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Background

The American Bar Association sponsored a comprehensive nationwide survey on the U.S. justice system among the general population. These findings were discussed at Symposium II: Public Understanding and Perceptions of the American Justice System (February 1999) among key educators, members of the judiciary and the organized bar, members of the media, and representatives of key community leaders. Part of the discussion at that symposium were about people's perceptions of the current state of the justice system and what needs to be done to continue to instill confidence in it. The findings from this research were used as stimuli for that discussion and, subsequently, will be published and distributed to: U.S. boards of education, colleges with teacher training programs, chief justices of state supreme courts, federal judges, local bar association leadership members, editorial boards, and education reporters.

Objectives

The stated objectives of this research are the following:

- Assess the public's current understanding of the justice system.
- Identify the public's current attitudes toward the justice system.
- Understand what drives those attitudes.
 - Do people with a better understanding of the justice system have more positive or negative attitudes toward it?
 - Do people who have had personal experience with the justice system hold more positive or negative attitudes toward it?
 - How do demographic characteristics influence understanding of and attitudes toward the justice system?
- Identify the key sources of information about and knowledge of the justice system.
 - What do those with a comparatively greater understanding of the justice system identify as their primary sources of information and knowledge? How do these sources vary from the sources of those who have a comparatively lesser understanding of the justice system?
 - Where do those with a more positive attitude toward the justice system get their knowledge and information?

- Where possible, illustrate how the public's attitudes toward and confidence in the justice system have changed by comparing and contrasting current findings to previous research on the justice system.

Sample

The sample consisted of one thousand respondents age eighteen and older. To minimize bias, respondent selection was based on the adult in the household next to celebrate a birthday. The primary language was either English or Spanish. The Spanish-speaking respondents had the option to be interviewed in Spanish via a translated version of the questionnaire. A demographic profile of the respondents who completed the interview includes:

- ➔ Gender: Men (46%), Women (54%)
- ➔ Age: 18-34 (26%), 35-54 (50%), 55 and older (23%)
- ➔ Race/Ethnicity: White (83%), African American (8%), Hispanic (3%), Other (6%)
- ➔ Level of Education: High school or less (31%), College (50%), Post Grad (19%)
- ➔ Income: Less than \$35,000 (35%), \$35,000 to less than \$75,000 (43%), \$75,000 or more (16%)
- ➔ Registered Voter: Yes (87%), No (13%)
- ➔ Used Lawyer: Yes (46%), No (54%)
- ➔ Experience as a litigant (70%)
- ➔ Experience as a juror (27%)

The sample closely matches the profile of both the United States population and an in-person study conducted by Yankelovich in 1978 (Table 1 in the appendix).

Methodology

The questionnaire was developed based on measures from previous research over the past 20 years sponsored by the United States government and corporations. Minor wording changes were made based on the objectives of this study, and some new questions were also added. Where possible, direct comparisons are made to previous findings. Two pre-tests helped refine the attitude statements and the overall questionnaire. Input was also solicited from the ABA planning committee for Symposium II: Public Understanding and Perceptions of the American Justice System.

- The first pre-test consisted of fifty in-person interviews. A factor analysis was conducted on the attitude statements to reduce the number of statements by determining which measures were most discriminating.
- A revised questionnaire was reviewed by the ABA member-based Steering Committee, which determined that a second pre-test of the attitude statements should be conducted.
- The second pre-test focused only on the attitude statements and on one new question regarding improvement of the justice system. It was conducted among fifty respondents via telephone interviews. The attitude statements were again factor analyzed. The results from both pre-tests were synthesized to derive the final set of attitude statements.

For the primary study, telephone interviews were conducted from August 6-31, 1998. The survey averaged 28 minutes in length. Respondents were called on a random digit dial basis nationwide.

Each respondent was asked the following:

- Self rating of perceived knowledge of the justice system
- Series of questions to derive level of knowledge of the justice system
- Confidence in several institutions/professions in American society
- Fifty attitude statements regarding:
 - The U.S. justice system in general.
 - Courts.
 - Judges.
 - Lawyers.
 - Police/Law Enforcement Officials.
- Past experience with the justice system
 - In court.
 - As a juror.
 - With a lawyer.
- Information sources
 - Rating of importance of sources.
 - Sources of education on the justice system.
 - Desire to learn more about the justice system/Sources interested from which to learn.
- Feelings about suggestions to improve the justice system
- Classification/Demographics

The questionnaire is appended to this report.

Executive Summary

The American Bar Association commissioned a national survey to: (1) assess the public's current understanding of and confidence in the justice system; (2) identify the public's sources of information about the justice system; and (3) understand what factors drive public attitudes. The survey, which included 1,000 randomly selected respondents age 18 and older, was conducted by telephone interviews between August 6 and August 31 of 1998 by M/A/R/C® Research, an independent Chicago research firm.

Respondents were asked to: (1) self rate their perceived knowledge; (2) answer a series of factual questions about the justice system; (3) define their confidence in a variety of institutions and professions; (4) rate 50 attitude statements; (5) identify current and preferred information sources; (6) discuss past experience with the justice system; and (7) provide suggestions for improving the administration of justice.

Some of the key findings of this study include the following:

- People strongly believe in the justice system, though they also identify areas that warrant improvement.
- People have confidence in the overall justice system, though the amount of that confidence varies for specific components of the system. Further, that confidence can be influenced over time and by level of knowledge, positive court experience, and personal demographic traits.
- People's knowledge of the justice system is uneven. They recognize some obscure tenets but still lack knowledge about more basic ones.
- Certain attitudes can influence people's confidence in the justice system. There are some confidence drivers that already show quite positive public attitudes. These attitudes should be maintained and strengthened. There are other areas that also influence confidence, but currently show more negative attitudes. These negative attitudes that work against confidence need to be addressed as areas for improvement.

I. Strong Support for the American Justice System

A. Confidence in the American justice system overall

At least conceptually, there is strong support for the justice system. The data indicate that 80% of all respondents either strongly agree or agree, based on a 5-point scale, that "in spite of its problems, the American justice system is still the best in the world." Further, the root of this support seems to lie in the jury system, as more than three-quarters, 78%, say it is the fairest way

to determine guilt or innocence, and more than two-thirds, 69%, believe that juries are the most important part of our justice system.

B. Confidence in the justice system, its individual components, and other U.S. institutions

Confidence in the justice system was also measured in relation to confidence in component parts of the justice system, and in relation to confidence in other U.S. institutions. Specifically, respondents were asked to rate their confidence in seventeen different institutions in American society, including the overall justice system, particular components of the justice system, other professions and institutions, and the media.

Respondents have the most confidence in the U.S. Supreme Court, with 50% showing strong confidence in this institution and only 15% having slight or no confidence in it. Confidence in other federal courts, in judges, and in the justice system overall is not as strong, with about a third of the respondents extremely or very confident in each institution. Strong confidence in the U.S. Congress is shown by only 18% of the respondents. Strong confidence in lawyers is shown only by 14% of the respondents. The media fared the worst, with strong confidence from only 8% of the respondents and slight or no confidence from 60% of the respondents. This suggests that while a clear majority believes in the justice system there is wide variation in how much confidence people have in the specific institutions that comprise it.

C. Variations in confidence by type of respondent

The current study identified variations in confidence by type of respondent. It found that those with more knowledge have more confidence in the system; that those who have had positive court experiences also tend to have more confidence in the system; and that males, people with higher incomes and higher levels of education are more confident than other demographic groups.

D. Confidence Levels: 1978 vs. 1998

Respondents were asked the same questions about confidence in the 1978 Yankelovich study, which allows us to assess changes in confidence over the past 20 years. Confidence in some key components of the justice system showed significant increases since the Yankelovich study was conducted. The levels of confidence in all kinds of courts—the U.S. Supreme Court, other federal courts, and state and local courts—have increased. Confidence in the local police also increased significantly. On the other hand, confidence in doctors, organized religion, public schools, the U.S. Congress, and, most notably, the media decreased.

E. Influence of knowledge and court experience on confidence

One of the key conclusions of the Yankelovich study, which became the basis for many programs, was, “Those having knowledge and experience with the court voice the greatest dissatisfaction and criticism.” But the current study, along with other research, refutes that conclusion. Specifically, it reveals that the more knowledge people have about the justice system the greater their confidence in the justice system overall as well as in a whole host of its components. In all of the cases identified, people with greater knowledge have significantly more confidence in the justice system than do those with lower levels of knowledge. (“Levels of knowledge” refers to

factual information about the courts and the justice system.) Further, people with positive court experiences were also more likely to have greater confidence in the justice system than those who had negative court experiences. There are significant differences in confidence for all parts of the system, except that few people, regardless of experience, have confidence in lawyers and the legal profession.

The findings from this research are supported by a number of studies cited in a recent article from *Judicature*, titled “Familiarity Breeds Respect: How Wisconsin Citizens View Their Courts,” Volume 82, Number 2, September/October 1998, page 58. In particular, a Wisconsin study found that general support for the justice system went up in response to specific positive experiences and down in response to specific negative experiences. A 1992 study conducted in Virginia had similar results, showing that respondents who had more *recent* court experiences had more positive perceptions of the courts and of the justice system’s performance than did those respondents who had no court experience.

The present study found that if people have good court experiences, their feelings did not change; basically, they still felt good about the courts. In fact, 82% of the people did not change their perceptions of the justice system. However, if people’s most recent court experience was negative, their perceptions either stayed the same or changed negatively. This suggests that improving people’s perceptions of the justice system through court experience alone may prove a difficult task. Those with positive experiences are probably not going to improve their perceptions but those with negative experiences have a good chance of becoming even more negative.

The current study also considered whether people’s confidence was affected by how removed in time they were from their court experience. No effect was found; regardless of whether a person’s experience was less than a year ago, or at least one year ago, the levels of confidence were the same.

Thus, this research concludes that knowledge and experience do influence a person’s confidence in the justice system, and that, contrary to the Yankelovich study, those having more knowledge and those having positive court experiences are more satisfied and less critical of the system. Indeed, in the previously cited article from *Judicature*, Herbert Kritzer, professor and chair of political science and professor of law at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and John Voelker, assistant to the chief justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, found after reanalyzing the Yankelovich data, that “It is not clear that the linkage described twenty years ago actually existed.” A re-analysis of the data does not show statistical evidence to support the Yankelovich conclusion.

F. Demographic characteristics of people with the most confidence in the justice system overall

In addition to tracking confidence by knowledge and court experiences, the study looked for the demographic characteristics of people with the most confidence in the justice system. It found that they are more likely to be men, those who have higher incomes, those who are more educated, and those who have positive litigant and juror experience.

Further, there are no consistent differences in confidence along ethnic lines. About the same number of whites and non-whites are extremely or very confident in the overall justice system. The definition of non-white includes African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and others. In spite of a large total sample, 1,000 respondents, there are not enough people to break out separately most of the ethnic groups. Therefore, they are grouped together, with African Americans making up the majority of non-whites.

It should be noted, however, that while overall confidence in the justice system shows no consistent patterns based on race/ethnicity, specific attitudes toward the system do vary between whites and non-whites, with whites holding more positive attitudes in many areas, particularly those that relate to equality of treatment.

II. People's Knowledge of the Justice System

In order to measure knowledge of the justice system, respondents were asked a series of seventeen questions to identify:

- The three branches of government
- The function of each branch
- The U.S. Chief Justice
- The accuracy of ten statements pertaining to the function of courts.

A. Unevenness of people's knowledge of the system

The data from this study indicate that people's knowledge of the justice system is quite uneven. On the one hand, there is some information that virtually all people know. For example, 99% know one of the basic tenets of our system—that anyone accused of a crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer; and 96% know the relatively obscure concept that a defendant who is found “not guilty” in a criminal trial can still be sued in a civil trial. (One could hypothesize that people learned this information from the widespread media coverage of the O.J. Simpson trials.) On the other hand, fewer people—two-thirds—know another of our system's most basic tenets, that a criminal defendant is innocent until proven guilty. This means, astonishingly, a third of the respondents believe that the defendant must prove innocence rather than that the prosecutor must prove guilt.

Respondents were asked, in two stages, about the branches of government. First, they were asked on an unaided basis to identify the three branches of government. Only 39% could identify all three and a quarter of the respondents could not identify any of the branches of government. This was surprising since the three branches of government are taught in basic civics and government classes and at least one, if not all, are frequently in the news. It should also be noted that the definition of a correct identification was quite liberal: a person could say the “President,” the “Supreme Court,” or the “House of Representatives” and be classified as correctly identifying a branch. Most people were aware of the judicial and legislative branches, with about two-thirds mentioning each individually, while half identified the executive branch.

