foreign firms, small businesses) or individual businesses (e.g. Enron, General Electric, Ben and Jerry’s).

Institutional confidence research focuses on the middle level, trust in institutions and not in the higher level of systems nor the lower level of specific policies (Lipset and Schneider, 1987).¹ It covers a wide range of entities in various sections (political,

¹ On what people mean by “confidence” in institutions see Smith, 1980; 1991.

economic, media, education, etc.) and thus covers society in general rather than just one realm.

Measuring Confidence

Institutional confidence has been measured in 24 rounds of the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1973 to 2006. The measure of institutional confidence asks respondents to rate how much confidence they have in “the people running” select institutions. The question asked about 12 institutions in 1973-74 and with the addition of Banks and Financial Institutions in 1975 has covered 13 institutions as indicated below:

I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?

- a. Banks and financial institutions
- b. Major companies
- c. Organized religion
- d. Education
- e. Executive branch of the federal government
- f. Organized labor
- g. Press
- h. Medicine
- i. TV
- j. U.S. Supreme Court
- k. Scientific Community
- l. Congress
- m. Military

Institutional Confidence Rankings

Table 1 shows the ranking of institutions across all years. There is considerable difference in how much confidence people have in different institutions. Medicine tops the list with 47.8% having a great deal of confidence. Second is Scientific Community with 40.3% and Military is third with 37.6%. The Supreme Court and Education are close together in fourth and fifth places with 30.5-31.8% having a great deal of confidence. Next in sixth to eighth position are Major Companies, Banks/Finance, and Organized Religion with great deal of confidence at 24.5-28.3%. In ninth to eleventh place are Press, Executive Branch, and Congress with 13.3-16.9% having a great deal of confidence. At the bottom are Television and Organized Labor at 11.7-13.5%. What might be called knowledge and authority institutions (Medicine, Scientific Community, Supreme Court, and Education) hold four of the top positions along with Military. The two business institutions, Major Companies and Banks/Finance, are in the middle with Organized Religion. In the bottom are the two media institutions, Press and Television, the two political institutions, Executive Branch and Congress, and Organized Labor.

Institutional Confidence Factors

Table 2 shows the combined factor loadings. Three factors emerge when using either the 12 or 13 items. The first is clearly a general factor combining the two political institutions with two economic institutions (Banks/Finance and Organized Labor), and other institutions (Military, Education, and Organized Religion). The second factor is led by the Scientific Community with main loadings from two knowledge/authority institutions, Medicine and the Supreme Court, and then Major Companies. The third factor covers media institutions, Press and Television. These factors are not sharp and clear either conceptually or quantitatively. First, many of the loadings are not very strong. Four of the top loadings are under .5. Second, the factors themselves have notable crossloadings. All 13 items are positively correlated. Even what might be seen as opposing or adversarial institutions have statistically significant and non-trivial positive associations. For example Organized Labor and Major Companies ($r=.122$), Scientific Community and Organized Religion ($r=.124$), Scientific Community and Television ($r=.108$), and Press and Executive Branch (.153). The lowest correlation overall is between Military and Press ($r=.088$). Third, many of the individual items have high crossloadings. For example, on the 12-item scale Major Companies loads almost as strongly on the first factor (.381) as on the second (.456); Organized Labor almost as strongly on the third (.447) as on the first (.462), Supreme Court .386 on the first vs. .547 on the second. Finally, the loadings are very unstable across years. In no two years did all of the 13 variables form and load on the same factors. From two to four factors emerged in different years and their composition varied quite a bit. The cleanest factor was Media. Press and Television loaded together in 21 of 22 years. But in 17 years they were joined by Organized Labor, in 8 years by Education, and in one or more years by Medicine, Scientific Community, Banks/Finance, Congress, or the Executive Branch. All other combinations of pairings are even less stable (e.g. Congress with Executive Branch in 19 years, Supreme Court with Executive Branch and Congress in 14 years, Supreme Court with Scientific Community and Medicine in 11 years, Major Companies and Banks/Finance in 16 years, etc.). For these reasons, the focusing on factors is generally not very illuminating and analysis will mostly examine the general scales and individual items.

Trends

This section examines trends in institutional confidence in general using various scales and then for each of the 13 institutions separately. The trend models first tested to see if there was any statistically significant variation beyond that predicted by chance. If not, the trend was described as constant. If the constant model was rejected, then the best linear fit was applied to the data. If there was no statistically significant linear fit, the non-constant, non-linear (NCNL) model was accepted. If there was a statistically significant linear fit, but a statistically significant variation still remained, then the significant linear component (SLC) model was accepted. If there was a statistically significant linear fit and no statistically significant residual variation, then the significant linear trend (SLT) model was accepted.

Scales

Three general scales were created. Each is an additive scale with great deal score 3, only some as 2, and hardly any as 1. The 13-item scale includes all variables and

covers years 1975-2006. Confidence scores range from 13 to 39. The 12-item scale excludes Banks and Finance and covers years 1973-2006 (scores of 12 to 36). The 11-item scale excludes the two media institutions, Press and Television, and covers 1975-2006 (scores 11 to 33). As Table 3 shows, each of the general scales (11, 12, or 13 items) has a statistically significant linear component (SLC) tilting in the negative direction. The 11-item scale which excludes the two media items shows the weakest linear component ($r=-0.55$) because it loses the strong linear component shown by these institutions. The 13-item scale which adds Banks/Finance and starts in 1975 has a $-.103$ correlation with time. The 12-item scale has a slightly stronger association with time ($r=-.129$) mainly because 1973 and 1974 had high confidence scores and this helped to anchor the declining slope. Table 4 shows the trends for the 12- and 13-item scale in terms of average % with a great deal of confidence.² For the 12-item scale confidence is highest (30-33.5%) in 1973, 1974, and 1977 and lowest (22-23%) in 1993-1996). For the 13-item scale starting in 1975, the high points (29.5-32%) are in 1976-1977 and the low points (21-23%) in 1993-1996.

These negative trends are both modest in magnitude and far from monotonic in consistency. Both the 12- and 13-item scales show their three highest points in the 1970s and their three-four lowest points in the 1990s. The slight rebound in the 2000s still puts these scales well below their levels in the 1970s. There are other statistically significant deviations from these linear tendencies. A major reason for this is that the 13 individual institutions are a diverse mix of idiosyncratic trends. Only 10 of the 13 institutions show a statistically significant linear decline with two showing gains and one no net direction. Of the 10 showing some net decline, 9 show their high point in the 1970s (2 in 1973, 5 in 1974, and 2 in 1977) and one in 1984. But there is no consensus on low points for these decreasing trends. They were in 1975, 1978, 1980, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2002, and 2004 (2). Thus, the overall confidence trends are really a weak amalgamation of many distinct trends and one must focus on individual institutions to really understand trends in confidence.

Individual Institutions

As Table 5 shows, 10 of the 13 institutions have statistically significant declines. In each case the trends consist of a statistically significant decrease along with statistically significant variation beyond that explained by the linear component. Two institutions, Military and Supreme Court, show significant linear components that increased. One institution, Organized Labor, had no net trend, modeling out as showing more change than would be expected by chance, but no statistically significant linear component (i.e. non-constant, non-linear). As the discussion of the individual time series will indicate, many of the linear components are weak and few trends are well described as generally and consistently moving in one direction.

The two media institutions, Television and Press, had the strongest linear component with confidence correlating with year respectively $-.15$ and $-.23$. Both basically show their high points in the early to mid 1970s and their nadir in the late 1990s and the 2000s (See Appendix)(Cook and Gronke, 2001; Gronke and Cook, 2002 and 2007). The percent with a great deal of confidence in Television slipped from 23% in

² Beside focusing on the positive end of the distribution, looking at the % with a great deal of confidence differs from the mean confidence score in that it retains Don't Knows in the base while these are excluded from the mean scores.

1974 to 9% in 2002 and 2006. For Press it declined from 28% in 1976 to 9% in 1998 and 2004. Likewise, the two-item, confidence-in-the-media scale shows a significant linear component decline of $-.23$ with year (Table 5). Fan, Wyatt, and Keltner (2001) link the decline in Press confidence to a rise in generalized ‘self-criticism’ by the media, perhaps linked to conservative charges of ‘liberal media bias’.” But they do not address the Television trend and since these two media institutions seem to have linked trends, one needs an explanation that would apply to both institutions. Another possibility is the switch to new Internet-based media has undermined confidence in these traditional media.

For the other eight institutions with negative significant linear components, the declines represent a rather small part of the total change. The trend in confidence in Banks/Finance has largely been driven by the savings and loan (S&L) crisis of the late 1980s/early 1990s (See Appendix). Confidence began to fall from 27% with a great deal of confidence in 1988 as the collapse of savings and loans progressed and criminal charges surrounded some of the failures (e.g. involving the bankruptcy of Charles Keating’s Lincoln Savings in 1989). In 1989 the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC) was created to handle the many insolvent S&Ls and the newly created Office of Thrift Supervision took over the regulation of the industry. Confidence slid to a low of 12% in 1991. The crisis was sorted out in the early 1990s and the RTC dissolved in 1995. In response to the improving conditions, confidence in Banks/Finance then recovered to 29.5% in 2000 and has remained around that level through 2006.

Confidence in Major Companies is mostly a function of the business cycle and corporate scandals (Lipset and Schneider, 1987; Wolfers, 2003). There is only a marginally statistically significant linear component with a very small negative tilt ($r=-.014$). As the Appendix shows, the proportion with a great deal of confidence fell during recessions (i.e. to 19% in 1975, 23% in 1982, 20% in 1991, and 17% in 2002). Only the impact of the 1980 recession that bottomed out in the third quarter of 1980 is not readily detectable because the contraction lasted only six months and the 1980 GSS field period was as close to the peak of the previous expansion as to the trough of the 1980 recession. In each case save one, confidence rose during the recovery and expanding phases following these recessions – to 27% in 1980, 30-31% in 1984 and 1987, and 28% in 2000. However, after the 2001-02 recession confidence did not rebound, with a great deal of confidence remaining at 18% in 2004 and 2006. This lagging confidence probably came from the spate of corporate failures and criminal cases in the 2002-2005 period, such as the scandals involving Enron, Worldcom, Tyco, Adelphia, and other companies and high-profile prosecutions such as Martha Stuart’s insider-trading case in 2004.

Confidence in Medicine declined by $r=-.094$ falling from 51-61% with a great deal of confidence in 1973-1977 to 40-48% by 1989-2000, and to under 40% in the 2000s (Table 5 and Appendix). Given rising life expectancies and some well-documented medial advances, the reason for the general decline in confidence is unclear. Perhaps the rising cost of medical coverage has depressed confidence. Medical inflation has exceeded the general cost of living over the last 30+ years and medical expenditures rose from 7.2% of the gross domestic product in 1970 to 16.0% by 2004. Specifically, Pescosolido, Tuch, and Martin (2001) argue that the decline is due to changes such as “changing insurance profiles and the penetration rate of managed care.” Schlesinger (2002) finds the decline due to “the public’s direct experience with the American health care system” and “well-publicized reports about medical error.”

Confidence in the Scientific Community shows only a weak linear decline in confidence ($r=-.014$)(Table 5). The maximum shift in % with a great deal of confidence is only between 45.5% of 37.0 (Appendix) and linearity explains little of the variation over time (7% of the sum of squares)(Table 5). The maximum shift of 8.5 percentage points occurred between 1973 and 1974 and highs and lows are fairly evenly distributed across the decades. There is some evidence that ratings are responsive to events such as the Challenger disaster. The Challenger spacecraft exploded on launch on January 28, 1986 and the proportion with a great deal of confidence dropped from 44.5% in 1984 to the post-disaster 39.5% in 1986. It then rebounded to 45.1% in 1987. The Columbia spacecraft was destroyed on re-entry on February 1, 2003. But with no post-disaster reading until over a year after the event, there was no evidence of a drop with 37.2% having a great deal of confidence in 2002 and 41.8% in 2004.

In addition, Don't Know levels are higher for this institution than for any of the other confidence items and more than twice the average Don't Know level (7.3% vs. 3.0%). This probably indicates that people have a harder time rating this institution than other institutions.

Confidence in Education also shows a moderate linear decline in confidence over time ($r=-.093$) with a substantial linear component to the changes (Table 5). The high years are all in the early to mid 1970s (averaging 39% with a great deal of confidence) and confidence bottomed out in the mid-1990s at around 22-23% with a great deal of confidence and then rose back on 28-29% in 2004-06 (Appendix). This decline may reflect the long series of critical educational reports (e.g. National Commission, 1983; DeMint, 2008) and the international educational comparisons that typically identify the US system as underperforming (PERLS, PISA, TIMMS).