After this question, respondents were told the three branches of government and were asked whether the function of each was to make laws, interpret laws or enforce laws. Again, there was only fair knowledge of basic tenets. While most people understood that the legislature makes laws, there was some confusion about the functions of the judicial and executive branches. While about half knew the judicial branch interprets laws, just as many thought its function was to enforce laws. Likewise, while almost half correctly answered that the executive branch enforces laws, some thought it makes laws and some thought it interprets laws. Further, very few people, 17%, could identify William Rehnquist as the United States Chief Justice. An equal number wrongly answered the question, and most, 67%, indicated that they simply did not know. (Given Chief Justice Rehnquist’s recent media exposure in the Senate impeachment trial, however, a survey conducted today might well yield different results.)

When one considers the varying degrees of knowledge across all the questions asked, only 26% of the total sample can be considered highly knowledgeable about the justice system. That means only 26% of the people answered thirteen to seventeen of the questions correctly. Just as many people, 24%, were found to have a low level of knowledge, answering at most only seven questions correctly. Though everyone answered at least one question correctly, one person answered only one correctly.

Further, it was not surprising to find that people who are most knowledgeable are those who have the most confidence in the justice system. They tend to be white, middle-aged, male, more educated, and with higher incomes. In addition, they are more likely to have had experience with the justice system either with lawyers or through litigation.

B. Demographic differences in levels of knowledge

Looking at the data in more detail, significant differences are apparent between whites and non-whites, between men and women, among those 35 to 54 years old and based on whether or not a person had experience with lawyers and litigation. The most dramatic differences lie in the levels of education and income. Those with post graduate degrees, and those who earn more than \$75,000 a year are much more likely than others to be knowledgeable about the justice system.

C. Sources of people's knowledge, by relative importance

When asked where they get their knowledge, most people name school – grade school, high school and, to a lesser extent, college. A substantial number of people, 67%, also say they get their knowledge through personal experience. When respondents were asked about the importance of a variety of information sources, they identified personal experience, schools, and libraries as the most important. Jury duty also is considered important by more than half the people as one form of personal experience. At the other extreme, all forms of media or entertainment, such as movies, videos, television dramas, court programs such as People's Court or Judge Judy, are considered the least important information sources.

When people's rankings of the various sources of information are analyzed in relation to their level of knowledge about the justice system, some interesting differences emerge. Personal experience, schools, books, jury duty and attorneys are equally important to all people. However, all forms of media, such as television news, local newspapers, radio news and even television dramas are significantly more important to people with less knowledge than to people with more knowledge. This clearly suggests that the media can and do impact some people's knowledge base.

Finally, people were asked from whom they want to learn about the justice system. They want to learn from the people who are involved in it and whom they consider most important – current and retired judges and educators. While a little more than half the people want to learn about the justice system from lawyers, this is relatively low compared to the 75% who said they wanted to learn from judges.

While it may be that people view judges as credible information sources, most people, 51%, do not agree that judges are not paid enough. However, most, 54%, do agree that they are extremely well qualified for their jobs. And while most believe that judges contribute to their communities, about a third believe judges do not contribute enough. Education programs involving judges would be a way to improve people's knowledge of the system and promote judges' civic-mindedness.

III. Attitudes That Drive Confidence in the System

The study identified several attitudinal areas that correlate strongly with confidence in the system (or lack there of). Some of these areas already exhibit quite positive public attitudes, which should be maintained. Other attitude areas are strongly correlated with confidence, but currently show more negative attitudes which in turn diminish confidence in the system. These negative attitudes represent areas for improvement.

A. Attitudes to be maintained

There are three attitudinal areas that should be maintained. These are respondents' beliefs that: 1) Our justice system is the best in the world, and juries are the fairest way to judge guilt or innocence; 2) court personnel know their jobs and are courteous and polite; and 3) most people have easy access to legal services and lawyers.

B. Attitudes to be addressed—areas for improvement

On the other hand, there are attitudes that need to be addressed. Respondents believe that court costs are too high; that court matters take too long to resolve; that certain groups are not treated fairly in court; that judges and lawyers should perform more community service. There is also room for improvement in their perception of lawyers. Each of these will be discussed individually below.

Respondents were asked whether tax dollars should be used for various programs identified by the ABA as possible improvements to the justice system. Almost all respondents felt tax dollars should be spent for educational programs about the various branches of government and the justice system. They also supported, but to a lesser degree, programs that would make the courts easier to use, such as the hiring of translators.

1. Court costs, duration

Most people, 69%, believe that it is easy to find a lawyer, if needed, and more than half, 54%, believe legal services and courts are easy to access. But three-quarters of the people believe it takes too long to go to court and it costs too much. It is important to change the view that the judicial system is too laborious and costs too much.

2. Lawyers

It also is important to work to improve people's perceptions of lawyers, which vary based on their own experiences. If their experience was positive, they are more likely to have positive perceptions of lawyers. If their experience was negative, they are more likely to have negative perceptions. Further, lawyers are often perceived to be more concerned about their own interests than the public's or the clients'. Finally, lawyers are not considered as civic-minded as judges, and as a result, people do not have much confidence in them.

3. Equality of treatment

A substantial number of people believe that the justice system treats different groups of people unequally. Only about half of the respondents agree that men and women are treated equally; even fewer believe that among racial or ethnic groups or between wealthy and poor people the treatment is equal. In fact, if the data are analyzed by sub-groups, those differences become even more pronounced. People who are less likely to agree that sub-groups are treated equally include women, non-whites, those with lower incomes and less education and those with negative court experiences. These people are the mirror images of those who are more knowledgeable and have more confidence in the justice system – more educated, higher income, white males. Men are more likely and women are less likely to agree that the system treats men and women equally; whites are more likely and non-whites are less likely to agree that the system treats different racial

and ethnic groups the same; likewise for the statements about income. This suggests that perceived inequalities still exist. Given this issue's influence on people's confidence, it sorely needs to be addressed.

An important parallel to these results can be seen in the February 1999 issue of the *ABA Journal* entitled "Race and the Law." In a collaborative effort, the *ABA Journal* and the *National Bar Association Magazine* polled 477 white lawyers, 489 black lawyers and 35 lawyers of other ethnic backgrounds. The purposes of this research were to identify lawyers' perceptions of the justice system and to understand *what differences in perception may exist based on race*. The study found that perceptions of racism in the justice system among lawyers of different races are similar to the perceptions among the general population we have discussed above. In some cases, the differences are even larger. It is thus imperative that the issue of inequality be addressed in society as a whole as well as within the legal profession.

4. Lenience in sentencing

Anywhere from one half to three-quarters of respondents feel that convicted criminals have too many opportunities to appeal (72%), that they are set free on too many technicalities (68%), and that they are not given severe enough punishment (52%). On the other hand, more than half, 56%, favor alternative sentencing, such as community service, over jail time.

IV. Conclusion

This study clearly shows that there is strong support for and a firm belief in the justice system. Additionally, it identifies several ways of increasing confidence in the system: through education, to improve people's current uneven knowledge of the system; through actual court experiences; and through focusing on key attitudes that drive confidence among targeted demographic groups.

Knowledge

Levels of Knowledge About the U.S. Justice System

Levels of knowledge were determined two ways:

- ➔ A self-assessment question
- ➔ Derived levels of knowledge, based on seventeen factual questions

Self-Assessment

Respondents were asked to assess their own level of knowledge about the justice system, through the question “In general, how knowledgeable do you consider yourself to be about the U.S. justice system?”

Overall, 72% of the respondents indicated they were very or somewhat knowledgeable about the U.S. justice system. Less than 10% considered themselves very knowledgeable. Almost two-thirds (63%) felt they were somewhat knowledgeable. Very few people (4%) considered themselves not at all knowledgeable.

	<u>Total</u> <u>(1000)</u>
	%
<u>Somewhat/Very knowledgeable</u>	<u>72</u>
Very knowledgeable	9
Somewhat knowledgeable	63
<u>Not very/Not at all knowledgeable</u>	<u>28</u>
Not very knowledgeable	24
Not at all knowledgeable	4

Self-Assessment: Demographic Profile

A demographic breakdown illustrates differences in what distinguishes the very/somewhat knowledgeable respondents from the rest.

There are significantly more men than women who believe themselves to be very/somewhat knowledgeable. Women may be more willing to admit that they do not know about the justice system. On the other hand, men may be more likely to be in positions, both personally and professionally, that require them to be more knowledgeable.

Those with self-assessed higher levels of knowledge tend to have higher incomes, have higher education, and be older. This is logical, since younger people may not have had the opportunity to earn advanced degrees, which lead to higher incomes. In the process of obtaining advanced degrees, some people (besides those in law school) could potentially study portions of the justice system.

	<u>Men</u> (460)	<u>Women</u> (540)	<u>Income</u>			<u>Education</u>		
			<u><\$35K</u> (348)	<u>\$35K- <\$75K</u> (425)	<u>\$75K+</u> (160)	<u>High School or Less</u> (307)	<u>Some College/ College Grad</u> (499)	<u>Post Grad</u> (191)
			% A	% B	% C	% D	% E	% F
Base:	78 B	66	65	75 C	76 C	61	73 F	84 FG
Very knowledgeable	13 B	6	6	9	15 CD	6	7	19 FG
Somewhat knowledgeable	65	61	58	66 C	61	55	66 F	66 F
<u>Not very/ Not at all knowledgeable</u>	22	33 A	34 DE	25	24	38 GH	27 H	15
Not very Knowledgeable	19	28 A	28	23	21	28 H	25 H	14
Not at all Knowledgeable	3	5 A	6 D	2	3	9 GH	2	1
Don't know	1	1	2 DE	0	0	2 G	0	1

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Registered voters also believe themselves to be more knowledgeable about the justice system. Perhaps out of a desire to make an informed choice at the polls these respondents are paying special attention to current events, many of which relate to the justice system. There were no meaningful differences by ethnicity.

These differences make sense, and suggest that educational efforts need to be targeted more toward lower income, less educated people who may not have had direct experience with the system.

Base:	Ethnicity		Age			Registered Voters	
	White (828)	Non-White (145)	18-34 (263)	35-54 (503)	55 + (233)	Yes (870)	No (125)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
<u>Very/somewhat knowledgeable</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>75</u> G	<u>49</u>
Very knowledgeable	9	6	6	10 c	11 C	9	7
Somewhat knowledgeable	62	63	64	62	61	66 G	42
<u>Not very/Not at all knowledgeable</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>50</u> F
Not very knowledgeable	25	19	25	25	22	22	36 F
Not at all knowledgeable	3	11 A	4	3	5	3	14 F
Don't know	1	1	1 D	-	2 D	1	2

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Not surprisingly, respondents who had used lawyers and those respondents with experience as a litigant considered themselves more knowledgeable about the justice system than those with no experience.

	Used Lawyer		Litigant Experience	
	Yes (458)	No (540)	Yes (696)	No (304)
	%	%	%	%
	A	B	C	D
<u>Very/somewhat knowledgeable</u>	<u>77</u> B	<u>67</u>	<u>75</u> D	<u>64</u>
Very knowledgeable	11 B	7	11 D	4
Somewhat knowledgeable	66 b	60	64	60
<u>Not very/Not at all knowledgeable</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>32</u> A	<u>25</u>	<u>35</u> C
Not very knowledgeable	20	27 A	22	28 c
Not at all knowledgeable	2	6 A	2	8 C
Don't know	1	1	1	0

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Number of Correct Answers

An index of the actual levels of knowledge was derived based on the number of correct answers respondents provided to a series of seventeen factual questions.

In this series of questions, respondents were asked to identify the three branches of government, the function of the branches, who the U.S. Chief Justice is, and to indicate whether statements pertaining to the function of courts were true or false.

- Examples of these statements include: “If you go to court, you are required to have a lawyer” and “Everyone accused of a crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer.”

Respondents were categorized as follows:

<u>Level of Knowledge</u>	<u># of Answers Correct</u>	<u>Total Respondents</u>
High	13-17	26 %
Medium	8-12	50 %
Low	0-7	24 %

One-fourth of the respondents had a high level of knowledge about the justice system. Half of the respondents had a medium level of knowledge; the remaining quarter of respondents had a low level of knowledge.

A discussion of the components follows, which shows where respondents were knowledgeable and where they were not.

The Seventeen Questions Used to Determine Levels of Actual Knowledge:

Only 39% of the total respondents could spontaneously identify the three branches of government; they were most aware of the judicial and legislative branches, with about two-thirds mentioning each individually. Half the respondents identified the executive branch.

One-fourth of the respondents was not able to identify any branches of the government.

	<u>Total</u> (1000) %
Aware of all three branches (Net)	39
<u>Judicial Branch (Net)</u>	<u>61</u>
Judicial Branch	60
Courts	1
<u>Legislative Branch (Net)</u>	<u>61</u>
Legislative Branch	45
Congress	12
Senate	9
House of Representatives	8
<u>Executive Branch (Net)</u>	<u>50</u>
Executive Branch	45
President	6
Don't Know Any	25

All respondents were then told the three branches of government and asked to identify whether the function of each was to make laws, interpret laws, or enforce laws.

Not only are people highly aware of the legislative branch, they are more knowledgeable about what its function is compared to the other branches. Seventy-nine percent (79%) know that the legislative branch makes laws. There is some confusion regarding the function of the judicial branch. There are as many people who incorrectly think the judicial branch enforces or makes laws as there are people who correctly think it interprets them. Further, while only 41% know that the function of the executive branch is to enforce laws, the others were almost evenly divided in believing the executive branch makes or interprets laws.

	Function		
	Legislative Branch (1000) %	Judicial Branch (1000) %	Executive Branch (1000) %
Base:			
Make Laws	79	8	28
Interpret Laws	10	49	26
Enforce Laws	7	42	41
Don't Know	3	2	5

Note: Correct function is bolded.

Another area where respondents are lacking is in their ability to identify the United States Chief Justice. Less than one-fifth (17%) of the respondents correctly identified William Rehnquist as the United States Chief Justice. Just as many incorrectly named someone else, and two-thirds of the respondents admitted that they simply did not know. However, this question was asked on an open-end basis, requiring recall rather than simple recognition (which is comparatively easier). Given that, it is not surprising that only a minority of respondents could answer correctly.

	Total (1000) %
Justice William Rehnquist	17
Mentioned Someone Else	15
Don't Know	67

Further, ten statements were read to respondents which pertained to the function of courts. Respondents were asked to identify whether the statements were true or false. As in previous studies, some statements were negatively worded while others were positively worded.

It appears respondents found it easier to correctly identify the accurate statements than to correctly identify the inaccurate ones. Virtually all respondents (99%) know that “anyone accused of a crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer.” Further, 96% know that “a defendant found ‘not guilty’ in a criminal trial can still be sued for money damages in a civil trial.” It is possible that this high awareness level is due to the O.J. Simpson trials, which were heavily covered by the media.

Two of the factually incorrect statements were considered true by a majority of the respondents. Over three-fourths of the respondents inaccurately believe that “every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by a federal court.” And nearly everybody (92%) inaccurately believes that “The state and local bar associations ensure that lawyers in each state pass minimum standards.”

The one inaccurate statement people readily identified as such was “If you go to court, you are required to have a lawyer.” Over the years, there have been news stories in the popular press and movies about people who have represented themselves instead of having a lawyer represent them.

One-third of respondents incorrectly believes that “The defendant in a criminal trial must prove his/her innocence.” This is somewhat disturbing since it is a major tenet of our justice system. However, it is consistent with previous research and will be discussed in more detail later.

Of the remaining factually incorrect statements, while a majority were right in their assessments, a substantial number of people (37% - 39%) were not.

	Respondents indicated the statements were:		
	<u>Accurate</u>	<u>Inaccurate</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
	%	%	%
<u>Factually Correct Statements:</u>			
Everyone accused of a crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer	99	1	0
A defendant who is found “not guilty” in a criminal trial can still be sued for money damages in a civil trial	96	4	1
Judges can be disciplined for misconduct	95 <input type="text"/>	4	1
Appellate courts review and sometimes overturn decisions made in trial courts	85 <input type="text"/>	11	5
<u>Factually Incorrect Statements:</u>			
If you go to court, you are required to have a lawyer	11	88 <input type="text"/>	1
The defendant in a criminal trial must prove his/her innocence	37 <input type="text"/>	63 <input type="text"/>	0
All judges are appointed	39	60 <input type="text"/>	1
The civil and criminal justice systems operate according to the same rules of evidence and procedure	39	57 <input type="text"/>	4
Every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by a federal court	78 <input type="text"/>	20	2
The state and local bar associations ensure that lawyers in each state pass minimum standards	92	7	2

How Knowledge of Courts Has Changed

In twenty years, levels of knowledge about the court functions have not changed much, although methodologies and wordings are slightly different. An in-person study by Yankelovich (1978) and a telephone study by the Hearst Corporation (1983) asked questions similar to those in the current study.

Interestingly, over one-third of the respondents in the current study still incorrectly believe that a defendant has to prove his or her innocence. This is back to the level of the findings from twenty years ago. A majority of the respondents also still incorrectly believe that “every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by the supreme/federal court.”

	<u>Accurate</u>	<u>Inaccurate</u>	<u>Uncertain</u>
	%	%	%
In a criminal trial, it is up to the person who is accused of a crime to prove his innocence (Yankelovich, 1978)	37	56	7
In a criminal trial, it is up to the person who is accused of a crime to prove his innocence (Hearst, 1983)	50	46	4
The defendant in a criminal trial must prove his/her innocence (MARC, 1998)	37	63	0
Every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court (Yankelovich, 1978)	72	12	16
Every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court (Hearst, 1983)	77	11	12
Every decision made by a state court can be reviewed and reversed by a federal court (MARC, 1998)	78	20	2

The slight wording change in the third comparison shows that three-fifths of the respondents in both studies correctly know that the statement about judges being appointed is inaccurate. By eliminating reference to the term of appointment, the level of uncertainty was reduced, but it appears that the respondents moved from being uncertain to incorrectly thinking the statement was true.

Over the years, there has been no change in respondent knowledge about the right to representation. Practically all respondents are aware of this right.

	<u>Accurate</u> %	<u>Inaccurate</u> %	<u>Uncertain</u> %
All judges in this state are appointed for life (Yankelovich, 1978)	16	63	21
All judges are appointed (MARC, 1998)	39	60	1
Everyone accused of a serious crime has the right to be represented by a lawyer (Yankelovich, 1978)	93	2	5
Everyone accused of a serious crime has the right to be represented by a lawyer (Hearst, 1983)	97	3	0
Everyone accused of a crime has the right to be represented in court by a lawyer (MARC, 1998)	99	1	0

Actual Knowledge of U.S. Justice System
Demographic Profile

A clear demographic profile of knowledgeable people emerged. Respondents who answered the individual questions correctly tended to be white, male, middle-aged (45-54), more educated, registered to vote, and of middle/upper income (\$35,000 or more).

People classified with low levels of knowledge tended to be non-white, female, in the youngest age group (18-24) or the oldest age group (65 or older), not highly educated, not registered to vote, and from lower income households. This suggests that education programs on the justice system would be best directed at the grass roots level.

The profiles based on the self-assessment and the more objective assessment were actually very similar. This suggests that people have fairly accurate self-perceptions of their knowledge of the justice system.

	<u>White</u>	<u>Non-White</u>	<u>Age</u>			<u>Registered Voters</u>	
			<u>18-34</u>	<u>35-54</u>	<u>55+</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Base:	(828)	(172)	(263)	(503)	(233)	(870)	(125)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
<u>Actual</u> <u>Level of</u> <u>Knowledge</u>							
High	28 B	18	21	29 C	24	28 G	10
Medium	52 B	42	51	52	47	51	48
Low	20	40 A	28 D	19	30 D	21	42 F

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Base:			Income			Education		
	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u><\$35K</u>	<u>\$35K- <\$75K</u>	<u>\$75K+</u>	<u>High School or Less</u>	<u>Some College/ College Grad</u>	<u>Post Grad</u>
	(460)	(540)	(348)	(425)	(160)	(307)	(499)	(191)
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Actual Level of Knowledge</u>								
High	34 B	19	14	28 C	41 CD	5	23 F	67 FG
Medium	47	53 a	49	56 ce	48	49 H	60 FH	30
Low	19	28 A	36 DE	17 e	11	47 GH	17 H	3

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Further, those who have used a lawyer are more knowledgeable than those who have not used a lawyer. This would indicate that personal experience can be attributed, at least in part, to an increased level of knowledge about the justice system.

	<u>Used Lawyer</u>	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
	(458)	(540)
	%	%
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
<u>Actual Level of Knowledge</u>		
High	31 B	22
Medium	50	51
Low	19	27 A

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Relationship Between Self-Reported Knowledge and Actual Knowledge Levels

Interestingly, self-reported levels of knowledge parallel the derived levels of actual knowledge. Those who report themselves to be very or somewhat knowledgeable can also demonstrate a significantly higher level of actual knowledge.

There is a direct and significant correlation (.33) between the self-reported levels of knowledge and the derived levels of knowledge. As people say they are more knowledgeable, they get more answers correct.

	Self-Reported Knowledge	
	Very/Somewhat Knowledgeable	Not Very/Not At All Knowledgeable
Base:	(715)	(278)
	%	%
	A	B
<u>Actual Level of Knowledge</u>		
High	32 B	11
Medium	48	57 A
Low	20	32 A

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

In summary, almost three-fourths of the people felt they were very or somewhat knowledgeable about the U.S. justice system. A demographic profile of respondents who declared themselves knowledgeable was very comparable to a profile of those who demonstrated actual knowledge in the factual question series.

For certain areas people are not very knowledgeable, and for other areas they are. They know basic facts, such as the branches of government, but do not specifically know the functions of the branches. Most people are unable to name the United States Chief Justice.

In the next section, we will investigate experiences these respondents have had with the justice system, which will help identify how they obtained their knowledge.

Experience

Experience with the Justice System

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their experience with the courts, with lawyers, and as jurors.

Court Experience

Respondents were asked about any occasions for which they were ever in court. This included all of the experiences they could remember. In order to help them answer more specific questions about their experience and to help us gain more current knowledge from them, we specifically asked them to identify their most recent experience, along with the type of case it was.

These results indicate that most people have had experience in court proceedings at some point in their lives, whether as an active participant in court, a spectator, a court employee, or a visitor on a court tour. Only eleven percent (11%) has had no experience in any capacity whatsoever in court proceedings.

Over three-fourths of respondents (78%) have been in court as an active participant. This includes going to traffic court, being a witness, a juror (either being called to serve or actually serving), a plaintiff, a defendant, or a victim. Passive occasions for past involvement were fairly high, with 54% being a spectator and 33% taking a tour. These situations are described as passive because the respondents did not have a personal stake in the outcome of the situation.

For the most recent time in court, almost three-fourths (73%) were there as active participants, which includes going to traffic court, being a witness, a juror, a plaintiff, a defendant, or a victim. Only 15% were spectators and only 5% were taking a tour for their most recent court experience.

Further, of the twenty-seven percent of the respondents who have ever been called for jury duty, nineteen percent indicated it was the reason for being in court for their most recent experience. A more detailed discussion of experience as a juror is at the end of this section.

The amount of participation in court proceedings has increased in the past twenty years. A study conducted by Yankelovich (1978) reveals that 43% of respondents had ever had court experience (compared to 89% in this study). Although our current definition of court experience was a bit broader, it is interesting to make this comparison.

Base:	Situations For Past Court Involvement (1000) %	Most Recent Time in Court (891) %
<u>Active Participants (Net)</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>73</u>
In Traffic Court	45	24
Witness	32	10
On Jury	27	19
Plaintiff	24	9
Defendant	24	7
Victim	20	4
Spectator in Court	54	15
Tour of Courthouse	33	5
Court Employee	2	1
Police Officer	2	1
Court Reporter	0	0
Something Else	8	5
Don't Know	0	1
No experience	11	N/A

Most Recent Type of Case

Respondents were then asked what type of case their most recent court experience was. Results indicate that almost one-third (32%) of these respondents said their most recent type of case was related to traffic court. Criminal cases were close behind, at 22%. Otherwise, the types of cases were fairly dispersed.

Base:	<u>Last Time in Court</u> (891)
	%
Traffic court	32
Criminal	22
Civil	15
Divorce/Domestic relations	13
Juvenile	5
Small claims	5
Bankruptcy	1
Probate	1
Something else	3
Don't know	3

Recency of Court Experience

The most recent court experience covers a fairly broad time span – from within six months to over five years ago. Specifically, one quarter of these respondents indicated their court experience was within the past year. In contrast, one-third stated it was longer than five years ago.

Base: Had Previous Court Experience	<u>Total</u> (891) %
Less than six months ago	17
Six months ago to less than a year ago	9
One to two years ago	22
Three to five years ago	19
Longer than five years ago	32

Reactions to Court Experience

Only those respondents who had an active role in court, either as a litigant or as a juror, were asked for reactions to their court experiences. Respondents in a passive role, such as a spectator, were not asked this question.

Of those who were either litigants or jurors, 64% gave the trial experience a positive rating, while 34% gave it a negative rating.

	<u>Total</u> (663)
Base: Had Previous Court Experience Other Than Passive	%
Positive	64
Negative	34
Don't Know	3

Positive/Negative Experiences By Role in Court

Examining the litigant or juror experiences further, we found that of those people whose last court experience was traffic court and jury duty, the majority had positive experiences. This could be a function of actively participating in the justice system, thereby seeing first-hand how the system works and understanding why it works as it does.

Of those who were either a witness, a plaintiff, or a defendant, only about half had positive experiences, and if a person was in court as a victim, more often than not it was a negative experience. This suggests that the negative judgment could be a function of why the person was in court to begin with, as well as a function of the outcome of the experience, rather than a function of the experience per se.