Confidence in Organized Religion shows a decline over time ($r=-.089$)(Table 5)(Chaves, this volume). Levels were inexplicably erratic in the early 1970s,³ but mainly confidence has varied predictably in response to positive and negative religious events. An example of the impact of positive events was the boost in a great deal of confidence among Catholics from 34.0% in 1978 to 43.2% in 1980 following the election of John Paul II as the new Pope and Mother Teresa winning the Nobel Peace Prize in late 1978. Among negative events are the televangelist scandals of 1987-1988, mainly involving Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart. They notably lowered the public's perception of religious leaders in general and televangelists in particular (Smith, 1992). The proportion with a great deal of confidence decreased from 29.0% in 1987 to 20.5% in 1988 and hardly any rose from 18.3% in 1987 to 28.9% in 1988 and to a record high of 29.4% in 1989. Likewise, the Catholic, sex-abuse scandals received massive attention in early 2002. Great deal of confidence dropped from 27.6% in 2000 to 18.9% in 2002, but recovered to 24.1% by 2006. The decline was especially strong among Catholics, from 31.4% in 2000 to 19.0% in 2002, as was the rebound to 31.2% in 2006. The rebounding of confidence in Organized Religion after the televangelist and sex-abuse scandals testifies to the resiliency of this institution.

³ Responses may have been influenced by questionnaire context (Smith, 1981; 1991; 1994). Confidence ratings are affected by both the order in which institutions are present and the content of prior questions. In the 1970s the order of confidence items changed several times before becoming fixed in 1977 (Smith, 1981). It is highly likely that several of the not readily explicable shifts in confidence during this period are due to these context shifts, but there is no experimental evidence to confirm this (Smith, 1994). There is experimental evidence that the content of preceding items does influence confidence ratings (Smith, 1991; 2008).

Confidence in the Executive Branch has a slight downward trend ($r=-.059$), but linear trends explain little of the change over time (Table 5). Confidence in the Executive Branch is largely shaped by views of the president as the subsequent analysis of the party-in-power effect documents. The presidential, job-approval literature finds that presidential popularity is strongly influenced by objective events such as foreign and security crises, economic conditions, and scandals (Mueller, 1973; Lipset and Schneider, 1987; Edwards, 1990; Gronke and Newman, 2000). Particularly powerful is the so-called “rally-around-the-flag” effect, under which foreign and security crises boost presidential job approval. It also finds a honeymoon or inaugural effect under which a newly sworn-in president typically starts out with relatively positive ratings. Similar results emerge for confidence in the Executive Branch. For example, in early 1973 with Nixon’s re-election 29% had a great deal of confidence. This fell to 14% a year later after the full exposure of Watergate that then led to the president’s resignation. In 1977 after Carter’s election it was up to 28%, but after the stagflation, the Iran hostage seizure, and his “malaise” speech, only 12% had a great deal of confidence in 1980.

Confidence in the Executive Branch also goes up when the US initially engages in a war and/or faces an external threat. In 1991 at the time of the Persian Gulf War and in 2002 in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and in the midst of the ousting of the Taliban from Afghanistan, confidence in the Executive Branch rose from earlier readings (e.g. the great deal of confidence more than doubling from 13.5% in 2000 to 27% in 2002). Similarly, the National Tragedy Study (NTS) showed 51.5% had a great deal of confidence in Executive Branch in the weeks immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Smith, Rasinski, and Toce, 2001; Cook and Gronke, 2002; Rasinski, Berkold, Smith, and Albertson, 2002). At both of these two points in time confidence in the Military also soared. Wars that drag out without clear success however lead to a drop in confidence as is seen by the declining % with a great deal of confidence from the post-9/11 high of 51.5% in the fall of 2001 to 16% in 2006 (Smith, Rasinski, and Toce, 2001).

Confidence in Congress has declined over time ($r=-.099$), but the linear component is not pronounced (Table 5). Presumably confidence in the Congress is shaped by the successes and failures of that institution, but no analysis to date has related Congressional events and ratings as closely as have the presidential job-approval literature. There is however some clear indication of the political fallout of low Congressional confidence. From 1987 to 1993-94 the % with hardly any confidence in Congress grew from 15% to 39-41% and in the 1994 election the Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives for the first time in over 40 years (Appendix). Likewise, from 2002 to 2006 the hardly any rating grew from 25% to 33% and the Republicans lost their majority in the House in 2006.

Two institutions, Supreme Court and Military, showed net increases in confidence. Confidence in the Supreme Court shows a small, but statistically significant, positive rise in confidence ($r=+.012$), but the linear component is quite small (Table 5). Moreover the overall variation is only moderate with the % with a great deal of confidence ranging between 24% and 37.5% (Appendix). Most research on Supreme Court confidence has focused on the implications of the level of confidence on the operation of the political system rather than factors behind the shifts in confidence in the judiciary (Gibson, Caldeira, and Spence, 2003a and 2003b; Nicholson and Howard, 2003; Price and Romantan, 2004).

Confidence in the Military shows the one clear positive shift over time ($r=+.087$) (Table 5). This trend was largely in response to military involvements and the success

and failures of same (Torres-Reyna and Shapiro, 2002; King and Karabell, 2003). The low point with just less than 30% having a great deal of confidence came in the late 1970s/early 1980s in the face of military reversals and failures such as the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the botched rescue attempt of the Iran hostages. There was modest improvement during the Reagan-Bush expansion of the military to an average of 34%, then the percent with a great deal of confidence soared to 61% during the 1991 Gulf War. After the war confidence returned to more typical levels, but remained higher than the pre-Gulf War level, averaging 39% for 1993-2000. The 9/11 terrorist attacks and subsequent war in Afghanistan pushed confidence up to 77% on the NTS immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It stood at 56% in 2002 and during the following Iraq War in 2004 great deal of confidence reached 58%. But in 2006 it was down to 47%, probably reflecting the limited success in Iraq at that time.

Confidence in Organized Labor shows no net direction over time with the trend being modeled as non-constant, non-linear (Table 5). Levels of confidence do not vary greatly but show higher levels in the early 1970s and 2000s with a low point in 1983-1986 (Appendix). Anti-union reaction to the 1981 strike by the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization is not clearly related to this decline since confidence dropped only marginally from 1980 to 1982 and fell more notably from 1982 to 1983 well after the strike and dissolving of the union. Political climate or at least partisan occupancy of the presidency has no apparent effect as the early and late high points and middle low points were all during Republican administrations. Also, unlike Confidence in Major Companies, evaluations of Organized Labor are not related to the business cycle.

Trends in Ranking of Institutions

The previous discussion described absolute changes. Here relative changes or how the ranking of institutions have changed are considered. While most institutions have tended to remain within the same general area (e.g. top, middle, or bottom thirds), there has been notable variation in the ranking of all institutions and several clear trends (Table 6).

First, Medicine has always been in the top three, but was replaced in first place by Military in 1991, 1993, and 2002-2006 and nudged into third position by Scientific Community in 2004 and 2006. Second, Scientific Community has usually been in second place and shows no major shifts. Third, Military has gained ground over the decades from 3rd-6th positions in the 1970s/early 1980s, to 3rd-4th place in the mid/late 1980s, to 1st-3rd place from 1991 to 2006. Fourth, Supreme Court has improved its relative position over time. It was generally in 6th place in the 1970s and early 1980s and has been in 3rd or 4th position since 1987. Fifth, Education has shown considerable change across years, but has tended to lose ground from 2nd and 3rd spots in 1973-74 to finishing as low as 8th in 1984, 1996, and 2000. Sixth, Major Companies has always ranked in the middle. It falls in rank during recessions. Seventh, Banks/Finance has varied more than any other institution from a high of second place in 1977 to a low of 12th position in 1991. As with the absolute figures, the basic pattern is a large drop from the 1970s to the early 1990s due to the S&L crisis and then a recovery to 5th place in 2006. Eighth, Organized Religion has shown some slippage in placement from finishing as high as third in 1974 and 1980 to being between 5th and 8th place from 1988-2006. Ninth, Press has lost relative standing along with its absolute decline, dropping from as high as 7th place in 1975 to last position in 1998, 2000, and 2004. Tenth, Executive Branch has undergone

considerable ups and downs ranging from as high as 6th place during the start of wars in 1991 and 2002 to a low of 12th position in 1974-76, 1978-1980, and 1996. Eleventh, Congress has never been above 9th position and has frequently slipped to last place (1980, 1982, 1993-1996). Twelfth, Television has also never ranked above 9th place and like Press, has lost ground over the years to last place in 2002 and 2006. Lastly, Organized Labor, has usually been in last place, but since 1993 has moved up to 9th-11th place.

Overall the absolute and relative trends are similar. Military and Supreme Court, for example, showed rises on both criteria and Medicine, Education, Press, Television, and Organized Religion have both negative slopes and a slippage in rankings. But there are some differences. Organized Labor had no net absolute trend, but did improve its rank somewhat. Scientific Community had a slight downward trend, but no drop in rank. Moreover, the wide and continuing fluctuations in ranks of many institutions (e.g. Major Companies, Banks/Finance, Executive Branch, Congress) helps to underscore that many of the linear components are minor parts of the overall changes.

Birth Cohorts

For most institutions cohort has a curvilinear relationship with confidence. As Table 7 shows, for both the 12- and 13-item scale, confidence declines from the pre-1923 generation to a nadir in the 1943-1952 cohort. Confidence then rises to a high point for the cohort born in 1983 and later. Confidence among the newest cohort exceeds that of all earlier cohorts. The individual trends all agree to a greater or lesser extent with this summary pattern, but differ considerably on details. First, only five bottom out in the 1943-1952 cohort, with three in 1933-42 and two in 1953-1962. The dispersion of the cohort low points and the fact that the decline from the second cohort to the third (“Vietnam” cohort) is not especially pronounced makes it hard to simply characterize the confidence reversal as a Vietnam-War effect (King and Karabell, 2003). A Vietnam-War effect may however be part of the general reversal and does fit the Military cohort pattern. Second, for nine of the series (Banks/Finance, Education, Executive Branch, Organized Labor, Medicine, Supreme Court, Scientific Community, Congress, and Military) the high point is the most recent cohort, but for four its peak is at the earliest cohort (Major Companies, Organized Religion, Press, Television). Third, the cohort reversal is sometimes deep and other times shallow. For Banks/Finance, Organized Religion, and Military the decline across cohorts was over 10 percentage points and for Banks/Finance, Education, Organized Labor, Medicine, Supreme Court, Scientific Community, and Military the recovery was over 10 percentage points. The largest swings (absolute decline and rise across cohorts) were Banks/Finance (45.9 points), Military (42.8 points), Education (26.1 points), and Organized Religion (26.0). Without these reversals in confidence across cohorts, the decline in confidence across time discussed above would have been much deeper and more consistent. But since relatively optimistic new cohorts have been largely replacing positive early generations, this has generally not driven up confidence. But as the most pessimistic middle cohorts begin to age out, cohort turnover should become an engine for rising confidence.

The role of cohorts on each institution is shown in Table 8. Cohorts are shown as rows and the columns are groups of years: 1974=1973-75; 1984=1983-86; 1994=1993-1996; and 2004=2002-2006. The columns extend one row lower as one moves forward in time as each decade sees a new cohort added. The four institutions with the largest cohort reversals are considered as the main examples. For Banks/Finance within cohorts

confidence uniformly dropped from 1974 to 1984. It continued to decline for the youngest cohorts from 1984 to 1994, but rose for the older cohorts. From 1994 to 2004 it rose for all cohorts. Also, of note is the fact that each entering cohort (the last row in each column) has more confidence than the preceding new cohort (rising from 26.6% to 47.0%). Military shows a very similar pattern to Banks/Finance, but with even larger gains within cohorts and across entering cohorts. For Education confidence drops within all cohorts from 1974 to 1984, shows a reversal in a couple cohorts in 1984-1994, and then rises for all but one cohort in 1994-2004. Entering cohorts however change little in confidence levels over time. For Organized Religion the preceding cohort pattern is notably weaker. Declines generally occur across cohorts with only some reversal among the earlier cohorts in 1994-2004. In contrast to these institutions, the two media institutions show each entering cohort with less confidence than the preceding one. This is a major factor in contributing to both the greater depth and linearity of the media trends.

Correlates of Institutional Confidence

Experiences/Conditions Connected to Specific Institutions

The connection between positive and negative aggregate-level experiences and confidence also exists between personal experiences and institutional confidence. Table 9 shows connections with nine institutions. The party-in-power effects relating to the Executive Branch and Congress are discussed subsequently. For Supreme Court there is no closely tied personal experience or attribute and for Education only level of schooling is closely related and it is covered in the following discussion of education and in the general analysis of the demographic correlates of confidence.