	Traffic Court	Jury	Witness	Plaintiff	Defendant	Victim	Something Else
Base: Had Positive/ Negative Experience	(208) % A	(160) % B	(88) % C	(78) % D	(57) % E	(35) % F	(20)* % G
Positive	68 EF	79 AC DEF	58	58	51	43	75 EF
Negative	32 B	21	42 B	42 B	49 ABG	57 ABG	25

* Caution: Small base size.

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Positive/Negative Experience By Type of Case

As we just saw, how a positive or negative experience was affected by the type of role the person had in court, we can also look at the positive or negative experiences by the type of case. Although we do not have the details of these cases, traffic and civil cases were more likely to be perceived as positive experiences than were criminal or domestic relations cases. However, over half of the people involved in criminal and domestic cases still indicated that it was actually a positive experience.

	<u>Traffic</u>	<u>Criminal</u>	<u>Civil</u>	<u>Divorce/ Domestic Relations</u>
Base: Had	(248)	(145)	(90)	(82)
Positive/ Negative Experience	% A	% B	% C	% D
Positive	69 B	57	72 Bd	60
Negative	31	43 AC	28	40 c

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

How Attitude Toward System Changed After Experience

For the most part, having court experience does not change people’s perceptions about the justice system. Almost three-quarters of the people indicated their attitudes remained the same, while the remaining 29% were fairly evenly distributed between positive and negative attitude changes.

	Previous Court Experience
Base:	(891) %
Positive Change	11
Negative Change	18
Remained the Same	71

Among people who viewed their most recent court experience positively and had an active role in court, the majority (82%) indicated that their opinion toward the justice system remained the same. An additional fifteen percent (15%) said there was a positive change in attitude. On the other hand, those who viewed their court experience negatively were much more likely to indicate a negative change in their opinions about the justice system.

	Most Recent Active Court Experience	
	Positive Experience	Negative Experience
Base:	(423) A %	(223) B %
Positive Change	15 B	0
Negative Change	3	52 A
Remained the Same	82 B	48

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

One of the areas which courts can directly help educate the public and thus perhaps influence their opinions, is in providing information on court proceedings. The presence and importance of such materials on court procedures is discussed next.

Impact of Information Regarding Court Procedures

Respondents who had indicated past experience with the courts were asked about available court information. The question was “at any time during your dealings with the court, were you ever given information about the court procedures in the form of a pamphlet, video, or written instructions?” Overall, only about one-fourth of the respondents reported receiving information on court procedures.

	<u>Had Previous Court Experience</u>
Base:	(891)
	%
Received information	24
Did not receive information	75

Who Received Information by the Reason They Were Last in Court

Respondents who did receive information tended to be those on a jury. Respondents who were in traffic court, or who were witnesses, were less likely to receive information. Not surprisingly, spectators were not as likely to receive information.

	Received Information on Court Procedures	
	<u>Yes</u> (214) A %	<u>No</u> (670) B %
Base:		
On a Jury	39 B	12
Traffic Court	17	26 A
Plaintiff	9	9
Spectator	9	17 A
Defendant	6	7
Victim	4	4
On a Tour	4	5
Witness	4	12 A
Court Employee	1	1
Police Officer	1	1
Something Else	5	5

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Further, the likelihood of receiving information varied by case type. People were more likely to receive information in criminal, civil, and bankruptcy proceedings. People who were in traffic court or in divorce proceedings or domestic relations cases were less likely to receive information.

	Received Information on Court Procedures	
	<u>Yes</u> (214) A %	<u>No</u> (670) B %
Base:		
Criminal	30 B	19
Civil	22 B	13
Traffic	22	35 A
Divorce/Domestic Relations	8	15 A
Small Claims	4	5
Juvenile	4	6
Probate	-	1
Bankruptcy	2 b	1
Something Else	3	3
Don't Know	5	3

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Of those who did receive information, 91% indicated it was very or somewhat helpful. Even three-fourths of those with negative court experience found the information to be very or somewhat helpful.

	<u>Total</u> (214)	<u>Most Recent Active Court Experience</u>	
		<u>Positive</u> (136)	<u>Negative</u> (37)
Base: Received Courtroom Information	%	%	%
		A	B
<u>Extremely/Very Helpful</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>96</u> B	<u>79</u>
Very helpful	43	53 B	14
Somewhat helpful	48	43	65 A
Not very helpful	5	2	11 A
Of no use at all	4	2	11 A

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Attitudes About Courts Based on Experience

Respondents rated attitude statements pertaining to various aspects of the justice system. More specifically, there was a series of statements on the courts, lawyers, judges, police, and the justice system itself. A more detailed discussion about attitudes in general follows in the “opinions” portion of this report. Here we will focus on attitudes among those with positive and negative experiences.

In general, people who had a positive experience with the courts were more likely to have positive perceptions and people who had a negative experience with the courts were more likely to have negative perceptions. With regard to most recent experience as a litigant or juror, some expected differences also emerged between respondents who had a positive experience and those who had a negative experience. Those differences include:

- ➔ Respondents with a recent litigant or juror experience that was positive have a more favorable view of the courts’ treatment of minority groups.
- ➔ Similarly, those with a positive experience are more likely to feel that victims are treated fairly.
- ➔ Those with positive court experience are also more likely to rate court employees as knowing their jobs and being courteous and helpful.
- ➔ In contrast, respondents with a negative court experience are more likely to rate courts significantly higher on the statements.
 - “costs too much to go to court”
 - “takes too long”
 - “are just puppets of the political system”
 - “do not make it easy for people to access them.”

Top-2-Box Agree

	Most Recent Litigant or Juror Experience	
	<u>Positive Experience</u> (423) A %	<u>Negative Experience</u> (223) B %
Base:		
<u>Minority Statements</u>		
In most cases, the courts treat all ethnic and racial groups the same	45 B	31
Courts try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	37 B	22
Courts try to treat males and females alike	57 B	44
Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	48 B	29
<u>Court Employees</u>		
Clerical and other court personnel do not know their jobs (Bottom 2 Box)	66 B	52
Generally, court personnel are courteous, helpful, and polite	68 B	52
Courts use information technology effectively	47 B	36
It costs too much to go to court	74	83 A
It takes too long for courts to do their job	75	84 A
The courts are just puppets of the political system	27	44 A
Courts do not make it easy for people to access them	41	58 A

Note: Question was answered on a 5-point scale; Extremely confident to Not at all confident. Scores reported are top-2-box: Extremely/Very Confident. Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Part of these court experiences is affected by dealings with lawyers, which will now be discussed.

Experience with Lawyers

Almost half (46%) of all the respondents have used a lawyer in the past five years.

Base:	<u>Used Lawyer in Past Five Years</u> (1000)
	%
Yes	46
No	54

Three-fourths of those who had sought the services of a lawyer expressed that they were very or somewhat satisfied with the quality of service, with half being very satisfied. Only about ten percent were very dissatisfied.

Base:	<u>Used Lawyer in Past Five Years</u> (458)
	%
<u>Very/Somewhat Satisfied</u>	<u>75</u>
Very Satisfied	53
Somewhat Satisfied	23
Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	4
Somewhat Dissatisfied	9
Very Dissatisfied	11
Don't Know	1

Satisfaction Levels of Service the Lawyer Provided in Relation to Type of Service Sought

Lawyers were retained for a variety of reasons, including: representation in court; help in creating contracts, wills or estates; and legal advice.

Those people seeking services such as real estate transactions and drawing up a will or contract were more likely to be satisfied than dissatisfied with those legal services. This may be because they were voluntarily going to have a lawyer do something for them and they were able to tell the lawyer what to do.

In contrast, those seeking services related to a lawsuit, divorce, or party to a criminal proceeding were more likely to be dissatisfied with the legal services they received. This may be because the reason for seeking a lawyer, to begin with, was more negative, the risk of a negative outcome was greater, or, in fact, the outcome itself was actually negative.

These findings concur with a study conducted by *Consumer Reports* in 1994 as part of their Annual Questionnaire. Overall, the type of transaction affected people's satisfaction with services provided by lawyers.

Base – Used Lawyer In Past Five Years MOST RECENT REASON FOR <u>RETAINING LAWYER</u>	<u>Total</u> (458) %	<u>Satisfaction Level of Quality of Service Provided by Lawyer</u>	
		<u>Very/Somewhat Satisfied</u> (345) % A	<u>Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied</u> (93) % B
Real estate transactions	12	14 B	6
Draw up a will	11	14 B	1
As party to a lawsuit (either being sued or bringing suit)	11	9	17 A
Divorce/separation	9	8	15 A
Probate/estate matters	6	6	5
Child support/custody matter	5	5	8
Draw up an agreement/contract	5	6 B	1
As party (complainant or defendant in criminal proceeding)	4	3	9 A
Traffic matters	4	4	3
Insurance claims	3	3	3
Bankruptcy	3	3	2
Automobile accident	3	3	3
Property disputes	2	3	2
Landlord/tenant matters	2	2	0
Tax matters	1	1	0
Debt collections	1	1	1
Consumer problems – defective Merchandise, etc.	1	1	0
Other	16	15	17
Don't know	3	2	5 a

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Jury Duty

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of all the respondents have been called for jury duty at least once.

Base:	<u>Total</u> (1000) %
<u>Been Called</u>	<u>27</u>
Served	24
Never Served	3
 Never Been Called	 73

The majority of these respondents have been called for jury duty three times or less, with a quarter having been called only once. Further, of those who have actually served (24% of total respondents), over half served one time. In contrast, eleven percent (11%) of the respondents called for jury duty never actually served on a jury.

Base:	<u>Ever Been Called</u> <u>For Jury Duty</u> (271) %	<u>Actually</u> <u>Served</u> (271) %
One time	27	56
Two times	24	19
Three times	19	10
Four times	15	1
Five or more times	14	2
Don't know/Never	2	11

The number of people called for jury duty has remained stable over the past fifteen years; the number of people who have actually served has increased slightly. In a study commissioned by the Hearst Corporation (1983), 32% of the respondents were called for jury duty (versus 27% in the current research) and 16% of the total respondents actually served (versus 24% in the current research).

Rating of Experience as Juror/Being Called as Juror

Many (40%) of the people who served on a jury considered it to be an excellent or very good experience. On the other hand, a quarter of those who served considered it fair or poor.

Base:	<u>Total</u> (271)
	%
<u>Excellent/Very Good</u>	<u>40</u>
Excellent	14
Very Good	25
Good	31
Fair	19
Poor	7
Don't Know	4

In the next section we will look at how the level of knowledge about and the type and amount of experience with the justice system affects opinions.

Opinions

Confidence in Institutions/Professions

Respondents were asked about their level of confidence in various institutions in American society, such as organized religion or the legal profession/lawyers, using a 5-point scale with the end points of “extremely confident” and “not at all confident.”

While confidence in the overall U.S. justice system is only at 30%, confidence in the different components within the system varies widely. For example, 50% of the respondents said they are extremely or very confident in the Supreme Court. Interestingly, only 34% said the same of the Federal Courts. Confidence in judges is only fair, with 32% of the respondents being extremely or very confident. Confidence in the U.S. Congress is even lower, at 18%, and only 14% of respondents said they are extremely or very confident in lawyers. In fact, the only category generating less confidence than the U.S. Congress and lawyers is the media at 8%.

The converse of this information confirms that this negative perception is held by a majority of respondents. Sixty percent (60%) are only slightly confident or have no confidence in the media. Further, almost half of respondents (42%) lack confidence in lawyers. On the positive side, the U.S. Supreme Court and the local police are the two components of the justice system that have the lowest percentage of “no confidence” votes.

In contrast to most components of the justice system, the local police, doctors and accountants have been able to garner a fairly healthy amount of confidence.

	<u>Extremely/ Very Confident</u> %	<u>Somewhat Confident</u> %	<u>Slightly/Not At All Confident</u> %
U.S. Supreme Court	50	35	15
The Local Police	47	33	20
Medical Profession/Doctors	46	39	15
Accounting Profession/Accountants	39	44	15
Organized Religion	37	30	31
Federal Courts other than U.S. Supreme Court	34	45	21
Judiciary/Judges	32	46	22
U.S. Justice System in General	30	43	27
State and Local Courts	28	47	25
The Public Schools	27	38	35
The Executive Branch of the Federal Government – Office of the President; Departments of Commerce, Defense, etc.	26	36	37
The Executive Branches of State/Local Government – Office of Governors, Mayors, Etc.	24	50	26
The State Legislatures	19	54	27
Your State’s Prison System	19	41	39
U.S. Congress	18	47	35
The Legal Profession/Lawyers	14	44	42
The Media	8	32	60

Comparison of Confidence Levels in Current and Previous Study

An assessment of confidence levels in these same categories and professions was previously done twenty years ago in a study by Yankelovich (1978). Although the methodology was different (in-person interviews versus telephone interviews), the sample is comparable (general population) and the question was worded the same. Additionally, the institutions, for the most part, remained the same. The current study included some additional professions:

- the U.S. justice system in general
- the accounting profession/accountants
- the judiciary/judges
- the legal profession/ lawyers

The Yankelovich study had also asked about confidence in American business and organized labor, which were not included in the current study.

Changes in perceptions are evident. The level of confidence in the U.S. Supreme Court has improved since 1978, as has the level of confidence in the local police, federal courts (besides the U.S. Supreme Court), and state and local courts. On the other hand, the public has significantly lower confidence in doctors, organized religion, public schools, U.S. Congress, and most notably, the media (29% down to 8%).

	Extremely/Very Confident	
	Yankelovich (1978)	MARC (1998)
	(1931)	(1000)
	%	%
	A	B
U.S. Supreme Court	36	50 A
The Local Police	40	47 A
Medical Profession/Doctors	50 B	46
Accounting Profession/Accountants	NA	39
Organized Religion	41 B	37
Federal Courts other than U.S. Supreme Court	29	34 A
Judiciary/Judges	NA	32
U.S. Justice System in General	NA	30
State and Local Courts	23	28 A
The Public Schools	37 B	27
The Executive Branch of the Federal Government – Office of the President; Departments of Commerce, Defense, etc.	27	26
The Executive Branches of State/Local Government – Office of Governors, Mayors, Etc.	21	24 a
The State Legislatures	21	19
Your State’s Prison System	17	19
U.S. Congress	23 B	18
The Legal Profession/Lawyers	NA	14
The Media	29 B	8

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Comparison of Confidence Levels Between Actual Levels of Knowledge

Now that we have looked at the overall confidence levels people have in various institutions and professions and have compared them to previous findings, we will discuss how levels of actual knowledge and active experiences with the justice system may influence confidence levels.

As one would hope, those who are more knowledgeable about the justice system have significantly higher levels of confidence in the U.S. justice system. Those people are also more confident in the various components of the justice system, with the exception of the executive branches of both federal and state governments, the state legislatures, the prison system, and the U.S. Congress. Another important finding is that, among the justice system components, confidence in the legal profession and lawyers is rated the lowest by those with the highest and middle levels of actual knowledge, though even among those with less knowledge, confidence is very low (19%).

Top-2-Box: Extremely/Very Confident

Base:	Actual Levels of Knowledge		
	<u>High</u> (260) %	<u>Medium</u> (504) %	<u>Low</u> (236) %
	A	B	C
U.S. Supreme Court	65 BC	45	42
Medical Profession/Doctors	57 BC	40	46
The Local Police	56 BC	46 c	39
Accounting Profession/Accountants	51 BC	39 C	25
Federal Courts other than U.S. Supreme Court	48 BC	31 c	24
Organized Religion	39	38	34
Judiciary/Judges	39 BC	30	29
U.S. Justice System in General	39 BC	26	28
State and Local Courts	37 BC	25	23
The Executive Branch of the Federal Government – Office of the President; Departments of Commerce, Defense, etc.	28 b	22	34 B
The Executive Branches of State/Local Government – Office of Governors, Mayors, Etc.	28	23	24
The Public Schools	26	24	33 aB
The State Legislatures	21 b	16	23 B
Your State’s Prison System	20	17	20
U.S. Congress	19	15	23 B
The Legal Profession/Lawyers	12	12	19 AB
The Media	10 B	5	12 B

*Note: Question was answered on a 5-point scale; Extremely Confident to Not At All Confident. Scores reported are top-2-box: Extremely/Very Confident
Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.*

Comparison of Confidence Levels Of Those With Positive And Those With Negative Active Court Experience

Further, in comparison to those who report negative court experience, those who report positive court experience are more confident in almost every component of the justice system. Interestingly, those with positive and those with negative court experience showed no significant differences in levels of confidence in the executive branch of the federal government, the U.S. Congress and the legal profession/lawyers. These people who have actually had direct experience with lawyers report low confidence in lawyers.

Top-2-Box: Extremely/Very Confident

	<u>Most Recent Active Court Experience</u>	
	<u>Positive</u> (423) % A	<u>Negative</u> (223) % B
U.S. Supreme Court	56 B	35
The Local Police	50 B	38
Medical Profession/Doctors	49 B	37
Accounting Profession/Accountants	43 B	31
Organized Religion	39	35
U.S. Justice System in General	37 B	14
Federal Courts other than U.S. Supreme Court	36 B	25
Judiciary/Judges	35 B	20
State and Local Courts	32 B	14
The Public Schools	29 B	21
The Executive Branch of the Federal Government – Office of the President; Departments of Commerce, Defense, etc.	29	26
The Executive Branches of State/Local Government – Office of Governors, Mayors, Etc.	28 B	19
The State Legislatures	21 B	14
Your State’s Prison System	21 B	14
U.S. Congress	20	15
The Legal Profession/Lawyers	15	13
The Media	10 B	5

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Comparison of Confidence Levels by Sub-Groups

There are demographic groups that appear to have more confidence in the U.S. justice system in general. These people tend to be men, those with higher incomes, and those with higher education levels. These patterns still hold in the individual components of the justice system. However, there is no consistent pattern among ethnic groups. (Table 5 in Appendix.)

Opinions About the U.S. Justice System

In order to understand what drives people's confidence, opinions about the U.S. justice system were collected through a series of fifty attitude statements. These statements were about the justice system in general and about the components of the system, namely, the courts, judges, lawyers, and the police.

The attitude statements will be discussed in several different ways:

- By identifying how respondents feel about the U.S. justice system.
- By how people's level of knowledge may be influencing their attitudes and opinions.
- By what attitudes are driving confidence in the justice system and its various components.

Attitude Statements on Which the Majority of Total Respondents Agree

Overall, in spite of its problems, the justice system is still perceived to be the best in the world; eighty percent (80%) of the respondents strongly agree or agree with this statement. Looking back at the confidence rating of the justice system (only 30%), people seem to be saying that they know the justice system has its problems, but that it is still the best available option. This could also be the difference between how it is considered conceptually and how it actually operates.

Along these same lines, people also tend to believe in the jury system, with a majority of respondents (78%) believing that it is the most fair way to determine the guilt or innocence of a person accused of a crime. In fact, most people (69%) agree that juries are the most important part of the judicial system.

It is encouraging that most people believe that lawyers are easily accessible (69%) when they are needed. However, they also believe that lawyers spend too much time getting criminals released on technicalities (68%).

On the other hand, ninety percent (90%) of respondents strongly feel that wealthy people or companies often wear down their opponents by dragging out the legal proceedings. As a result, it is not surprising to find that most people think going to court takes too long (78%) and is too costly (77%). Further, the courts are considered to be too lenient, finding technicalities to let criminals go free (74%) and providing too many opportunities to appeal decisions (72%). These may be some of the reasons why confidence in the system overall is relatively low.

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Strongly <u>Agree</u> %
In spite of its problems, the American justice system is still the best in the world	80	26
The jury system is the most fair way to determine the guilt or innocence of a person accused of a crime	78	17
Juries are the most important part of our judicial system	69	19
It would be easy to get a lawyer if I needed one	69	10
Lawyers spend too much time finding technicalities to get criminals released	68	20
Wealthy people or companies often wear down their opponents by dragging out the legal proceedings	90	40
It takes courts too long for courts to do their jobs	78	28
It costs too much to go to court	77	24
The courts let too many criminals go free on technicalities	74	26
The courts offer convicted criminals too many opportunities for appeal	72	26

Note: Question was answered on a 5-point scale; Strongly agree to Strongly disagree. Scores reported are top-2-box: Strongly Agree/Agree

Most people believe judges should have flexibility in sentencing convicted criminals, but they also clearly believe that lack of jail space should not be one of the criteria used for determining sentences.

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> %	<u>Strongly Disagree/ Disagree</u> %
Lack of jail space should be considered by judges when sentencing criminal defendants	22	70
Judges should have no leeway in how they sentence convicted criminals	13	70

Note: Question was answered on a 5-point scale; Strongly agree to Strongly disagree. Scores reported are bottom-2-box: Strongly Disagree/Disagree

Opinions of Specific Components of the U.S. Justice System

All of the attitude statements were asked on a rotated basis within their respective component section and across different component sections. For example, one person would have rated all of the attribute statements on the court first, and the next person would have had a different component first, such as lawyers. Or, two people could have rated the courts first, but they would have rated the statements in a different order. These rotations were done to prevent response bias. The statements, while asked by component section, are analyzed here in related topic groupings:

- overall system attitudes
- how groups of people are treated
- sentencing/criminals in court
- court/judges/lawyers doing their jobs.

Overall System Attitudes:

As previously noted, a majority of people strongly agree or agree that the American justice system is the best worldwide. The jury system is perceived to be both fair and the most important part of the judicial system. Respondents also believe that it would be easy to get a lawyer if needed and that, in general, it is easy to access legal services.

In contrast, about half the people believe the justice system needs a complete overhaul and that there should be fewer lawyers. Some of this may be a function of people believing the profession does not adequately discipline lawyers. While most do not believe the courts are puppets of the political system, a substantial group of people (31%) believe this.

This suggests that while, in general, people believe in the U.S. justice system, they do not believe it is perfect, and improvements should be considered in specific areas.

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree Nor <u>Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
<u>Juries/Justice System Importance</u>			
In spite of its problems, the American justice system is still the best in the world	80	9	11
The jury system is the most fair way to determine the guilt or innocence of a person accused of a crime	78	10	12
Juries are the most important part of our judicial system	69	10	21
<u>Access to Lawyer/Legal Service</u>			
It would be easy to get a lawyer if I needed one	69	6	25
It is easy to access legal services	54	12	34
<u>Justice System Improvements</u>			
The justice system needs a complete overhaul	51	15	34
We would be better off with fewer lawyers	51	18	30
The courts are just puppets of the political system	31	17	52
<u>Discipline</u>			
The legal profession does a good job of disciplining lawyers	29	24	46

How Groups of People Are Treated:

A majority of respondents (90%) concur that wealthy people or companies wear down their opponents by dragging out legal proceedings. Respondents are split as to how people of different races, gender, and income are treated, particularly by the police. People are dissatisfied with the way the justice system is handling race and income. These results suggest that the justice system could be more sensitive to minority differences and needs.

People are also split in their beliefs as to how victims are treated during court proceedings and in their belief that lawyers need to do a better job of keeping their clients informed.

A more in-depth look at people with positive litigant or juror experience shows that they are more likely to strongly agree or agree that minority groups are treated equally. On the other hand, those with negative court experience are more likely to strongly disagree or disagree with these statements. (A detailed table is in the appendix – TABLE 2.)

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree Nor <u>Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
<u>Influence of Wealth on Justice System</u>			
Wealthy people or companies often wear down their opponents by dragging out the legal proceedings	90	5	4
<u>Treatment of Minority Groups</u>			
Courts try to treat males and females alike	55	14	30
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat males and females alike	45	12	43
In most cases, the courts treat all ethnic and racial groups the same	39	14	47
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	34	9	56
Courts try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	33	12	55
Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	44	19	36
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat whites and minorities alike	39	10	50
<u>Keeping Clients Informed</u>			
Lawyers do not keep their clients informed of the progress of the case	36	27	35

Sentencing/Criminals:

The justice system is deemed to be too lenient with sentencing. Most people believe the system lets too many criminals go free on technicalities or allows too many appeals. In fact, about half the people agree that convicted criminals are not given severe enough punishment at least part of the time.

	<u>Strongly Agree/ Agree</u> %	<u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u> %	<u>Strongly Disagree/ Disagree</u> %
The courts let too many criminals go free on technicalities	74	10	16
The courts offer convicted criminals too many opportunities for appeal	72	8	19
Lawyers spend too much time finding technicalities to get criminals released	68	11	21
Persons convicted of crimes are not given severe enough punishment by judges	52	23	24
The justice system is always too lenient in dealing with crime	35	14	51
Court decisions should reflect the majority of public opinion	35	7	57

Sentencing/Criminals (Continued):

Interestingly, many respondents feel the system's intent is good: they believe in alternative sentences and they believe the system is concerned with rehabilitating criminals. However, they are split on whether judges should have more influence on cases, though most believe judges should have leeway in how they sentence criminals.

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree Nor <u>Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
Alternative sentences, such as doing community service, should be used more often instead of sending people to prison	56	15	28
The justice system is not at all concerned about rehabilitating criminals	37	14	49
Judges should have more influence on the outcome of cases	43	17	39
Lack of jail space should be considered by judges when sentencing criminal defendants	24	5	70
Judges should have no leeway in how they sentence convicted criminals	23	7	70

Courts/Judges/Lawyers Doing Their Jobs:

Courts

Generally, court employees are perceived as helpful, polite, and knowledgeable about their jobs. However, people are split as to whether or not the courts effectively serve people with physical handicaps, are easy to access and use information technology effectively.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, people perceive the cost of going to court as too high and the process too lengthy, and they think the courts could do a better job of informing the public about court proceedings.