Negative economic circumstances are related to lower confidence in both Banks/Finance and Major Companies (Lipset and Schneider, 1987). Specifically, confidence in Banks/Finance and in Major Companies is lower when personal financial satisfaction is low and when recent financial changes have been for the worse. In addition, confidence in Major Companies is less when there is less job satisfaction. For Organized Labor confidence is higher when the respondent is a union member, but surprisingly not when both the respondent and spouse belong to a union. Confidence in Medicine is higher when one's personal health is better. For the media institutions viewing more television is associated with greater confidence in Television, but reading newspapers is unrelated to confidence in Press. Confidence in Organized Religion increases with both more religious behaviors and stronger religious beliefs (Hout and Fischer, 2002). Confidence in the Military is higher among veterans. Confidence in the Scientific Community increases with level of scientific knowledge (Smith, 1997a).

In sum, positive associations with institutions generally increase confidence in them, but there are a few exceptions such as the lack of an association between newspaper readership and Press confidence and the mixed results on union membership and confidence in Organized Labor that qualify the generality of this relationship.

Party-in-Power Effects

As shown by research going back nearly 30 years (Smith, Taylor, and Mathiowetz, 1980; Alford, 2001; Richardson, Houston, and Hadjiharalambous, 2001),

confidence in the executive branch of the federal government is closely tied to popular, job approval of the President and thus subject to a party-in-power effect. As Figure 1 shows, confidence in the executive branch is greater among partisans of the President's political party. When the political party controlling the White House switches, partisans reverse their confidence levels. Thus, Democrats have more confidence than Republicans during the Carter and Clinton presidencies, while Republicans lead during the Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and Bush administrations. Independents have an intermediate level of confidence between the partisans, but are usually closer to the out-party than the in-party. Since the Reagan years, the presidential party-in-power effect has mostly been the result of Republican shifts. Their confidence went up sharply under Reagan-Bush, down under Clinton, and back up under Bush. Democrats have shown much less fluctuations. Overall, the % of Democrats with a great deal of confidence in the executive branch is 5.3 percentage points higher when there is a Democratic president than when a Republican is in office, but the % of Republicans with a great deal of confidence is 22.0 points higher under a Republican president rather than a Democratic leader. A similar pattern also prevails when differences by political ideology are examined.

A party-in-power effect also occurs on Congress. Whenever the Republicans controlled both Houses of Congress, they had more confidence, while the Democrats had the most confidence when they had Congressional majorities. For example, from the late 1980s through 1994 when the Democratic party controlled both Houses Democrats exceeded Republicans in Congressional confidence by 5-16 percentage points, while in the 1996-2006 period of Republican party control, the confidence in the legislature among Republicans topped the Democrats by an average of four points. In the early-to-mid 1980s when the Democrats controlled the House of Representatives and the Republicans held the Senate, the pattern was very mixed with Republicans having more confidence in Congress in two years (1984 and 1986) and the Democrats also leading in two years (1982 and 1983). However, in contrast to the presidential party-in-power effect in which the out party has the lowest confidence, in most years it is the independents with the least confidence.

Despite the sensitivity of confidence to which party controls the White House and Congress, there is a strong positive association between confidence in these two political institutions even when they are controlled by opposing parties. When the same party controls both institutions, confidence correlates .471, when control of Congress is split, the average correlation is .424, and when the two bodies are held by the opposite parties, the correlation still averages .400. Thus, partisan differences only modestly attenuate a strong association between confidence in the two political branches of the federal government.

Education

Education has a highly variable association with institutional confidence. As Table 10 shows, each institution has a significant linear component relationship with education. For five institutions confidence increases with education. Of these, Major Companies, Scientific Community, and the Supreme Court have a clear and fairly strong association. For the other two, Executive Branch and Medicine, the association is weak with a dip in the middle among holders of Associate degrees. For eight institutions confidence decreases with education. For Organized Labor, Television, and Military the negative association is fairly strong and clear. For Education, Congress, and Organized

Religion the association is weak-to-moderate with a low point among those who started, but never completed, graduate school. For Press and Banks/Finance the association is also weak-to-moderate with a low point for Associate degrees. Overall when the 13-item scale is used, there is a weak negative association ($r=-.019/\text{prob.}=.002$) reflecting the fact that negative associations outnumbered the positive 8-to-5.⁴

The mixed associations with education follow some discernable patterns. The increase in confidence in Supreme Court and Scientific Community with level of education reflects the fact that these institutions are associated with knowledge and higher education. But those connections do not work as well for Medicine, which has only a weak positive association with education. Moreover, Education shows no signs of those attributes leading to more confidence with greater education and the overall association is negative (Klugman and Xu, 2008). The pattern for economic institutions generally follows a socio-economic status perspective. Confidence in Major Companies tends to rise with education, probably reflecting a middle-class orientation, while the decline in confidence with educational level for Organized Labor reflects the lower socio-economic status of union workers. Banks/Finance however shows little variation by education and a weak curvilinear pattern. The media institutions also show a somewhat diverse pattern. The drop of confidence in Television may denote an elite disdain for this mass medium. Press confidence also tends to decline with education, but the pattern is weaker and more curvilinear. The relatively high confidence among the less than high-school educated on Banks/Finance, Military, and Press has reflect cohort rather than educational differences.

Misanthropy

The misanthropy scale ranges from 3 for someone who thinks most people are trustworthy, fair, and helpful to 9 for those considering most people to be untrustworthy, trying to take advantage of you, and just looking out for themselves (Smith, 1997b). Because of the shared element of trust in both the misanthropy and confidence measures and because misanthropy has shown a downward shift across time (Smith, 1997b; Glaeser et al., 2000; Putnam, 2000; Robinson and Jackson, 2001), one suspects there might be a connection between these two constructs. As Table 11 shows, confidence in institutions is generally moderately associated with positive evaluations of people (Orren, 1997; Newtown and Norris, 2002; Uslander, 2002). Misanthropy negatively associates with confidence ($r=-.14$ for the 12-item scale and $-.15$ for the 13-items). However, the association varies quite a bit across institutions. It is negative and weak to moderate for 10 institutions, not statistically related to Military and weakly, but statistically-significantly, positively related to Television and Organized Labor. That means that people with misanthropic views actually tend to have greater confidence in Television and Organized Labor than those who judge people positively.

Opinionation

Institutional confidence is also related to opinionation. First, those with no opinion on institutional confidence also tend to have no opinion on other matters. A scale

⁴ If years of schooling (EDUC) is used instead of the educational categories used in Table 10, the association marginally increases to $-.023/\text{prob.}=.000$. On curvilinear relationships with education and various satisfaction measures see Smith, 1982.

was constructed counting how many times a person had no opinion on 10 items dealing with government spending priorities, punishing criminals, political ideology, and finances. People with no opinion on institutional confidence also were much more likely to have no opinion on these other matters. For example, those rating their confidence in Banks/Finance gave 0.24 no-opinion responses on the scale, while those responding Don't Know on Banks/Finance rating had 1.6 no-opinion responses. Second, among those rating institutions, there was a weak connection between having more no opinionation and lower confidence. This was statistically significant for Major Companies, Medicine, the Supreme Court, and the Military and for the 13-item scale ($r = -.031/\text{prob.} = .0000$).

General Demographic Model

As Table 13 shows, the bivariate background associates of confidence vary across institutions (Lipset and Schneider, 1987; Blendon et al., 1997; Orren, 1997; Alesina and La Ferrer, 2000; Moy and Pfau, 2000; Alford, 2001; Cook and Gronke, 2001; Richardson et al., 2001; Cook and Gronke, 2002; Newton and Norris, 2002; King and Karabell, 2003). First, only two associations are reasonably consistent. For nine institutions men have more confidence than women do. Women lead men only in regards to Organized Religion. Additionally, those born outside the United States have more confidence than the native born on 10 institutions with no difference on the remaining three. Second, for most variables associations go in opposite directions across different institutions. For example, Republicans have the most confidence for 8 and Democrats for 5, the retired the most for 4 and students the most for 4, and whites the most for three, non-blacks the most for 3, blacks the most for 5, and no difference for 2. Third, most of the relations are rather modest. Differences across most institutions and most demographics are only a few percentage points. Military shows the largest sub-group variation. Finally, previous research indicates that a number of these relationships varies over time (Smith, Taylor, and Mathiowitz, 1980; Pescosolido, Tuch, and Martin, 2001).

Table 13 also indicates that institutions tend to line up as liberal/Democratic (Education, Organized Labor, Press, Television), conservative/Republican (Banks/Finance, Major Companies, Military, Organized Religion), or mixed (Congress, Executive Branch, Medical, Scientific Community, Supreme Court). Congress and the Executive Branch do not line up politically mostly because of the shifting political control of the institutions and the others are seen as non-political. The liberal/Democratic institutions also tend to attract more support from the less educated and minorities vs. the college-educated and whites favoring the conservative/Republican and non-political institutions, but this pattern does not hold up for all institutions.

Regardless of whether the institution has a conservative, liberal, or non-ideological orientation, a second pattern emerges. Those who classify themselves as "extreme" liberals/conservatives have less confidence than liberals or conservatives have for all institutions. This principally shows up in the hardly any category. When there is a liberal or conservative leaning to the confidence ratings of an institution, one finds a slight reversal of the general pattern as one shifts to the "extreme" category. For example, those with hardly any confidence in Organized Labor falls monotonically from 49% for extreme conservatives to 25.5% for liberals and then rises to 27% for extreme liberals. The opposite is true for conservative institutions. For example, having hardly any confidence in the Military declines from 35% for extreme liberals to 8% for

conservatives, then rises to 11% for extreme conservatives. Conversely, the extreme category provides a substantial boost when the leaning is towards that end of the spectrum. For example, having hardly any confidence in education is greater among conservatives and increases by 0.4 percentage points from moderates to slight conservatives, 4.5 points from slight conservatives to conservatives and by 8.9 points from conservative to extreme conservative. In the other direction, having hardly any confidence in Major Companies increases by 0.3 percentage points from moderates to slight liberals, by 4.7 point from slight liberal to liberals and by 13.9 point from liberal to extreme liberal. Thus, the self-label of “extreme” marks less confidence, causing either the reversal of a positive ideological leaning or the amplification of a negative ideological leaning.

Because the demographics are mostly modest in magnitude and variable across institutions, running multivariate models with the 12- and 13-item confidence scale shows modest results. Standardized coefficients never exceed 0.06 and r^2 is not higher than 2%.

Institutional Confidence’s Impact on Government Programs and Other Political Matters

Confidence in institutions has been examined primarily as a dependent variable in this analysis. But it is also an independent variable that helps to shape people’s attitudes and actions towards other components of society (Brooks and Cheung, 2001; Chanley, Rudo and Rahn, 2001). One connection is between institutional confidence and support for government programs and taxes (Smith, Taylor, and Mathiowetz, 1980). As Table 14 shows, for Military and Scientific Community the association is straightforward, the more confidence one has the more support for greater spending for defense, scientific research, and space exploration there is. For Education, the Supreme Court, and Medicine the relationship is more complex. The proportion for less spending increases as confidence wanes, just as it did for the Military and the Scientific Community. But support for more spending does not decline as confidence falls. Support for more spending varies little by level of confidence, but tends to rise rather than fall. Previous research (Smith, Taylor, and Mathiowetz, 1980), indicates that when an area is deemed to be an important priority and more spending for the area is supported (as is clearly the case for education, health care, and crime control – Smith, 2007), then some people believe that more spending is needed to compensate for or solve the shortcomings of those handling that area.

Research also indicates that Supreme Court confidence influences political matters such as the acceptance of the Bush-Gore decision on the 2000 election outcome (Gibson, Caldeira, and Spence, 2003a and 2003b; Price and Romantan, 2004) and public opinion on gay rights (Stoutenborough, Haider-Markel, and Allen, 2006). Similarly, Moy and Pfau (2000) argue that confidence in institutions adds to the pool of social capital.

Conclusion

Institutional confidence shows a complex pattern over the last four decades. First, most individual institutions show distinctive patterns. Only for Press and Television are declines in confidence similar to one another and largely linear. Second, most of the individual trends are largely non-linear. Third, because the trends are distinctive and largely institution-specific, one should not talk about general, unidirectional trends as

captured by such terms as “crisis of confidence/leadership,” but needs to use more limited and nuanced descriptions of the various trends.