	<u>Strongly Agree/ Agree</u> %	<u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u> %	<u>Strongly Disagree/ Disagree</u> %
<u>Court Personnel</u>			
Generally, court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite	61	19	19
Clerical and other court personnel do not know their jobs	14	25	60
<u>Ease of Court Access</u>			
The courts always effectively serve people who have physical handicaps	42	30	25
Courts do not make it easy for people to access them	46	21	31
Courts use information technology effectively	43	29	26
<u>Cost/Efficiency of Courts</u>			
It takes too long for courts to do their job	78	9	12
It costs too much to go to court	77	10	12
Courts are effective in informing the public about court procedures and services	28	15	56

Judges

Most people are confident in the qualifications of judges and believe judges are adequately compensated. They are split as to whether or not judges fulfill their role as civic-minded citizens through community service.

	<u>Strongly Agree/ Agree</u> %	<u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u> %	<u>Strongly Disagree/ Disagree</u> %
Most judges are extremely well qualified for their jobs	54	20	25
Judges are not paid enough given how much work they do	14	31	51
Most judges do not contribute enough to their community through donations of time, legal services, or money	33	38	26

Lawyers Being Civic Minded:

The public is split on its views of lawyers, their motivations and their civic-mindedness. On the positive side, about half the people believe that some costs for lawyers' services are reasonable and that lawyers do not choose cases based on the publicity they may receive. On the other hand, most people do not believe that lawyers work harder and longer hours than most others, that the best lawyers are selected to serve as judges or that lawyers try to make divorces simpler and less painful.

Otherwise, almost as many people agree as disagree that most lawyers are motivated to both serve the public and do what is right for their clients. Further, as with judges, people seem to feel lawyers should contribute to their communities, but that they are only doing a moderately good job in this area.

It is clear from people's lack of confidence in the profession and their questioning of lawyers' motives and efforts that some public relations is in order. Importantly, many people seem to think that the legal profession should have some altruistic or civil servant aspects to it. They believe lawyers should have in mind the welfare not only of their clients but also of the public. In essence, lawyers are put on a pedestal and are held to very high standards of moral conduct.

There is a division among the people who have used lawyers. A comparison between those who said they were very or somewhat satisfied with the service they received and those who said they were very or somewhat dissatisfied shows that those with positive experience have a more positive outlook regarding lawyers, rating them higher on trying to serve public interests well. In contrast, those with negative experience believe lawyers are more concerned with self-promotion than with their client's best interests. This group also more strongly disagrees that costs for lawyers' services are reasonable. (A more detailed table is in the appendix – TABLE 3.)

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree Nor <u>Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
Some costs for lawyers' services are reasonable	53	9	37
Lawyers work harder and longer hours than do people in most other jobs	28	15	57
Most lawyers try to serve the public interests well	47	16	36
Most lawyers choose their cases based on how much publicity they will get	29	20	50
Most lawyers are more concerned with their own self-promotion than their client's best interests	45	22	33
The best lawyers are selected to serve as judges	27	22	50
Lawyers try to help make divorce simpler and less painful	28	21	50
Most lawyers do what is right for their clients, and still do what is good for the public	41	18	40
A lawyer from a smaller firm takes more interest in his or her client than does a lawyer from a larger firm	43	27	28
Most lawyers do not contribute enough to their community through donations of time, legal services, or money	43	31	23

Comparison of Attitude Ratings by Actual Levels of Knowledge

For many of the attitude statements, there are significantly different responses based on the respondents' actual level of knowledge. Only the attitude statements that illustrate significant differences between the majority of respondents (67% or more) are discussed in this section.

As we have discussed previously, in general people believe that although the justice system has its problems, it is still the best in the world. Those most knowledgeable about the justice system have significantly higher agreement with this statement; they have faith in the justice system, yet are also skeptical. They believe that the system is too flexible, that lawyers choose cases based on publicity and that the courts are too political. They also believe that it is easy to get a lawyer if needed. On the other hand, people with less knowledge feel the courts are too lenient with criminals.

Top-2-Box: Strongly Agree/Agree

	<u>Actual Level of Knowledge</u>		
	<u>High</u> (260) % A	<u>Medium</u> (504) % B	<u>Low</u> (236) % C
Base:			
<u>Justice System Importance</u>			
In spite of its problems, the American justice system is still the best in the world	86 BC	80	76
Juries are the most important part of our judicial system	62	69 a	77 AB
<u>System Leniency</u>			
The courts let too many criminals go free on technicalities	57	80 A	78 A
The courts offer convicted criminals too many opportunities for appeal	59	77 A	75 A
Lawyers spend too much time finding technicalities to get criminals released	57	73 A	68 A
<u>Lawyer Access</u>			
It would be easy to get a lawyer if I needed one	76 BC	67	66

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Bottom-2-Box: Strongly Disagree/Disagree

	Actual Levels of Knowledge		
	<u>High</u> (260) %	<u>Medium</u> (504) %	<u>Low</u> (236) %
Base:	A	B	C
<u>Sentencing/Leniency</u>			
The justice system is always too lenient in dealing with crime	70 BC	46	43
Judges should have no leeway in how they sentence convicted criminals	88 BC	67 C	58
Lack of jail space should be considered by judges when sentencing criminal defendants	76 C	75 C	53
<u>Court Operations</u>			
The courts are just puppets of the political system	73 BC	47 C	39
Court decisions should reflect the majority of public opinion	82 BC	55 C	36
Clerical and other court personnel do not know their jobs	69 BC	57	56
<u>Lawyer Motivations</u>			
Most lawyers choose their cases based on how much publicity they will get	68 BC	46 C	38

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Comparison of Attitude Ratings by Demographic Sub-Groups

Within demographic groups, there are not necessarily differences on all attitude measures, but there are some patterns worthy of note. In general, men tend to have more positive attitudes about the justice system than women. Likewise, people with higher incomes tend to have more positive attitudes than people with lower incomes.

Further, older people tend to be more positive than younger people, though younger people are often more positive about lawyers and about how the courts function, in regard to aspects dealing with criminals, how long court processes take, and court access. Younger people are less critical of the system than are older people.

Finally, whites tend to be more positive than non-whites, though their attitudes about lawyers and some court functions were mixed. That is, in some cases whites are more positive and in some cases, non-whites are more positive. (See Appendix, Table 6).

Top-2-Box Agreement

	<u>Actual Levels of Knowledge</u>		
	<u>High</u> (260) % A	<u>Medium</u> (504) % B	<u>Low</u> (236) % C
Base:			
<u>Affirmative Statements about Courts</u>			
The justice system is always too lenient in dealing with crime	70 BC	46	43
Judges should have no leeway in how they sentence convicted criminals	88 BC	67 C	58
Lack of jail space should be considered by judges when sentencing criminal defendants	76 C	75 C	53
<u>Court Operations</u>			
The courts are just puppets of the political system	73 BC	47 C	39
Court decisions should reflect the majority of public opinion	82 BC	55 C	36
Clerical and other court personnel do not know their jobs	69 BC	57	56
<u>Lawyer Motivations</u>			
Most lawyers choose their cases based on how much publicity they will get	68 BC	46 C	38

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

How Attitudes Group Together

Statistical analysis of all the attitude statements allows us to identify specific “drivers,” that is, which are the most important attitudes. These fifty statements can be grouped into thirteen common themes, some of which parallel the previous discussion. These factors include the following statements:

Factor 1 – Treatment of Minority Groups

- Law enforcement officials and police try to treat whites and minorities alike
- Law enforcement officials and police try to treat poor and wealthy people alike
- Law enforcement officials and police try to treat males and females alike
- In most cases, the courts treat all ethnic and racial groups the same
- Courts try to treat males and females alike
- Courts try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike
- The justice system is not concerned about rehabilitating criminals*

Factor 2 – System Leniency/Technicalities/Appeals

- The courts let too many criminals go free on technicalities * X
- The courts offer convicted criminals too many opportunities for appeal * X
- The justice system is always too lenient in dealing with crime *
- Persons convicted of crimes are not given severe enough punishment by judges*
- Lawyers spend too much time finding technicalities to get criminals released * X
- The justice system needs a complete overhaul * X
- Judges should have no leeway in how they sentence convicted criminals * X
- The courts are just puppets of the political system * X

Factor 3 – Lawyer Issues

- Most lawyers try to serve the public interests well
- Most lawyers are more concerned with their own self-promotion than their client’s best interests * X
- Most lawyers do what is right for their clients, and still do what is good for the public
 - We would be better off with fewer lawyers
 - Lawyers try to help make divorce simpler and less painful
 - Some costs for lawyers’ services are reasonable
 - Most lawyers choose their cases based on how much publicity they will get * X
 - The legal profession does a good job of disciplining lawyers
 - Lawyers do not keep their clients informed of the progress of the case*

Factor 4 – Court Information and Victim Treatment

- The courts always effectively serve people who have physical handicaps
- Courts use information technology effectively
- Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings
- Courts are effective in informing the public about court procedures and services
- Most judges are extremely well qualified for their jobs

Factor 5 – Court Processes

- It takes too long for courts to do their job * X
- Wealthy people or companies often wear down their opponents by dragging out the legal proceedings * X
 - It costs too much to go to court * X
 - Courts do not make it easy for people to access them *

Factor 6 – Judges/Lawyers Contributing to Communities

- Most judges do not contribute enough to their community through donations of time, legal services, or money*
- Most lawyers do not contribute enough to their community through donations of time, legal services, or money*

Factor 7 – Access to Legal Services

- It would be easy to get a lawyer if I needed one
- It is easy to access legal services

Factor 8 – The Best System

- The jury system is the most fair way to determine the guilt or innocence of a person accused of a crime
 - Juries are the most important part of our judicial system
 - In spite of its problems, the American justice system is still the best in the world

Factor 9 – Court Personnel

- Clerical and other court personnel do not know their jobs*
- Generally, court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite

Factor 10 – Judges'/Lawyers' Value

- Judges are not paid enough given how much work they do*
- Judges should have more influence on the outcome of cases
- The best lawyers are selected to serve as judges
- Lawyers work harder and longer hours than do people in most other jobs

Factor 11 – Sentence Considerations

- Alternative sentences, such as doing community service, should be used more often instead of sending people to prison
 - Lack of jail space should be considered by judges when sentencing criminals

Factor 12 – Court Decisions and Public Opinion

- Court decisions should reflect the majority of public opinion

Factor 13 – Lawyer Interest in Clients

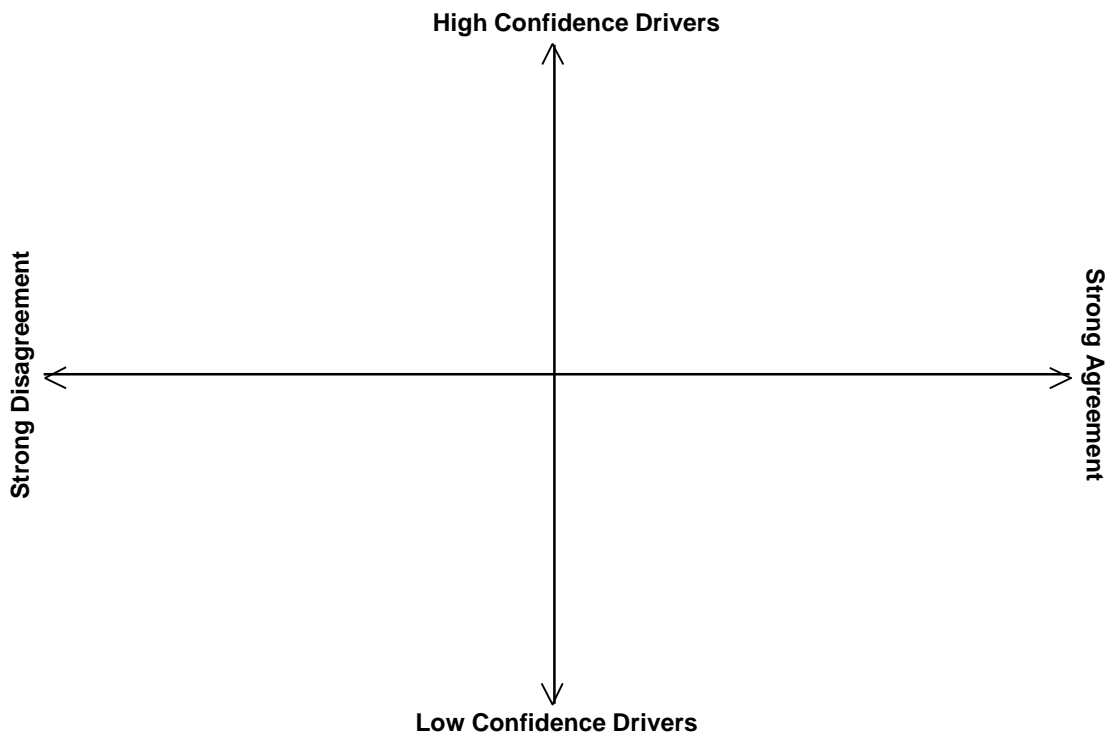
- A lawyer from a smaller firm takes more interest in his or her client than does a lawyer from a larger firm

* = Statement flipped for analysis.