Episodic positive and negative events are the chief force behind changes in confidence levels. This is well documented for Major Companies, Banks/Finance, Executive Branch, Organized Religion, and Military and most likely is true for the others as well. While there is support for the institutional-performance model of confidence (Lipset and Schneider, 1987; Blendon et al., 1997; Fan, Wyatt, and Keltner, 2001; Newton and Norris, 2000; Fried and Harris, 2001), this model is too focused on institutional outputs and thus too limited. Rather than being evaluated merely by their performance, institutions are judged by relevant events. Several examples will illustrate the difference: 1) Support for Executive Branch goes up when a new president is inaugurated, before that office holder has been in office long enough to be judged on the basis of objective success or failure, 2) Confidence in Executive Branch and Military soared after the 9/11 attacks before any gains were achieved, and 3) Confidence in Major Companies suffers during recessions both when external shocks like an oil embargo were the trigger events and when corporate shortcomings and missteps were to blame.

The events-based model primarily hinges on examples in which negative events (recessions, scandals, failures) lower confidence, but do include some examples of positive events boosting confidence (economic recoveries/expansions, inaugurations). Still it appears that either the negative plays a larger role than the positive or that the occurrence of positive developments has not been as readily identified and studied. This may in part be due to the observation of King and Karabel (2003) that “Confidence in institutions takes years to build, but far less time to erode. For institutions as for buildings, it is easier to tear down than to construct.”

One variant of the events-based model suggests that institutions have their basic confidence position fixed by general, enduring cultural norms and expectations. These generate what might be thought of as average or expected levels of confidence that are then pushed upwards or downwards when events beyond the normal occur. After the shock of these events wears off, confidence exhibits homeostasis and returns to typical levels.

Because confidence ratings are largely shaped by episodic events, the trends described through 2006 do not necessarily project to the present, much less the future. For example, recent events in the sub-prime, mortgage market and the economy as a whole have probably already notably altered confidence ratings for Major Companies and Banks/Finance and perhaps for Executive Branch and Congress. In effect, these can be seen as predictions based on the event-driven model of confidence.

But while confidence trends are definitely a story of individual trees, is the forest being missed by focusing on the separate institutions? Are Lipset and Schneider (1987) right when they contend, “It appears justified to speak of a common confidence trend for the leaders of all institutions”? There are several reasons to believe that there may be a general, master confidence trend. First, all confidence items are positively correlated, indicating some commonality. Second, while the pattern is not identical across institutions, cohort reversal is a common pattern across almost all institutions. Third, most institutions have shown declines and once the important impact of institution-specific events are distilled away, there may be generalized forces weakening confidence across most institutions.

Several generalized factors have been proposed. First, is a societal-failure model which is consistent with the institutional-performance model in arguing that confidence is

down in response to an overall increase in objective problems and system shortcomings. There is no comprehensive measure of such failures available to test this idea, but there seem to be enough counter examples of improvements and positive developments to question this explanation (e.g. the fall of Communism, the drop in the crime rate in the 1990s/2000s, the rise in life expectancy, the increase in real income, the most serious political scandal, Watergate, coming at the start of the period).

Second, some have argued that confidence has declined because leaders have undermined confidence in their own institutions. Fried and Harris (2001) argue that political leaders have exploited distrust and cynicism for political advantage and in the process reduced institutional confidence. Fan, Wyatt, and Keltner (2001) find that the press has reduced confidence due to an increase in “‘self-criticism’ of media, perhaps linked to conservative charges of ‘liberal media bias’.” Corporate emphasis on short-term profits rather than long-term fundamentals might be another example. But while there is a common thread of leadership shortcomings in such examples, it is far from clear that they are manifestations of a broad, societal trend.

Third, a related argument is that there was an increase in media negativity about other institutions and society at large. Moy and Pfau (2000) site talk radio as having a caustic impact on political discourse in general and undermining institutional confidence in particular. Shribman (1999) found that media coverage of Congress became more negative over time. These arguments however focus only on the political institutions and do not address institutions across the board. Nor do they clearly establish whether the level of negativity reflects real fluctuations in institutional performance or are independent of such objective factors.

Fourth, Dalton (2000) believes that “legitimacy based on inclusion is replacing legitimacy based on hierarchical authority.” He in turn relates this to the rise of the post-materialists. This has undermined confidence both because the transition in the basis of legitimacy has been disruptive and because bottom-up confidence is harder to generate and maintain than deferential, top-down confidence. This idea is consistent with other societal trends toward greater equality and democratization.

Fifth, “rising expectations” have been cited as a reason for lowered confidence evaluations (Lipset and Schneider, 1987). However, there is no direct evidence that expectations were in fact on the upswing.

Finally, several contend that institutional confidence should be seen more as the exception than the expectation in American society. Sherman (2001) points out that de Tocqueville wrote that Americans were “suspicious of all authority” and Lipset and Schneider (1987) cite democratic egalitarianism and populism as major themes that question authority. Alford (2001) see the 1950s and 1960s as a period of atypically high confidence coming from the success of America in World War II and from the solidarity generated by the cold war threat of Communism. This bubble of institutional confidence was then burst by the Vietnam War and the anti-establishment sixties and from the 1970s onwards traditional American skepticism of authority has reasserted itself. Thus, from this perspective what needs explanation is not why has confidence fallen so low, but why did it used to be so high. Perhaps the chief reason for questioning this explanation is the cohort-reversal pattern since the return-to-skepticism explanation would seem to indicate that newer generations would have the lower and more normal confidence, but instead they have the highest. The cohort-reversal instead suggests that there was a Mannheimian negative impact on the middle generations that suppressed institutional confidence.⁵

⁵ On such cohort effects see Schuman and Scott, 1989; Schuman and Rieger, 1992.

Institutional confidence in America over the last generation is a complex story. Clearly, much change is event-driven and institution specific. But there are plausible reasons for also expecting that more general, inter-institutional factors are at play. These are also likely to be multifold and there is unlikely to be any single factor that is driving a decline in confidence. Once the role of specific events on specific institutions are modeled, the impact of more general societal trends may be identified and a fuller understanding of confidence trends achieved.

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Table 1

Rank of Institutions

(All years Combined)

| Institutions | Means (1973-2006) | Difference Score (1975-2006) | % Great Deal of Confidence (1973-2006) |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Medicine | 2.40 | +0.333 | 47.8 |
| Scientific Community | 2.36 | +0.301 | 40.3 |
| Military | 2.26 | +0.196 | 37.6 |
| Supreme Court | 2.18 | +0.132 | 31.8 |
| Education | 2.17 | +0.093 | 30.5 |
| Major Companies | 2.12 | +0.060 | 24.5 |
| Banks/Finance | 2.11 | +0.040 | 26.6 |
| Organized Religion | 2.09 | +0.009 | 28.3 |
| Press | 1.88 | -0.205 | 16.5 |
| Executive Branch | 1.87 | -0.191 | 16.9 |
| Congress | 1.87 | -0.213 | 13.3 |
| Television | 1.82 | -0.276 | 13.5 |
| Organized Labor | 1.80 | -0.279 | 11.7 |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

Note: Means are based on all years which are 1973-2006 except for Banks/Financial which is 1975-2006.

Difference scores subtract the individual mean score from the mean score of the 13 item scale in 1975-2006

% Great Deal of Confidence retains Don't Knows in the base and is for 1973-2006

Table 2

Factor Loadings, Main Loadings
(Varimax rotation)

A. 13 Institutions (1975-2006)

| General: | | Knowledge: | | Media | |
|--------------------|------|-----------------|------|------------|------|
| Executive Branch | .653 | Scientific Com. | .796 | Press | .773 |
| Congress | .590 | Medicine | .564 | Television | .740 |
| Military | .579 | Supreme Court | .538 | | |
| Organized Religion | .546 | Major Companies | .481 | | |
| Education | .490 | | | | |
| Organized Labor | .461 | | | | |
| Banks/Finance | .441 | | | | |

B. 12 Institutions (1973-2006)

| General: | | Knowledge: | | Media: | |
|--------------------|------|-----------------|------|------------|------|
| Executive Branch | .686 | Scientific Com. | .818 | Press | .770 |
| Congress | .595 | Medicine | .557 | Television | .743 |
| Military | .595 | Supreme Court | .547 | | |
| Organized Religion | .523 | Major Companies | .456 | | |
| Organized Labor | .461 | | | | |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

Table 3

Trends in Confidence Scales

| Year | 13-item Scale | 12-item Scale | 11-item Scale | 2-item Media Scale | 3-item Govt. Scale |
|-------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1973 | ---- | 26.1 | ---- | 4.1 | 6.4 |
| 1974 | ---- | 26.2 | ---- | 4.1 | 5.9 |
| 1975 | 27.2 | 25.0 | 23.1 | 4.0 | 5.8 |
| 1976 | 27.7 | 25.4 | 23.7 | 4.0 | 6.0 |
| 1977 | 28.6 | 26.3 | 24.6 | 4.0 | 6.4 |
| 1978 | 26.9 | 24.7 | 23.0 | 3.8 | 5.9 |
| 1980 | 27.0 | 24.9 | 23.1 | 3.9 | 5.6 |
| 1982 | 27.2 | 25.1 | 23.3 | 3.8 | 6.0 |
| 1983 | 26.7 | 24.6 | 23.0 | 3.7 | 5.8 |
| 1984 | 27.5 | 25.3 | 23.7 | 3.8 | 6.0 |
| 1986 | 27.0 | 24.9 | 23.2 | 3.8 | 6.1 |
| 1987 | 27.7 | 25.5 | 23.9 | 3.8 | 6.2 |
| 1988 | 27.2 | 25.1 | 23.4 | 3.8 | 6.1 |
| 1989 | 26.9 | 24.9 | 23.2 | 3.7 | 6.2 |
| 1990 | 26.8 | 24.9 | 23.1 | 3.8 | 6.2 |
| 1991 | 27.0 | 25.2 | 23.3 | 3.7 | 6.2 |
| 1993 | 25.7 | 23.8 | 22.2 | 3.5 | 5.6 |
| 1994 | 26.0 | 24.0 | 22.6 | 3.4 | 5.6 |
| 1996 | 25.9 | 23.8 | 22.5 | 3.4 | 5.4 |
| 1998 | 26.2 | 24.2 | 22.9 | 3.4 | 5.7 |
| 2000 | 26.8 | 24.6 | 23.4 | 3.4 | 5.9 |
| 2002 | 26.7 | 24.6 | 23.4 | 3.4 | 6.2 |
| 2004 | 26.5 | 24.3 | 23.2 | 3.3 | 6.0 |
| 2006 | 26.3 | 24.1 | 22.9 | 3.4 | 5.7 |
| Model | SLC | SLC | SLC | SLC | SLC |
| r | -.103 | -.129 | -.055 | -.232 | -.064 |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

SLC=Significant Linear component

Table 4

Trends in Average % Great Deal of Confidence, 1973-2006

| | 12-items | 13-items |
|------|----------|----------|
| 1973 | 30.3 | ---- |
| 1974 | 33.5 | ---- |
| 1975 | 25.4 | 25.9 |
| 1976 | 28.7 | 29.5 |
| 1977 | 31.4 | 32.3 |
| 1978 | 24.2 | 24.8 |
| 1980 | 26.0 | 26.4 |
| 1982 | 26.0 | 26.0 |
| 1983 | 24.2 | 24.1 |
| 1984 | 27.2 | 27.4 |
| 1986 | 25.5 | 25.1 |
| 1987 | 28.4 | 28.3 |
| 1988 | 26.1 | 26.1 |
| 1989 | 25.9 | 25.3 |
| 1990 | 25.3 | 24.7 |
| 1991 | 28.9 | 27.6 |
| 1993 | 22.0 | 21.4 |
| 1994 | 23.1 | 22.7 |
| 1996 | 22.8 | 22.9 |
| 1998 | 23.8 | 24.0 |
| 2000 | 25.1 | 25.4 |
| 2002 | 25.0 | 24.8 |
| 2004 | 25.7 | 26.0 |
| 2006 | 24.1 | 24.5 |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

Table 5

Trends in Individual Confidence Measures, 1973(5)-2006

| Institution | Mean Trend (r) | Model | Linearity as % of Sum of Squares | Difference Trend (r) | Model |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------|--|----------------------------|-------|
| Television | -.152 | SLC | 85.1 | -.096 | SLC |
| Press | -.230 | SLC | 90.2 | -.200 | SLC |
| Medicine | -.094 | SLC | 66.4 | -.039 | SLC |
| Scientific Community | -.014 | SLC | 7.4 | +.050 | SLC |
| Education | -.093 | SLC | 47.0 | -.014 | SLC |
| Executive Branch | -.059 | SLC | 9.8 | -.021 | SLC |
| Congress | -.099 | SLC | 28.0 | -.031 | SLC |
| Supreme Court | +.012 | SLC | 2.1 | +.067 | SLC |
| Military | +.087 | SLC | 35.0 | +.170 | SLC |
| Major Companies | -.014 | SLC | 1.4 | +.059 | SLC |
| Banks/Finance (75+) | -.069 | SLC | 13.4 | -.011 | NCNL |
| Organized Labor | +.000 | NCNL | 0.0 | +.091 | SLC |
| Organized Religion | -.089 | SLC | 36.6 | -.017 | SLC |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

SLC=Significant Linear Components

NCNL=Not Constant; Not Linear

Table 6
Rank of Confidence in Institutions, 1973-2006 (% Great Deal of Confidence)

| Rank | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 | 1980 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1993 | 1994 | 1996 | 1998 | 2000 | 2002 | 2004 | 2006 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | MED | ARM | ARM | MED | MED | MED | MED | ARM | ARM | ARM |
| | .538 | .610 | .510 | .546 | .528 | .458 | .532 | .452 | .538 | .510 | .468 | .525 | .526 | .475 | .453 | .606 | .412 | .426 | .452 | .450 | .446 | .558 | .582 | .471 |
| 2 | SCI | EDC | SCI | SCI | FIN | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | MED | MED | SCI | SCI | SCI | SCI | MED | SCI | SCI |
| | .370 | .490 | .373 | .428 | .420 | .357 | .409 | .391 | .419 | .445 | .395 | .451 | .393 | .409 | .378 | .479 | .404 | .392 | .399 | .397 | .415 | .372 | .418 | .410 |
| 3 | EDC | CLG | ARM | ARM | SCI | FIN | CLG | EDC | ARM | ARM | ARM | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | SCI | SCI | ARM | ARM | ARM | ARM | SCI | MED | MED |
| | .369 | .445 | .347 | .398 | .413 | .320 | .353 | .337 | .301 | .367 | .312 | .373 | .351 | .347 | .344 | .400 | .376 | .376 | .386 | .363 | .397 | .372 | .378 | .398 |
| 4 | CLG | ARM | FIN | FIN | EDC | CLG | FIN | CLG | CLG | JUD | JUD | ARM | ARM | ARM | ARM | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD |
| | .345 | .393 | .314 | .390 | .405 | .306 | .318 | .322 | .285 | .336 | .304 | .357 | .347 | .328 | .332 | .375 | .302 | .312 | .283 | .312 | .324 | .360 | .317 | .326 |
| 5 | ARM | SCI | EDC | EDC | CLG | ARM | EDC | JUD | EDC | FIN | EDC | EDC | EDC | EDC | EDC | EDC | CLG | BUS | CLG | EDC | FIN | FIN | EDC | FIN |
| | .319 | .370 | .310 | .377 | .396 | .296 | .299 | .309 | .283 | .307 | .281 | .348 | .297 | .302 | .267 | .298 | .226 | .263 | .253 | .269 | .295 | .295 | .288 | .293 |
| 6 | JUD | JUD | JUD | JUD | ARM | JUD | ARM | ARM | JUD | CLG | CLG | BUS | FIN | BUS | BUS | FED | EDC | EDC | FIN | CLG | BUS | FED | CLG | EDC |
| | .309 | .330 | .304 | .341 | .363 | .286 | .283 | .299 | .273 | .307 | .250 | .304 | .269 | .250 | .256 | .266 | .223 | .256 | .245 | .266 | .284 | .273 | .235 | .282 |
| 7 | BUS | BUS | PRS | CLG | JUD | EDC | BUS | FIN | BUS | BUS | BUS | CLG | BUS | CLG | FED | CLG | BUS | CLG | BUS | BUS | CLG | EDC | FIN | CLG |
| | .292 | .313 | .238 | .302 | .359 | .283 | .269 | .234 | .244 | .305 | .247 | .290 | .248 | .217 | .239 | .251 | .213 | .293 | .240 | .265 | .276 | .257 | .223 | .241 |
| 8 | FED | PRS | CLG | PRS | FED | BUS | JUD | BUS | FIN | EDC | FED | FIN | CLG | FED | CLG | BUS | FIN | FIN | EDC | FIN | EDC | CLG | FED | BUS |
| | .289 | .254 | .238 | .283 | .275 | .212 | .342 | .229 | .234 | .279 | .213 | .275 | .295 | .205 | .227 | .198 | .145 | .181 | .233 | .260 | .272 | .189 | .217 | .179 |
| 9 | LEG | TV | BUS | BUS | BUS | PRS | PRS | FED | FED | FED | FIN | FED | PRS | PRS | FIN | LEG | TV | FED | LAB | FED | FED | BUS | BUS | FED |
| | .234 | .230 | .194 | .212 | .271 | .198 | .220 | .192 | .135 | .188 | .207 | .188 | .189 | .189 | .167 | .176 | .116 | .113 | .111 | .133 | .135 | .173 | .184 | .157 |
| 10 | PRS | LAB | TV | TV | PRS | TV | TV | PRS | PRS | PRS | PRS | PRS | FED | FIN | LEG | PRS | FED | LAB | PRS | LAB | LAB | LEG | LEG | LAB |
| | .227 | .190 | .179 | .182 | .248 | .144 | .152 | .186 | .133 | .175 | .186 | .182 | .165 | .183 | .157 | .160 | .114 | .106 | .106 | .107 | .130 | .137 | .147 | .117 |
| 11 | TV | LEG | LEG | LEG | LEG | LEG | LAB | TV | TV | TV | LEG | LEG | LEG | LEG | PRS | TV | PRS | PRS | TV | LEG | LEG | LAB | LAB | LEG |
| | .182 | .170 | .132 | .133 | .191 | .128 | .151 | .141 | .124 | .131 | .162 | .168 | .159 | .175 | .144 | .147 | .106 | .100 | .105 | .104 | .127 | .116 | .129 | .116 |
| 12 | LAB | FED | FED | FED | TV | FED | FED | LAB | LEG | LEG | TV | TV | TV | TV | TV | FIN | LAB | TV | FED | TV | TV | PRS | TV | PRS |
| | .156 | .136 | .131 | .131 | .176 | .123 | .120 | .131 | .099 | .128 | .148 | .111 | .141 | .137 | .136 | .120 | .078 | .096 | .098 | .100 | .103 | .099 | .102 | .102 |
| 13 | XXX | XXX | LAB | LAB | LAB | LAB | LEG | LEG | LAB | LAB | LAB | LAB | LAB | LAB | LAB | LAB | LEG | LEG | LEG | PRS | PRS | TV | PRS | TV |
| | ---- | ---- | .096 | .115 | .148 | .113 | .089 | .129 | .084 | .085 | .088 | .105 | .109 | .093 | .107 | .147 | .065 | .080 | .072 | .090 | .100 | .094 | .089 | .090 |

MED=Medicine
SCI=Scientific Community
ARM=Military
JUD=Supreme Court
EDC=Education
BUS=Major Companies
FIN=Banks/Finance
CLG=Organized Religion
PRS=Press
FED=Executive Branch
LEG=Congress
TV=Television
LAB=Organized Labor

Table'9

Confidence in Institutions by Cohorts, 1973-2006

(% Great Deal/Means)

| | Pre-1923 | 1923-32 | 1933-42 | 1943-52 | 1953-62 | 1963-72 | 1973-82 | 1983+ |
|---------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| Banks/Finance | 40.3 | 29.4 | 26.5 | 20.7 | 21.6 | 25.6 | 35.8 | 47.0 |
| Major Companies | 31.4 | 28.3 | 26.4 | 22.3 | 22.0 | 25.4 | 26.5 | 24.7 |
| Organized Religion | 41.2 | 33.6 | 30.2 | 25.0 | 24.3 | 23.6 | 27.8 | 32.0 |
| Education | 38.6 | 33.5 | 30.1 | 27.5 | 27.1 | 27.9 | 36.2 | 41.7 |
| Executive Branch | 21.0 | 18.7 | 17.2 | 15.0 | 15.2 | 18.2 | 18.0 | 22.0 |
| Organized Labor | 15.5 | 12.4 | 9.4 | 9.5 | 11.6 | 14.4 | 19.8 | 23.6 |
| Press | 20.3 | 16.5 | 16.6 | 17.2 | 16.3 | 14.7 | 12.6 | 13.6 |
| Medicine | 48.6 | 46.3 | 46.7 | 47.7 | 49.1 | 49.9 | 51.5 | 61.9 |
| Television | 17.5 | 13.1 | 12.4 | 11.6 | 13.4 | 14.3 | 14.8 | 12.1 |
| Supreme Court | 32.6 | 32.3 | 30.2 | 31.0 | 33.5 | 33.7 | 41.3 | 41.3 |
| Scientific Com. | 42.2 | 40.4 | 40.1 | 44.0 | 45.3 | 45.3 | 47.6 | 57.0 |
| Congress | 16.6 | 14.7 | 12.8 | 11.0 | 12.1 | 15.0 | 17.1 | 26.4 |
| Military | 42.3 | 40.1 | 38.2 | 31.9 | 36.1 | 43.7 | 49.0 | 64.3 |
| 13-item scale means | 27.5 | 27.1 | 26.7 | 26.3 | 26.6 | 27.0 | 27.5 | 28.9 |
| 12-item scale means | 25.5 | 25.0 | 24.7 | 24.4 | 24.7 | 24.9 | 25.3 | 26.3 |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

Table :

Confidence in Select Institutions and
Related Experiences, Evaluations, and Attitudes

A. Banks/Finance and Financial Satisfaction

| | Satisfied | More or Less Satisfied | Not at All Satisfied | |
|------------|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Great Deal | 37.1% | 27.2% | 21.4% | |
| Only Some | 52.5 | 60.2 | 56.2 | |
| Hardly Any | 10.4 | 12.6 | 22.4 | r=.160/prob.=.000 |

B. Banks/Finance and Changes in Financial Situation

| | Better | Same | Worse | |
|------------|--------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 33.0% | 28.1% | 21.4% | |
| Only Some | 56.0 | 57.9 | 57.2 | |
| Hardly Any | 11.0 | 14.0 | 21.5 | r=.124/prob.=.0000 |

C. Major Companies and Financial Satisfaction

| | Satisfied | More or Less Satisfied | Not at All Satisfied | |
|------------|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Great Deal | 27.1% | 20.8% | 17.4% | |
| Only Some | 62.3 | 64.2 | 60.1 | |
| Hardly Any | 10.6 | 15.1 | 22.5 | r=.132/prob=.0000 |

D. Major Companies and Changes in Financial Satisfaction

| | Better | Same | Worse | |
|------------|--------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Great Deal | 25.5% | 21.2% | 15.8% | |
| Only Some | 62.6 | 61.7 | 63.0 | |
| Hardly Any | 11.9 | 22.5 | 15.8 | r=.122/prob.=0000 |

Table : (continued)

E. Major Companies and Job Satisfaction

| | Very Satisfied | Moderately Satisfied | A Little Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | |
|------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 25.4% | 20.2% | 17.8% | 10.1% | |
| Only Some | 62.1 | 65.5 | 62.6 | 64.4 | |
| Hardly Any | 12.5 | 14.3 | 19.5 | 25.5 | r=.195/prob.=.0000 |

F. Organized Labor and Union Membership

| | Member | Spouse Member | Both Member | Neither Member | |
|------------|--------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 20.4% | 12.1% | 8.8% | 12.4% | |
| Only Some | 60.9 | 63.6 | 63.2 | 57.7 | |
| Hardly Any | 18.7 | 24.3 | 28.1 | 29.9 | r=.086/prob.=.0000 |

G. Medicine and Personal Health

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | |
|------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| Great Deal | 48.9% | 39.9% | 45.8% | 35.3% | |
| Only Some | 43.1 | 51.7 | 41.3 | 41.7 | |
| Hardly Any | 8.0 | 8.4 | 12.9 | 23.0 | r=.080/prob.=0000 |

H. Television and TV Hours Watched per Day

| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6-9 | 10+ | |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------|
| Great Deal | 2.1 | 5.5 | 8.2 | 8.0 | 12.1 | 15.9 | 11.1 | 27.2 | |
| Only Some | 29.9 | 38.9 | 47.8 | 53.3 | 55.4 | 49.3 | 60.1 | 43.2 | |
| Hardly Any | 68.0 | 55.6 | 44.0 | 38.8 | 32.5 | 34.8 | 28.8 | 29.6 | r=-.177/prob.=.0000 |

Table : "(continued)