X = Wording changes on Key Driver maps (shown and discussed in next section) to accurately reflect where data point lies on Key Driver map.

Key Drivers

In order to identify how to build confidence in the justice system and its components, key driver maps were created. These maps consist of two components: what drives/ builds confidence; and people's attitudes about the justice system. They are, then, plotted against each other to create a quadrant map.



The vertical axis, high/low confidence drivers, was derived through regression analysis of the attitude statements against the confidence ratings. It illustrates the degree to which the statement (or factor) is a confidence driver. The horizontal axis, strong disagreement/strong agreement, shows the average agreement or disagreement to the statements or the statements in a factor.

Each quadrant can be described as follows:

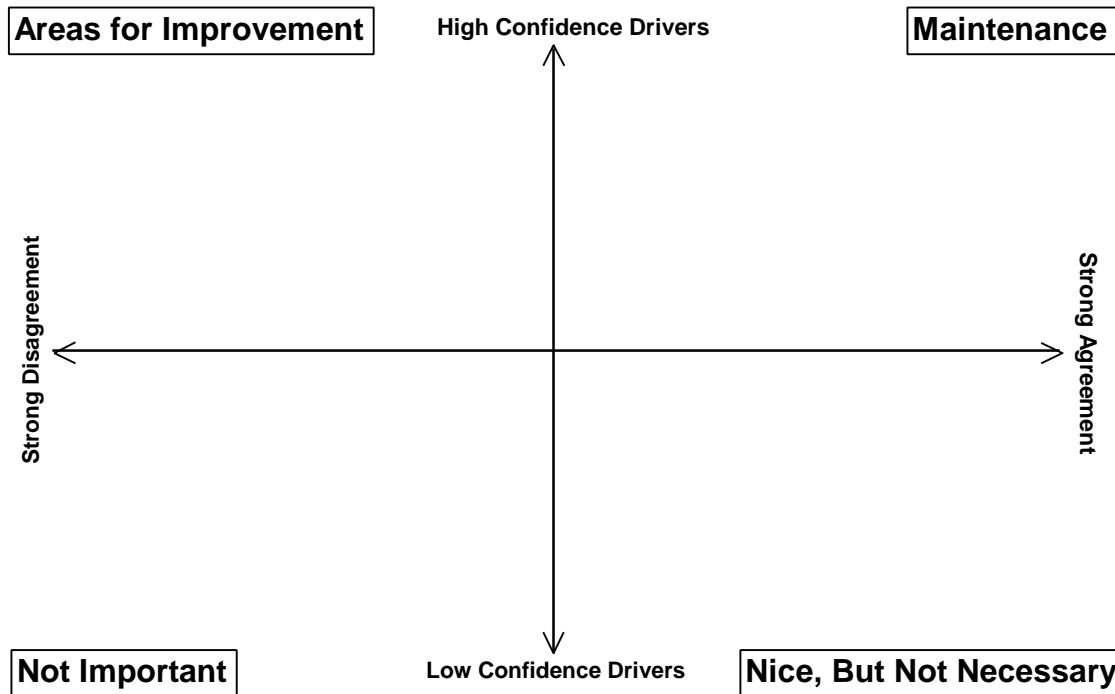
Maintenance area (upper right quadrant) = Strong Agreement – High Confidence Drivers

Areas for improvement (upper left quadrant) = Strong Disagreement – High Confidence Drivers

Nice, but not necessary (lower right quadrant) = Strong Agreement – Low Confidence Drivers

Not an improvement area (lower left quadrant) = Strong Disagreement - Low Confidence Drivers

Each quadrant of the graph, then, identifies where the ABA and its participating organizations should focus their attention. Each quadrant can then be described as follows:



Statements that fall in Areas for Improvement and in Maintenance are key drivers. Efforts should be concentrated in the Areas for Improvement in order to improve the general public’s opinion of the justice system. The Maintenance area is where perceptions of the justice system are relatively strong. Care should be given not to lose ground in these areas.

Several Key Driver maps were generated:

- For the Justice System Overall
- For the State and Local Courts
- For the Judiciary/Judges
- For Lawyers

Each institution (that is, beyond the justice system overall) is analyzed within the context of its relevant attitudes – that is, lawyers against lawyer attitude statements, etc.

Key Drivers of the Justice System Overall

The first key driver map incorporates the confidence in the justice system overall with all of the attitude statements (using the factor analysis).

Not surprisingly, as we have seen in previous sections, the statements that are in the maintenance area, where there are strong opinions in which people agree and have high confidence, are related to the system in general. Those statements are about the U.S. justice system being the best overall, juries being the most important part of the system (Factor 8), how court personnel treat others (Factor 9), and how easy it is to access legal services (Factor 7).

There are other important areas where attitudes about the justice system are not as strong as they should be. For example, court information and victim treatment (Factor 4) are held to be important, but are only moderately. In fact, the importance of court information was previously discussed as a way to improve the system. Additionally, lawyer issues in general (Factor 3) also fall on the cusp and should be considered an area for improvement. One objective here might be to reverse the perception that lawyers are more concerned with self-promotion than with their clients' best interests.

There are several key areas for improvement. The first relates to Court access/costs (Factor 5). People believe it costs too much to go to court and the process itself is too lengthy. The next two areas, Treatment of minority groups (Factor 1), and System leniency (Factor 2), are also the greatest influences in driving confidence in the system. Treatment of minority groups (Factor 1) includes treatment by the police and courts across lines of race, gender, and income. Examples of System leniency (Factor 2) include courts allowing criminals to go free on technicalities and judges not giving out severe enough punishment to criminals. Other areas for improvement relate to lawyers and judges and the need for both groups to make a more concerted effort at civic activities (Factor 6).

All other factors tend to drive confidence less and people do not strongly agree or disagree with the statements.

INSERT GARY'S GUIDANCE MAP TITLED: CONFIDENCE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM and OVERALL ATTITUDE RATINGS (USING FACTOR ANALYSIS)

Key Drivers of the U.S. Justice System

To get a more detailed look at the U.S. justice system, we considered only the attitude statements about the justice system and the confidence ratings of the U.S. justice system in general. As in the overall key driver map, “The American justice system is still the best in the world” is the statement most people have the strongest opinion about and it is also one that drives confidence.

A key driver in the area for improvement is that the justice system needs a complete overhaul. As indicated earlier, it appears that respondents are thinking about the tactics and execution of the system. Another area for improvement is the system’s degree of concern with rehabilitating criminals. It makes sense that trying to make criminals productive in today’s society is important because it changes negative behavior and turns it into something positive and constructive.

**INSERT GUIDANCE MAP:
CONFIDENCE IN JUSTICE SYSTEM AND JUSTICE SYSTEM ATTRIBUTES
(Excel file: IMPMAP1.XLS, sheet: JSJS MAP)**

Key Drivers of the Courts

Confidence in each type of court (U.S. Supreme Court, Federal Courts other than the U.S. Supreme Court, and State and Local Courts) was run against the court attributes. The attitude statements that appear in each of the quadrants are fairly similar among the types of courts. The State and Local Court Map is discussed in detail because that is the court with which people are most likely to be familiar or to have had experience.

As in the overall system map, the statements pertaining to court personnel (Factor 9) are those with which people strongly agree and are also ones which drive confidence. These statements are about people knowing their jobs and being polite and helpful. Although people are only in mild agreement with the statement that courts are not perceived as being political puppets, it is the key driver. These perceptions should be maintained.

Similarly, the statements relating to the treatment of minority groups (Factor 1) tend to be in the area for improvement. Courts especially need to make greater efforts to treat minority groups the same, particularly by race and income level; people are in stronger agreement that men and women are treated more equally. Efforts should also be made to maintain that opinion. Further, as we have suggested before, the courts could improve how they better inform the public about court procedures. This could be accomplished by having published information readily available.

People are in agreement that it takes courts too long to do their job, but this does not greatly drive confidence.

INSERT GUIDANCE MAP:

State/Local Court Ratings and Court Attributes

Federal Court Ratings and Court Attributes

U.S. Supreme Court Ratings and Court Attributes

Excel file: IMPMAP2.xls

Key Drivers of the Judiciary

People's strongest opinion about judges is that they are qualified for their jobs. Encouragingly, more than half the people believe this statement. It is also important to these people that judges have leeway in sentencing. Maintaining these attitudes will help sustain people's confidence in the judiciary.

In contrast, while people think it is important that judges give punishment to convicted criminals commensurate with their crimes, they do not believe that this tends to happen. This supports previous findings about the justice system being too lenient with criminals. Further, as seen earlier, the criteria for sentencing should be considered. People seem to be saying that consideration should be given based on the circumstances germane to the case rather than on outside considerations such as lack of jail space.

INSERT GUIDANCE MAP:

THE JUDICIARY RATINGS AND JUDGE ATTRIBUTES

Excel file: IMPMAP2.xls

Key Drivers of the Legal Profession and Lawyers

As previously discussed, it appears that the area of the justice system people are most critical of is the legal profession and lawyers. There are, however, some positive aspects that we should be careful to maintain. People are in agreement that lawyers try to serve public interests well, that they do not choose cases based on publicity, and that some costs for lawyers' services are reasonable. However, these are only moderate confidence drivers.

Conversely, there are many aspects of the legal profession that drive confidence, but need improvement. In particular, the legal profession's disciplining of lawyers and the belief that lawyers tend to spend too much time finding technicalities to release criminals are both areas where there are strong opinions and where improvement is needed.

Doing what is right for clients and what is for the good of the public is considered important, but has only moderate agreement. In fact, it is really bimodal in that about the same number of people agreed with the statement as disagreed with it (41% agreed versus 40% disagreed). This seems to be more a function of whether people had a positive or negative experience with their lawyer. Those who had a negative experience have a significantly higher level of disagreement.

All of these statements are about lawyers, themselves, and what they do in their jobs – their process – rather than about how they help their clients. If we can draw a parallel to the marketing of a consumer product, the goal here would be to get people to focus less on the process, or how the product is made, and more on the end benefit, on what it does for the consumer – in this case, on what lawyers do for their clients.

INSERT GUIDANCE MAP

THE LEGAL PROFESSION RATINGS AND LAWYER ATTRIBUTES

Excel file: IMPMAP2.xls

Key Drivers of the Police

There were only three statements regarding the actions of the police, and they cover the treatment of different minority groups and sub-segments of the population. The actual agreement and disagreement of these statements are not very different. A majority thinks the police are not treating poor and wealthy people alike, or whites and minorities alike; on the other hand, more people than not think the police are treating males and females alike. This suggests there is more room for improvement with respect to race and income level than with respect to gender.

	<u>% Agree</u>	<u>% Disagree</u>
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat poor and wealthy people alike.	34	56
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat whites and minorities alike.	39	50
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat males and females alike.	45	43

Sources of Information

Sources of Information About the Justice System

Respondents were read a list of information sources and asked, for each source, how important it was for obtaining information on the justice system. A 5-point scale was used: Extremely important = 5, Not at all important = 1.

We previously noted that a majority of respondents (89%) have had experience with the courts. Therefore, it is not surprising that personal experience (63%) is considered the most important source for obtaining information about the justice system. Jury duty (57%) is another important source and is, in fact, a form of personal experience. This gives credence to the adage “you have to see it to believe it.”

Closely following personal experience are school or college courses (59%) and books/library (58%). After these sources, there is a big gap in importance, as the next most important sources are lawyers (43%) and materials available from the court (43%). It is worth noting that out of all of these information sources, the one which the justice system can directly impact is materials available from the court.

The next grouping of important sources include television news (41%), family members (40%), TV shows like 20/20, 60 Minutes, Dateline (37%), local daily newspapers (36%), national newspapers (35%), and radio news (31%). These information sources concentrate on reporting news of the day, including current experience people have with the justice system.

Sources of information that are considered least important are various forms of entertainment, such as movies, television dramas and court programs like People’s Court. The lower importance ratings of these media as a source of information about the justice system parallels confidence levels in the media. As discussed previously, the level of confidence in the media is low, with a majority of respondents (60%) indicating they were slightly or not at all confident in it.

Additionally, as discussed previously, it was evident that the role and type of case people had experience with affected their perception of the justice system. With regard to perception of importance of these information sources, there are no significant differences between those with positive versus negative active court experience, with two exceptions. Those with negative experience rate court programs on TV and information from a family member significantly more important sources of information than do those with positive experiences. One possible explanation would be that this group believes their court experience should have proceeded more along the lines of the court proceeding they saw on TV.