I. Press and Newspaper Reading

| | Every- Day | Few Times A Week | Once A Week | Less Than Weekly | Never |
|------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------|
| Great Deal | 10.8% | 8.4 | 11.2% | 6.3% | 9.6% |
| Only Some | 47.7 | 48.0 | 46.1 | 49.0 | 41.4 |
| Hardly Any | 41.6 | 43.6 | 42.8 | 44.7 | 49.0 |

r=.045/prob.=.069

J. Organized Religion and Frequency of Praying

| | Several Times A Day | Once A Day | Several Times A Week | Once A Week | Less Than Weekly | Never |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------|
| Great Deal | 34.6% | 29.3% | 24.5% | 17.3% | 11.1% | 4.6% |
| Only Some | 48.2 | 54.7 | 58.4 | 64.6 | 55.5 | 45.1 |
| Hardly Any | 17.1 | 17.0 | 17.1 | 18.1 | 33.4 | 50.3 |

r=.260/prob.=.0000

K. Organized Religion and Frequency of Attending Religious Services

| | Never Than Yearly | Less Than Yearly | 1-2 Times Yearly | Several Times Yearly | Once A Month | 2-3 Times Monthly | Nearly Weekly | Weekly | More than Weekly |
|------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------|------------------------|
| Great Deal | 11.4% | 16.9% | 15.9% | 25.0% | 25.8% | 33.0% | 39.9% | 37.6% | 34.4% |
| Only Some | 45.1 | 55.8 | 59.2 | 58.2 | 61.4 | 56.3 | 47.5 | 52.4 | 51.1 |
| Hardly Any | 43.5 | 27.3 | 24.8 | 16.8 | 12.7 | 10.8 | 12.6 | 9.9 | 14.5 |

r=-.304/prob.=.0000

L. Organized Religion and Self-Rating to Attachment to Ones Religion

| | Strong | Somewhat Strong | Not Very Strong | No Religion |
|------------|--------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Great Deal | 37.2% | 26.5% | 19.0% | 8.3% |
| Only Some | 49.8 | 58.3 | 59.7 | 42.9 |
| Hardly Any | 12.9 | 15.2 | 21.3 | 48.7 |

r=.300/prob.=.0000

Table : (continued)

M. Organized Religion and Belief in God

| | Don't Believe | No Way to Know | Higher Power | Believe Sometimes | Believe Mostly | Know Exists | |
|------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Great Deal | 18.1% | 7.0% | 7.4% | 15.6% | 18.6% | 31.3% | |
| Only Some | 35.1 | 40.6 | 50.2 | 52.8 | 61.2 | 52.0 | |
| Hardly Any | 46.8 | 52.4 | 42.4 | 31.6 | 20.3 | 16.8 | r=-.262/ prob.=.0000 |

N. Military and Years in Armed Forces

| | None | Less Than 2 Years | 2-4 Years | 4+ Years | |
|------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|----------|---------------------|
| Great Deal | 35.0% | 34.5% | 36.9% | 48.5% | |
| Only Some | 51.7 | 50.5 | 49.5 | 40.7 | |
| Hardly Any | 13.3 | 15.0 | 13.6 | 10.8 | r=-.035/prob.=.0000 |

O. Scientific Community and Science Knowledge Scale (# Correct)

| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------------|
| Great Deal | 32.2% | 40.5% | 45.7% | 52.5% | 63.7% | 68.1% | 79.9% | |
| Only Some | 58.9 | 51.2 | 48.6 | 44.3 | 34.0 | 31.9 | 20.1 | |
| Hardly Any | 9.0 | 8.3 | 5.6 | 3.2 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | r=-.194/prob.=.0000 |

Source: GSS, 2000-2006 for continuing GSS items and most recent years for former items

Table ;
Confidence in Institutions by Education
(% Great Deal)

| | Less than High School | High School | Some College | Assoc. Degree | 4-year Degree | Some Grad. | Post Grad Degree | Corr. |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------|--------|
| Banks/Finance | 32.1 | 26.4 | 25 | 22.2 | 26.6 | 25.2 | 26 | -0.015 |
| Major Companies | 22.5 | 23.3 | 26.4 | 25.1 | 34.2 | 27.8 | 31.7 | 0.095 |
| Organized Religion | 35.2 | 29.9 | 26 | 24.5 | 26.2 | 23.2 | 24.9 | -0.046 |
| Education | 39.7 | 30.5 | 27.4 | 24.8 | 25.4 | 22.8 | 27 | -0.063 |
| Executive Branch | 18.7 | 15.8 | 17.6 | 14.7 | 19.6 | 18.1 | 18 | 0.015 |
| Organized Labor | 18.5 | 12.6 | 11 | 9.5 | 7 | 6.2 | 6 | -0.11 |
| Press | 21.9 | 16.6 | 15 | 11.6 | 14.7 | 14.4 | 13.2 | -0.059 |
| Medicine | 49.4 | 48.7 | 47.7 | 43.8 | 49.1 | 49.2 | 45.9 | 0.014 |
| Television | 21.7 | 13.6 | 10.7 | 10.1 | 8.5 | 5.8 | 6.9 | -0.143 |
| Supreme Court | 29.6 | 29.6 | 33.3 | 34.2 | 41.2 | 45.4 | 45.9 | 0.13 |
| Scientific Com. | 34.1 | 39.1 | 46.3 | 46.7 | 56.5 | 61.1 | 58.4 | 0.185 |
| Congress | 17.3 | 13.3 | 12.6 | 11.9 | 11.8 | 9.2 | 11.9 | -0.029 |
| Military | 46.2 | 39.5 | 36.9 | 36.5 | 32 | 29.9 | 27.9 | -0.104 |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

Table 32

Misanthropy and Confidence in Institutions

(Pearson's r/Prob.)

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| 12-item Scale | -.142/.000 |
| 13-item Scale | -.146/.000 |
| Scientific Community | -.163/.000 |
| Major Companies | -.157/.000 |
| Supreme Court | -.141/.000 |
| Executive Branch | -.124/.000 |
| Banks/Finance | -.102/.000 |
| Organized Religion | -.098/.000 |
| Medicine | -.091/.000 |
| Congress | -.078/.000 |
| Education | -.063/.000 |
| Press | -.044/.000 |
| Military | -.012/.052 |
| Television | +.027/.000 |
| Organized Labor | +.050/.000 |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

Misanthropy:

HELPFUL: Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?

FAIR: Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance or would they try to be fair?

TRUST: Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

Table 13

Demographic Correlates of Confidence in Institutions

(Group showing highest confidence)

| | Banks/ Finan. | Major Comp. | Org. Relig. | Educa- tion | Exec. Branch | Org. Labor | Press | Medi- cal | TV | Suprm. Court | Sci. Com. | Con- gress | Mili- tary | CON13 |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------|--------------|-------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------|
| Degree | LTHS | COL | LTHS | LTHS | ** | LTHS | LTHS | Mixed | LTHS | COL | COL | LTHS | LTHS | LTHS |
| Gender | ** | MEN | WOM | ** | MEN | Mixed | MEN | MEN | MEN | MEN | MEN | MEN | MEN | MEN |
| Race | WHT | WHT | BLK | BLK | WHT | BLK | ** | ** | BLK | NBLK | NBLK | ** | NBLK | NBLK |
| Marital | WID | MAR | WID | NMAR | NDIV | SING | ** | NMAR | NSEP | NMAR | NMAR | WID | WID | NMAR |
| Region | NWST | ** | NWST | SOMW | SO | ** | NE | NWST | SO | Mixed | NEWST | ** | SO | NWST |
| Community Type | RURL | SUBS | RURL | Mixed | NTCC | TCC | TCC | RURL | Mixed | NRURL | SUBS | ** | RURL | RURL |
| # Children | 0,6+ | LT5 | 3+ | 3+ | ** | 0,6+ | 0,6+ | 0 | 0,6+ | 0 | 0 | 6+ | 5+ | Mixed |
| Labor Force Status | RET | RET | RET | RETSC | RETSC | Mixed | UNSC | SCH | Mixed | SCH | SCH | SCH | RET | RETSC |
| Country of Birth | ** | ** | ** | NUSA | NUSA | NUSA | NUSA | ** | NUSA | NUSA | NUSA | NUSA | ** | NUSA |
| Income | Mixed | High | Mixed | Low | ** | Low | Low | ** | Low | High | High | Low | Low | Low |
| Party Identification | REP | REP | REP | DEM | REP | DEM | DEM | REP | DEM | REP | REP | DEM | REP | NIND |
| Political Ideology | CON | CON | CON | LIB | CON | LIB | LIB | NEXT | LIB | NEXT | LIB | MIXED | CON | NEXT |

Source: GSS, 1973-2006

**=not statistically significant

Degree: LTHS=less than high school; COL=college

Race: NBLK=not black

Marital: WID=widowed; MAR=married; NMAR=not married; NDIV=not divorced; SING=never married; NSEP=not separated

Region: NWST=not West; SOMW=South+Midwest; NE=Northeast; SO=South; NEWST=Northeast+West

Community Type: RURL=rural; SUBS=Suburbs; NTCC=not 12 largest central cities; NRURL=not rural

Labor Force: RET=retired; RETSC=retired+in school; UNSC=unemployed+in school; SCH=in school

Country of Birth: NUSA=not born in USA

Party Identification: REP=Republican; DEM=Democratic

Political Ideology: CON=conservative; LIB=liberal; NEXT=not extreme liberal or conservative

Table 14

Confidence in Select Institutions and
Support for Related Governmental Spending and Policies

A. Military and Defense Spending

| | More | Same | Less | |
|------------|-------|------|------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 35.8% | 44.0 | 20.2 | |
| Only Some | 24.3% | 41.1 | 34.5 | |
| Hardly Any | 19.8% | 19.9 | 60.3 | r=.232/prob.=.0000 |

B. Scientific Community and Scientific Research Spending

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|------|------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 50.7% | 43.0 | 6.3 | |
| Only Some | 35.7% | 50.1 | 14.2 | |
| Hardly Any | 28.7% | 35.2 | 36.1 | r=.216/prob.=.0000 |

C. Scientific Community and Space Exploration Spending

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|------|------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 19.2% | 51.6 | 29.2 | |
| Only Some | 11.3% | 46.3 | 42.4 | |
| Hardly Any | 6.1% | 26.0 | 67.9 | r=.209/prob.=.0000 |

D. Education and Education Spending

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|------|------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 69.4% | 27.3 | 3.3 | |
| Only Some | 77.8% | 18.2 | 4.0 | |
| Hardly Any | 73.2% | 12.9 | 13.8 | r=.017/prob.=.0000 |

E. Supreme Court and Halting Rising Crime Rate Spending

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|------|------|--------------------|
| Great Deal | 53.2% | 40.6 | 6.2 | |
| Only Some | 57.4% | 34.9 | 7.7 | |
| Hardly Any | 59.8% | 27.3 | 12.9 | r=-.007/prob.=0000 |

F. Medicine and Health Spending

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|------|-----|-------------------|
| Great Deal | 68.5% | 25.9 | 5.6 | |
| Only Some | 77.6% | 16.5 | 5.9 | |
| Hardly Any | 77.3% | 13.0 | 9.7 | r=-.051/prob=.000 |

Source: GSS, 2000-2006

Appendix: Trends in Institutional Confidence

Confidence in Television

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly Any | Don't Know | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 1973 | 18.2 | 59.2 | 21.6 | 0.9 | 1496 |
| 1974 | 23.0 | 58.2 | 17.8 | 1.0 | 1481 |
| 1975 | 17.9 | 56.9 | 22.8 | 2.4 | 1487 |
| 1976 | 18.2 | 52.8 | 27.6 | 1.5 | 1492 |
| 1977 | 17.6 | 56.1 | 24.9 | 1.4 | 1526 |
| 1978 | 14.4 | 53.2 | 30.9 | 1.5 | 1527 |
| 1980 | 15.2 | 55.2 | 28.2 | 1.4 | 1467 |
| 1982 | 14.1 | 57.8 | 27.0 | 1.0 | 1502 |
| 1983 | 12.4 | 57.6 | 28.3 | 1.7 | 1595 |
| 1984 | 13.1 | 57.0 | 28.9 | 1.0 | 973 |
| 1986 | 14.8 | 55.5 | 28.4 | 1.3 | 1464 |
| 1987 | 11.1 | 58.8 | 28.9 | 1.3 | 1462 |
| 1988 | 14.1 | 58.7 | 26.1 | 1.1 | 989 |
| 1989 | 13.7 | 54.1 | 29.9 | 2.2 | 1018 |
| 1990 | 13.6 | 57.7 | 26.9 | 1.7 | 892 |
| 1991 | 14.7 | 54.2 | 30.4 | 0.7 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 11.6 | 51.2 | 36.4 | 0.9 | 1061 |
| 1994 | 9.6 | 50.2 | 39.4 | 0.8 | 1980 |
| 1996 | 10.5 | 45.8 | 41.6 | 2.1 | 1911 |
| 1998 | 10.0 | 49.8 | 38.6 | 1.5 | 1884 |
| 2000 | 10.3 | 46.5 | 41.4 | 1.8 | 1887 |
| 2002 | 9.4 | 47.5 | 42.0 | 1.1 | 893 |
| 2004 | 10.2 | 47.0 | 42.5 | 0.3 | 880 |
| 2006 | 9.0 | 48.8 | 40.9 | 1.3 | 2000 |

Confidence in the Press

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 22.7 | 61.5 | 14.4 | 1.4 | 1500 |
| 1974 | 25.4 | 55.9 | 17.7 | 1.0 | 1481 |
| 1975 | 23.8 | 55.1 | 18.4 | 2.8 | 1486 |
| 1976 | 28.3 | 51.9 | 18.2 | 1.6 | 1488 |
| 1977 | 24.8 | 58.0 | 15.3 | 1.9 | 1527 |
| 1978 | 19.8 | 58.5 | 20.0 | 1.7 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 22.0 | 58.0 | 17.4 | 2.6 | 1467 |
| 1982 | 18.6 | 58.4 | 21.1 | 1.9 | 1502 |
| 1983 | 13.3 | 59.6 | 25.2 | 1.9 | 1594 |
| 1984 | 17.5 | 58.5 | 22.5 | 1.6 | 973 |
| 1986 | 18.6 | 53.7 | 26.0 | 1.8 | 1465 |
| 1987 | 18.2 | 55.9 | 24.2 | 1.7 | 1464 |
| 1988 | 18.9 | 53.5 | 24.7 | 3.0 | 990 |
| 1989 | 16.6 | 54.3 | 26.6 | 2.5 | 1018 |
| 1990 | 14.4 | 56.9 | 25.4 | 3.3 | 892 |
| 1991 | 16.0 | 53.2 | 29.3 | 1.4 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 10.6 | 48.9 | 38.6 | 1.8 | 1060 |
| 1994 | 10.0 | 49.4 | 39.3 | 1.3 | 1981 |
| 1996 | 10.6 | 46.8 | 39.9 | 2.7 | 1913 |
| 1998 | 9.0 | 46.2 | 42.6 | 2.2 | 1885 |
| 2000 | 10.0 | 46.7 | 41.0 | 2.3 | 1888 |
| 2002 | 9.9 | 46.7 | 41.7 | 1.8 | 893 |
| 2004 | 8.9 | 47.4 | 43.5 | 0.3 | 880 |
| 2006 | 10.2 | 48.0 | 40.6 | 1.2 | 2001 |

Confidence in Medicine

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 53.8 | 39.6 | 5.8 | 0.7 | 1496 |
| 1974 | 61.0 | 33.1 | 4.6 | 1.4 | 1482 |
| 1975 | 51.0 | 39.7 | 7.7 | 1.5 | 1487 |
| 1976 | 54.6 | 35.0 | 9.2 | 1.2 | 1492 |
| 1977 | 52.8 | 40.4 | 5.6 | 1.2 | 1527 |
| 1978 | 45.8 | 44.5 | 9.1 | 0.6 | 1527 |
| 1980 | 53.2 | 38.0 | 7.6 | 1.2 | 1468 |
| 1982 | 45.2 | 46.2 | 7.4 | 1.2 | 1503 |
| 1983 | 51.9 | 40.3 | 6.6 | 1.2 | 1594 |
| 1984 | 51.0 | 42.7 | 5.5 | 0.7 | 972 |
| 1986 | 46.8 | 44.7 | 7.3 | 1.2 | 1466 |
| 1987 | 52.5 | 41.3 | 5.3 | 1.0 | 1462 |
| 1988 | 52.6 | 40.5 | 5.8 | 1.0 | 994 |
| 1989 | 47.5 | 44.7 | 6.8 | 1.1 | 1017 |
| 1990 | 45.3 | 47.0 | 6.7 | 1.0 | 891 |
| 1991 | 47.9 | 43.3 | 7.6 | 1.2 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 40.4 | 50.3 | 8.2 | 1.0 | 1059 |
| 1994 | 42.6 | 46.9 | 9.9 | 0.7 | 1984 |
| 1996 | 45.2 | 45.1 | 8.4 | 1.2 | 1916 |
| 1998 | 45.0 | 44.8 | 8.8 | 1.5 | 1882 |
| 2000 | 44.6 | 45.1 | 9.0 | 1.4 | 1888 |
| 2002 | 37.2 | 51.1 | 11.1 | 0.6 | 893 |
| 2004 | 37.8 | 49.8 | 12.0 | 0.4 | 880 |
| 2006 | 39.8 | 48.9 | 10.6 | 0.7 | 2001 |

Confidence in Science

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 37.0 | 47.6 | 6.0 | 9.4 | 1494 |
| 1974 | 45.5 | 37.7 | 6.8 | 10.1 | 1482 |
| 1975 | 37.3 | 45.6 | 6.6 | 10.4 | 1487 |
| 1976 | 42.8 | 38.8 | 7.5 | 10.9 | 1487 |
| 1977 | 41.3 | 46.1 | 5.0 | 7.6 | 1524 |
| 1978 | 35.7 | 49.1 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 1527 |
| 1980 | 40.9 | 43.5 | 6.9 | 8.7 | 1462 |
| 1982 | 39.1 | 46.6 | 5.9 | 8.5 | 1500 |
| 1983 | 41.9 | 46.8 | 5.4 | 6.0 | 1593 |
| 1984 | 44.5 | 44.2 | 5.7 | 5.6 | 971 |
| 1986 | 39.5 | 48.4 | 7.1 | 5.0 | 1464 |
| 1987 | 45.1 | 43.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 1459 |
| 1988 | 39.3 | 47.9 | 5.2 | 7.6 | 993 |
| 1989 | 41.0 | 44.9 | 6.0 | 8.1 | 1017 |
| 1990 | 37.8 | 47.1 | 6.7 | 8.5 | 891 |
| 1991 | 40.0 | 46.9 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 37.6 | 48.1 | 6.9 | 7.5 | 1058 |
| 1994 | 39.2 | 49.4 | 6.9 | 4.6 | 1982 |
| 1996 | 39.7 | 45.1 | 7.8 | 7.5 | 1910 |
| 1998 | 39.7 | 45.2 | 8.1 | 7.0 | 1882 |
| 2000 | 41.5 | 43.8 | 7.4 | 7.4 | 1890 |
| 2002 | 37.2 | 48.3 | 8.4 | 6.1 | 893 |
| 2004 | 41.8 | 48.6 | 6.2 | 3.4 | 879 |
| 2006 | 41.0 | 48.2 | 6.1 | 4.7 | 2000 |

Confidence in Education

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 36.9 | 54.1 | 7.9 | 1.1 | 1496 |
| 1974 | 49.0 | 41.7 | 8.2 | 1.1 | 1481 |
| 1975 | 31.0 | 54.5 | 12.8 | 1.7 | 1487 |
| 1976 | 37.7 | 45.1 | 15.4 | 1.9 | 1489 |
| 1977 | 40.5 | 50.2 | 8.5 | 0.8 | 1527 |
| 1978 | 28.3 | 55.3 | 15.4 | 1.0 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 29.9 | 56.3 | 12.2 | 1.6 | 1467 |
| 1982 | 33.7 | 51.6 | 13.0 | 1.6 | 1501 |
| 1983 | 28.3 | 56.6 | 13.5 | 1.6 | 1594 |
| 1984 | 27.9 | 60.0 | 10.3 | 1.8 | 971 |
| 1986 | 28.1 | 59.8 | 10.9 | 1.1 | 1464 |
| 1987 | 34.8 | 55.5 | 8.5 | 1.2 | 1463 |
| 1988 | 29.7 | 59.7 | 8.8 | 1.9 | 995 |
| 1989 | 30.2 | 58.6 | 10.2 | 1.1 | 1018 |
| 1990 | 26.7 | 58.5 | 13.2 | 1.7 | 888 |
| 1991 | 29.8 | 55.2 | 13.7 | 1.3 | 1022 |
| 1993 | 22.3 | 57.8 | 18.4 | 1.6 | 1060 |
| 1994 | 25.6 | 56.5 | 17.0 | 0.9 | 1986 |
| 1996 | 23.3 | 57.1 | 18.5 | 1.0 | 1915 |
| 1998 | 26.9 | 55.1 | 16.9 | 1.1 | 1881 |
| 2000 | 27.2 | 56.2 | 15.6 | 1.0 | 1891 |
| 2002 | 25.7 | 57.8 | 15.5 | 0.9 | 893 |
| 2004 | 28.8 | 56.9 | 14.3 | - | 878 |
| 2006 | 28.2 | 56.6 | 14.4 | 0.4 | 2001 |

Confidence in Executive Branch

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 28.9 | 51.1 | 18.2 | 1.8 | 1498 |
| 1974 | 13.6 | 42.3 | 42.0 | 2.1 | 1482 |
| 1975 | 13.1 | 55.5 | 29.1 | 2.3 | 1488 |
| 1976 | 13.1 | 59.5 | 24.7 | 2.7 | 1494 |
| 1977 | 27.5 | 55.5 | 13.9 | 3.1 | 1526 |
| 1978 | 12.3 | 59.2 | 25.7 | 2.8 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 12.0 | 50.9 | 34.3 | 2.8 | 1465 |
| 1982 | 19.2 | 54.5 | 24.0 | 2.3 | 1502 |
| 1983 | 13.5 | 54.1 | 29.4 | 3.0 | 1596 |
| 1984 | 18.8 | 50.6 | 28.1 | 2.6 | 972 |
| 1986 | 21.3 | 53.7 | 22.6 | 2.4 | 1467 |
| 1987 | 18.8 | 52.0 | 26.3 | 2.9 | 1464 |
| 1988 | 16.5 | 53.3 | 26.5 | 3.7 | 995 |
| 1989 | 20.5 | 54.6 | 20.4 | 4.5 | 1018 |
| 1990 | 23.9 | 49.8 | 23.1 | 3.2 | 892 |
| 1991 | 26.6 | 49.8 | 21.3 | 2.2 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 11.4 | 53.2 | 32.6 | 2.7 | 1059 |
| 1994 | 11.3 | 51.9 | 35.1 | 1.7 | 1984 |
| 1996 | 9.8 | 44.7 | 42.2 | 3.3 | 1915 |
| 1998 | 13.3 | 48.3 | 35.5 | 2.8 | 1882 |
| 2000 | 13.5 | 48.4 | 33.7 | 4.4 | 1889 |
| 2002 | 27.3 | 50.6 | 20.2 | 1.9 | 891 |
| 2004 | 21.7 | 46.6 | 30.5 | 1.2 | 878 |
| 2006 | 15.7 | 45.0 | 37.3 | 2.1 | 1999 |

Confidence in Congress

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 23.4 | 58.9 | 15.3 | 2.4 | 1497 |
| 1974 | 17.0 | 59.3 | 20.9 | 2.9 | 1481 |
| 1975 | 13.2 | 58.4 | 25.4 | 3.0 | 1487 |
| 1976 | 13.3 | 58.3 | 26.0 | 2.4 | 1494 |
| 1977 | 19.1 | 61.1 | 17.0 | 2.8 | 1525 |
| 1978 | 12.8 | 62.9 | 21.4 | 2.9 | 1527 |
| 1980 | 8.9 | 54.2 | 33.5 | 3.4 | 1467 |
| 1982 | 12.9 | 62.3 | 23.0 | 1.7 | 1502 |
| 1983 | 9.9 | 64.5 | 22.8 | 2.8 | 1592 |
| 1984 | 12.8 | 64.2 | 21.3 | 1.7 | 971 |
| 1986 | 16.2 | 61.8 | 19.7 | 2.3 | 1465 |
| 1987 | 16.8 | 62.5 | 17.7 | 3.0 | 1464 |
| 1988 | 15.9 | 61.5 | 19.2 | 3.4 | 996 |
| 1989 | 17.5 | 58.4 | 21.1 | 3.0 | 1019 |
| 1990 | 15.7 | 58.5 | 22.7 | 3.1 | 891 |
| 1991 | 17.6 | 54.2 | 25.7 | 2.5 | 1018 |
| 1993 | 6.5 | 50.2 | 41.2 | 2.1 | 1061 |
| 1994 | 8.0 | 50.4 | 39.4 | 2.1 | 1979 |
| 1996 | 7.2 | 47.1 | 42.7 | 3.0 | 1911 |
| 1998 | 10.4 | 56.3 | 30.3 | 3.0 | 1880 |
| 2000 | 12.7 | 55.0 | 27.8 | 4.5 | 1889 |
| 2002 | 13.7 | 58.8 | 25.0 | 2.4 | 892 |
| 2004 | 14.7 | 58.6 | 25.6 | 1.1 | 879 |
| 2006 | 11.6 | 52.9 | 33.2 | 2.2 | 2000 |

Confidence in Supreme Court

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 30.9 | 50.9 | 15.2 | 3.0 | 1497 |
| 1974 | 33.0 | 47.9 | 15.0 | 4.1 | 1483 |
| 1975 | 30.4 | 46.9 | 18.4 | 4.2 | 1485 |
| 1976 | 34.1 | 45.1 | 15.5 | 5.3 | 1491 |
| 1977 | 35.9 | 49.9 | 10.5 | 3.7 | 1523 |
| 1978 | 28.6 | 52.8 | 15.0 | 3.6 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 24.2 | 51.0 | 19.8 | 4.9 | 1468 |
| 1982 | 30.9 | 53.5 | 12.4 | 3.2 | 1501 |
| 1983 | 27.3 | 54.7 | 14.6 | 3.4 | 1595 |
| 1984 | 33.6 | 50.9 | 12.6 | 3.0 | 973 |
| 1986 | 30.4 | 52.5 | 13.8 | 3.2 | 1462 |
| 1987 | 37.3 | 49.1 | 10.0 | 3.6 | 1462 |
| 1988 | 35.1 | 50.6 | 10.1 | 4.2 | 993 |
| 1989 | 34.7 | 50.8 | 9.9 | 4.6 | 1019 |
| 1990 | 34.4 | 48.5 | 12.7 | 4.3 | 892 |
| 1991 | 37.5 | 46.1 | 12.6 | 3.9 | 1019 |
| 1993 | 30.2 | 52.7 | 13.4 | 3.7 | 1061 |
| 1994 | 31.2 | 49.9 | 15.8 | 3.1 | 1985 |
| 1996 | 28.3 | 49.5 | 17.3 | 5.0 | 1914 |
| 1998 | 31.2 | 50.4 | 14.0 | 4.5 | 1882 |
| 2000 | 32.4 | 49.3 | 12.5 | 5.8 | 1889 |
| 2002 | 36.0 | 49.5 | 10.8 | 3.6 | 892 |
| 2004 | 31.7 | 52.3 | 14.7 | 1.4 | 880 |
| 2006 | 32.6 | 48.9 | 14.8 | 3.7 | 1999 |

Confidence in Military

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 31.9 | 49.1 | 16.6 | 2.5 | 1497 |
| 1974 | 39.3 | 44.5 | 13.8 | 2.4 | 1483 |
| 1975 | 34.7 | 46.8 | 14.1 | 4.3 | 1486 |
| 1976 | 39.8 | 41.0 | 13.3 | 5.9 | 1491 |
| 1977 | 36.3 | 50.8 | 10.1 | 2.8 | 1527 |
| 1978 | 29.6 | 54.6 | 12.9 | 2.9 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 28.3 | 52.0 | 16.1 | 3.7 | 1468 |
| 1982 | 29.9 | 52.9 | 15.2 | 2.0 | 1503 |
| 1983 | 30.1 | 54.1 | 12.9 | 2.9 | 1595 |
| 1984 | 36.7 | 48.6 | 12.1 | 2.6 | 972 |
| 1986 | 31.2 | 53.0 | 13.3 | 2.4 | 1466 |
| 1987 | 35.7 | 49.6 | 11.9 | 2.8 | 1462 |
| 1988 | 34.7 | 49.7 | 12.3 | 3.3 | 996 |
| 1989 | 32.8 | 50.4 | 13.2 | 3.6 | 1019 |
| 1990 | 33.2 | 49.5 | 13.9 | 3.4 | 892 |
| 1991 | 60.6 | 32.0 | 5.6 | 1.7 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 41.2 | 45.7 | 11.4 | 1.7 | 1060 |
| 1994 | 37.6 | 48.6 | 11.8 | 2.0 | 1981 |
| 1996 | 38.6 | 47.7 | 10.4 | 3.3 | 1916 |
| 1998 | 36.3 | 48.6 | 12.7 | 2.4 | 1883 |
| 2000 | 39.7 | 47.6 | 9.5 | 3.2 | 1888 |
| 2002 | 55.8 | 36.0 | 6.6 | 1.5 | 893 |
| 2004 | 58.3 | 33.0 | 8.3 | 0.4 | 879 |
| 2006 | 47.1 | 39.1 | 12.3 | 1.4 | 2001 |

Confidence in Major Companies

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----|------|
| 1973 | 29.2 | 53.4 | 11.2 | 6.1 | 1500 |
| 1974 | 31.3 | 51.1 | 14.3 | 3.3 | 1483 |
| 1975 | 19.4 | 53.8 | 21.7 | 5.1 | 1483 |
| 1976 | 21.2 | 52.6 | 21.9 | 4.4 | 1491 |
| 1977 | 27.1 | 56.8 | 12.4 | 3.8 | 1527 |
| 1978 | 21.2 | 59.4 | 15.7 | 3.7 | 1529 |
| 1980 | 26.9 | 54.3 | 14.1 | 4.7 | 1467 |
| 1982 | 22.9 | 58.6 | 13.7 | 4.8 | 1503 |
| 1983 | 24.4 | 58.4 | 13.3 | 3.9 | 1595 |
| 1984 | 30.7 | 58.2 | 8.2 | 3.0 | 975 |
| 1986 | 24.7 | 62.3 | 9.5 | 3.4 | 1466 |
| 1987 | 30.4 | 57.2 | 8.4 | 3.9 | 1464 |
| 1988 | 24.8 | 60.3 | 10.6 | 4.2 | 994 |
| 1989 | 25.0 | 60.6 | 9.5 | 5.0 | 1019 |
| 1990 | 25.6 | 60.0 | 11.0 | 3.5 | 891 |
| 1991 | 19.8 | 62.3 | 13.1 | 4.7 | 1022 |
| 1993 | 21.3 | 63.2 | 12.1 | 3.4 | 1062 |
| 1994 | 26.3 | 61.6 | 9.2 | 2.9 | 1986 |
| 1996 | 24.0 | 59.1 | 13.0 | 3.9 | 1916 |
| 1998 | 26.5 | 56.7 | 12.8 | 4.1 | 1885 |
| 2000 | 28.4 | 57.6 | 10.2 | 3.9 | 1892 |
| 2002 | 17.3 | 63.8 | 16.6 | 2.4 | 892 |
| 2004 | 18.4 | 62.8 | 17.2 | 1.6 | 880 |
| 2006 | 17.9 | 62.0 | 17.8 | 2.3 | 1999 |

Confidence in Banks

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1975 | 31.4 | 55.1 | 10.6 | 2.9 | 1488 |
| 1976 | 39.0 | 49.0 | 9.9 | 2.1 | 1492 |
| 1977 | 42.0 | 48.0 | 8.4 | 1.6 | 1527 |
| 1978 | 32.0 | 55.1 | 11.7 | 1.2 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 31.8 | 50.6 | 15.3 | 2.3 | 1464 |
| 1982 | 26.7 | 54.6 | 17.0 | 1.7 | 1502 |
| 1983 | 23.4 | 58.8 | 15.6 | 2.2 | 1596 |
| 1984 | 30.5 | 56.6 | 10.7 | 2.1 | 971 |
| 1986 | 20.7 | 60.5 | 17.0 | 1.9 | 1466 |
| 1987 | 27.5 | 57.1 | 13.4 | 2.0 | 1464 |
| 1988 | 26.9 | 57.3 | 13.4 | 2.4 | 996 |
| 1989 | 18.5 | 59.2 | 19.2 | 3.1 | 1019 |
| 1990 | 16.7 | 58.6 | 22.2 | 2.5 | 892 |
| 1991 | 12.0 | 52.0 | 34.2 | 1.8 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 14.5 | 56.7 | 26.9 | 1.9 | 1061 |
| 1994 | 18.1 | 61.1 | 19.8 | 1.0 | 1983 |
| 1996 | 24.5 | 56.7 | 16.4 | 2.3 | 1912 |
| 1998 | 26.0 | 55.9 | 15.9 | 2.1 | 1884 |
| 2000 | 29.5 | 54.6 | 13.7 | 2.3 | 1888 |
| 2002 | 22.3 | 58.3 | 17.6 | 1.7 | 893 |
| 2004 | 29.3 | 56.9 | 13.0 | 0.9 | 880 |
| 2006 | 29.7 | 55.8 | 13.3 | 1.3 | 2001 |

Confidence in Organized Labor

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 15.6 | 54.8 | 26.1 | 3.6 | 1493 |
| 1974 | 19.0 | 53.4 | 25.2 | 2.4 | 1481 |
| 1975 | 9.6 | 54.7 | 29.6 | 6.1 | 1488 |
| 1976 | 11.5 | 48.5 | 32.6 | 7.4 | 1494 |
| 1977 | 14.8 | 50.8 | 30.9 | 3.5 | 1525 |
| 1978 | 11.3 | 46.6 | 37.4 | 4.6 | 1528 |
| 1980 | 15.1 | 51.2 | 28.8 | 4.9 | 1467 |
| 1982 | 13.1 | 53.3 | 29.7 | 3.9 | 1501 |
| 1983 | 8.4 | 48.7 | 39.1 | 3.8 | 1596 |
| 1984 | 8.5 | 53.3 | 36.3 | 2.0 | 973 |
| 1986 | 8.8 | 47.6 | 38.8 | 4.8 | 1465 |
| 1987 | 10.5 | 51.3 | 33.5 | 4.7 | 1462 |
| 1988 | 10.9 | 50.2 | 33.9 | 5.0 | 994 |
| 1989 | 9.3 | 51.2 | 33.4 | 6.1 | 1019 |
| 1990 | 10.7 | 53.6 | 30.6 | 5.1 | 889 |
| 1991 | 11.3 | 48.6 | 34.6 | 5.5 | 1021 |
| 1993 | 7.8 | 53.7 | 32.4 | 6.2 | 1060 |
| 1994 | 10.6 | 52.6 | 32.0 | 4.9 | 1983 |
| 1996 | 11.1 | 50.6 | 30.1 | 8.1 | 1915 |
| 1998 | 10.9 | 52.5 | 28.9 | 7.7 | 1884 |
| 2000 | 13.0 | 51.3 | 26.1 | 9.5 | 1888 |
| 2002 | 11.6 | 59.6 | 23.4 | 5.3 | 892 |
| 2004 | 12.9 | 54.0 | 28.2 | 5.0 | 877 |
| 2006 | 11.7 | 55.4 | 27.6 | 5.3 | 2001 |

Confidence in Clergy

| | A great deal | Only some | Hardly any | DK | N |
|------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1973 | 34.5 | 46.4 | 15.8 | 3.3 | 1495 |
| 1974 | 44.5 | 42.8 | 10.9 | 1.9 | 1482 |
| 1975 | 23.8 | 48.2 | 21.4 | 6.5 | 1484 |
| 1976 | 30.2 | 45.3 | 18.3 | 6.2 | 1491 |
| 1977 | 39.6 | 45.8 | 11.2 | 3.4 | 1526 |
| 1978 | 30.6 | 48.3 | 17.6 | 3.5 | 1526 |
| 1980 | 35.2 | 43.1 | 18.0 | 3.7 | 1466 |
| 1982 | 32.2 | 49.7 | 14.9 | 3.1 | 1504 |
| 1983 | 28.6 | 50.1 | 17.6 | 3.7 | 1591 |
| 1984 | 30.7 | 47.5 | 18.7 | 3.2 | 973 |
| 1986 | 25.0 | 51.1 | 20.7 | 3.2 | 1467 |
| 1987 | 29.0 | 50.0 | 18.3 | 2.7 | 1460 |
| 1988 | 20.5 | 47.6 | 28.9 | 3.0 | 996 |
| 1989 | 21.7 | 45.9 | 29.4 | 3.0 | 1017 |
| 1990 | 22.7 | 48.7 | 23.7 | 4.8 | 891 |
| 1991 | 25.1 | 53.2 | 19.6 | 2.0 | 1022 |
| 1993 | 22.6 | 50.1 | 24.4 | 2.9 | 1059 |
| 1994 | 25.0 | 51.8 | 21.1 | 2.1 | 1984 |
| 1996 | 25.3 | 50.9 | 19.0 | 4.7 | 1914 |
| 1998 | 26.6 | 51.9 | 18.3 | 3.2 | 1882 |
| 2000 | 27.6 | 49.5 | 18.4 | 4.5 | 1892 |
| 2002 | 18.9 | 56.2 | 23.1 | 1.8 | 892 |
| 2004 | 23.5 | 52.3 | 22.4 | 1.8 | 877 |
| 2006 | 24.1 | 51.7 | 21.7 | 2.5 | 1996 |

Figure 1
Trends of Confidence in Executive Branch of Federal Government by Party Identification, 1973-2006