Base:	<u>Total</u>
	(1000)
	%
<u>Extremely/Very Important</u>	
Personal experience	63
School or college courses	59
Books/library	58
Jury duty	57
Lawyers/attorneys	43
Materials available from the court	43
Television news	41
Family member	40
Television news shows like 20/20, 60 Minutes, Dateline	37
Local daily newspaper	36
National newspapers	35
Radio news	31
High profile cases	28
Internet	23
Word of mouth	22
Television trials like Court TV	20
Magazines	16
Radio/TV talk shows	15
Court programs like People's Court/Judge Judy	11
Television dramas	9
Movies/videos	7

Note: The question was answered on a 5 point scale; Extremely important to Not at all important.

Importance of Information Sources By Actual Level of Knowledge Groups

Respondents with high levels of knowledge about the justice system do not consider any information source as significantly more important than their counterparts with medium or low levels of knowledge do. On the other hand, those with low levels of knowledge consider media sources of significantly higher importance. Additionally, this low level of knowledge group considers books or the library to be significantly more important sources of information than do the other more knowledgeable groups. Thus, it appears that these people know where to get the information, but have not actually taken the steps to get it.

Base:	Actual Levels of Knowledge		
	<u>High</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Low</u>
	(260)	(504)	(236)
	%	%	%
Extremely/Very Important	A	B	C
Personal experience	64	63	63
School or college courses	55	60	61
Jury duty	54	57	59
Books/library	50	60 A	61 A
Lawyers/attorneys	45	41	46
Materials available from the court	37	42	53 AB
National newspapers	34	33	38
Local daily newspaper	32	34	47 AB
Television news	29	41 A	56 AB
Family member	29	41 A	53 AB
Radio news	26	29	40 AB
Television news shows like 20/20, 60 Minutes, Dateline	25	38 A	48 AB
High profile cases	22	29 A	34 A
Internet	21	24	23
Word of mouth	18	23	27 A
Magazines	15	15	20
Television trials like Court TV	14	21 A	25 A
Radio/TV talk shows	10	15	23 AB
Television dramas	4	8 A	16 AB
Court programs like People's Court/Judge Judy	3	10 A	22 AB
Movies/videos	2	6 A	16 AB

Note: The question was answered on a 5 point scale; Extremely important to Not at all important. Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Sources of Education About the Justice System

In previous sections, we discussed levels of knowledge people actually have about the justice system. Respondents were also asked where they received that knowledge. Respondents with the highest levels of knowledge were more likely to receive education from many of these sources. For the most part, people received their education about the justice system from sources most have natural access to, such as social studies classes in grade school (83%) and high school civics or government classes (82%).

Base:	Total (1000)	Levels of Knowledge		
		High (260) %	Medium (504) %	Low (236) %
		A	B	C
Social studies classes in grade school	83	89 B C	84 C	76
High school civics or government class	82	94 B C	82 C	68
Personal experience	67	79 B C	67 C	56
College level courses on political science	42	74 B C	36 C	17
Paralegal studies	5	7 c	4	3
Attended law school	3	8 B C	1	3
Graduated law school	2	6 B C	1	1
Any other source	11	14 C	13 C	4
None of the above	5	0	4 A	13 A B

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Interested in Learning More About the Justice System

Sixty-one percent (61%) of the respondents indicated a desire to learn more about the justice system.

	<u>Total</u> (1000)
	%
Yes, Would like to learn more	61
No, Would not like to learn more	39

Demographic Profile of Those Interested in Learning More About the Justice System

Those indicating interest in learning more appear to be younger, middle income, non-white, and college educated.

Base:	<u>Interested</u> (610) % A	<u>Not Interested</u> (386) % B
Gender		
Male	45	47
Female	55	53
Age		
18-34	29 B	23
35-54	52	48
55 or older	20	29 A
Education		
High School or less	26	38 A
Some College/College graduate	55 B	43
Post Grad	19	19
Income*		
Less than \$35,000	35	40
\$35,000 to less than \$75,000	48 B	41
\$75,000 or more	16	18
Ethnicity*		
White	83	89 A
Non-White	17 B	11

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

*Rebased to account for refusals. For income: Interested base, n=572; Not Interested base, n=357. For Ethnicity: Interested base, n=595; Not Interested base, n=374.

Sources Willing to Learn From

People are willing to learn from a variety of sources.

- ➔ Of those desiring to learn more, three-fourths want to learn from current judges or retired judges.
- ➔ College or law professors and teachers are also good sources, according to 70% of the respondents.
- ➔ Two-thirds of the people want to learn more from the state/local bar associations and from the American Bar Association.

	<u>Desire to Learn More</u>
	(610)
	%
Judges	75
Retired judges	73
College/law professors	70
Teachers	70
State/local bar association	69
American Bar Association	68
Lawyers	58
Civic groups	56
Any type of media	51
Other	6
None of the above	2

Suggestions to Improve the Courts

Finally, respondents were read a series of suggestions as to whether tax dollars should or should not be used to improve the courts. People were not asked to make a trade-off of allocating tax dollars.

The data suggests people feel that all of the suggestions should be implemented. The lowest support (57%) was for providing extra resources to let courts be open weekends and evenings.

- ➔ Almost all respondents felt schools should be required to teach about the justice system and that information should be provided to increase education and information on the court system.
- ➔ On the other hand, “Establishing citizen advisory committees for the courts” was one of the suggestions with the lowest level of agreement. This may be because this option would potentially cause people to be approached for help.

	<u>Should Use Tax Dollars</u> (1000) %
Requiring schools to teach about the judicial branch And how it relates to the other branches of government	93
Providing education and information to help people Understand the court system	86
Encouraging judges and lawyers to seek the ideas of average people when planning court improvements	77
Hiring top quality translators whenever needed	77
Providing opportunities for people to volunteer their Time to help the courts	76
Having staffed information desks in every courthouse	71
Establishing citizen advisory committees for the courts	59
Providing extra resources to let courts be open weekends And evenings	57

Appendix

TABLE 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Base:	<u>MARC, 1998</u> (1000) %	<u>Yankelovich, 1978</u> (1931) %
Gender		
Male	46	48
Female	54	52
Age		
18-24	7	16
25-34	20	26
35-44	27	17
45-54	23	15
55-64	12	12
65 or older	11	14
Education		
Did not graduate from high school	4	NA
Some high school	4	17
High school diploma or GED	23	34
Some college/technical school	33	19
Finished 4-year college degree	17	10
Some graduate school	7	6
Graduate degree	12	NA
Had Legal Education/Course in Law		
Social studies classes in grade/middle school	83	NA
High school civics/government classes	82	NA
Personal experience	67	NA
College courses on political science, the law	42	NA
Paralegal studies	5	21
Attended law school	3	2
Graduated from law school	2	3

Perceptions of the U.S. Justice System

Other source	11	62
Uncertain	NA	12

TABLE 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents
(Continued)

Base:	<u>MARC, 1998</u> (1000) %	<u>Yankelovich, 1978</u> (1931) %
Income		
Under \$25,000	17	NA
\$25,000 - \$34,999	17	NA
\$35,000 - \$49,999	21	NA
\$50,000 - \$74,999	21	NA
\$75,000 - \$99,999	9	NA
\$100,000 or more	7	NA
Refused	7	NA
Ethnicity		
White, not Hispanic	83	84
African American	8	11
Hispanic	3	4
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	NA
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	NA
Other	2	1
Refused	3	NA
Marital Status		
Married	58	66
Single	17	15
Separated or divorced	13	9
Living with a partner, but not married	6	NA
Widowed	5	9
Refused	1	1
Employment Status		
Full time	61	43
Part-time	12	11
Not employed at all/Unemployed	27	6
Other	NA	40

Registered Voter

Yes	87	NA
No	13	NA

Note: Income was asked in Yankelovich study, but on a different income scale.

TABLE 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents
(Continued)

Base:	<u>MARC, 1998</u> (1000) %	<u>Yankelovich, 1978</u> (1931)
Residential Distribution		
New England	5	5
Middle Atlantic	12	18
South Atlantic	20	17
East North Central	17	18
East South Central	7	7
West North Central	8	9
West South Central	10	9
Mountain	7	4
Pacific	15	13

TABLE 2
How Groups of People Are Treated
(Positive Court Experience Vs. Negative Court Experience)

	Most Recent Litigant or Juror Experience			
	Strongly Agree/ Agree		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	
	<u>Positive</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>	<u>Negative</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>	<u>Positive</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>	<u>Negative</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>
	(423)	(223)	(423)	(223)
	%	%	%	%
	A	B	A	B
Wealthy people or companies often wear down their opponents by dragging out the legal proceedings	90	92	4	3
Courts try to treat males and females alike	57 B	44	28	42 A
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat males and females alike	45 b	38	42	52 A
In most cases, the courts treat all ethnic and racial groups the same	45 B	31	42	56 A
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	37 B	27	55	63 A
Courts try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	37 B	22	52	66 A
Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	48 B	29	34	52 A
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat whites and minorities alike	41	39	48	52
Lawyers do not keep their clients informed of the progress of the case	32	50 A	38 B	28

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

TABLE 3
Lawyers Being Civic Minded
(Positive Lawyer Experience Vs. Negative Lawyer Experience)

	Satisfaction with Quality of Lawyer Experience			
	Strongly Agree/ Agree		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	
	<u>Positive</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>	<u>Negative</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>	<u>Positive</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>	<u>Negative</u> <u>Experien</u> <u>ce</u>
	(345) % A	(93) % B	(345) % A	(93) % B
Some costs for lawyers' services are reasonable	61 B	46	32	51 A
Lawyers work harder and longer hours than do people in most other jobs	26 b	17	57	75 A
Most lawyers try to serve the public interests well	50 B	38	31	55 A
Most lawyers choose their cases based on how much publicity they will get	23	38 A	58 b	47
Most lawyers are more concerned with their own self-promotion than their client's best interests	39	62 A	39 B	17
The best lawyers are selected to serve as judges	25	26	53	61
Lawyers try to help make divorce simpler and less painful	28	24	49	62 A
Most lawyers do what's right for their clients, and still do what's good for the public	43	34	38	55 A
A lawyer from a smaller firm takes more interest in his or her client than does a lawyer from a larger firm	43	51	30	28
Most lawyers do not contribute enough to their community through donations of time, legal services, or money	37	65 A	26 B	13

Capital letter indicates significant difference at the 95% confidence level; lower case letter indicates significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

TABLE 4
Attitude Statement Ratings Among Total Respondents (n=1000)

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree/</u> <u>Agree</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Neither Agree</u> <u>Nor Disagree</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree/</u> <u>Disagree</u> <u>%</u>
<u>Justice System in General</u>			
Wealthy people or companies often wear down their opponents by dragging out the legal proceedings	90	5	4
In spite of its problems, the American justice system is still the best in the world	80	9	11
The jury system is the most fair way to determine the guilt or innocence of a person accused of a crime	78	10	12
Alternative sentences, such as doing community service, should be used more often instead of sending people to prison	56	15	28
It is easy to access legal services	54	12	34
The justice system needs a complete overhaul	51	15	34
The justice system is not at all concerned about rehabilitating criminals	37	14	49
The justice system is always too lenient in dealing with crime	35	14	51

TABLE 4
Attitude Statement Ratings Among Total Respondents (n=1000)
(Continued)

<u>Courts</u>	<u>Strongly Agree/ Agree</u> %	<u>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</u> %	<u>Strongly Disagree/ Disagree</u> %
It takes too long for courts to do their job	78	9	12
It costs too much to go to court	77	10	12
The courts let too many criminals go free on technicalities	74	10	16
The courts offer convicted criminals too many opportunities for appeal	72	8	19
Juries are the most important part of our judicial system	69	10	21
Generally, court personnel are courteous, helpful and polite	61	19	19
Courts try to treat males and females alike	55	14	30
Courts do not make it easy for people to access them	46	21	31
Victims are treated in a fair manner during court proceedings	44	19	36
Courts use information technology effectively	43	29	26
The courts always effectively serve people who have physical handicaps	42	30	25
In most cases, the courts treat all ethnic and racial groups the same	39	14	47
Court decisions should reflect the majority of public opinion	35	7	57
Courts try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	33	12	55
The courts are just puppets of the political system	31	17	52
Courts are effective in informing the public about court procedures and services	28	15	56
Clerical and other court personnel do not	14	25	60

know their jobs

TABLE 4
Attitude Statement Ratings Among Total Respondents (n=1000)
(Continued)

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree <u>Nor Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
<u>Judges</u>			
Most judges are extremely well qualified for their jobs	54	20	25
Judges should have more influence on the outcome of cases	43	17	39
Judges are not paid enough given how much work they do	14	31	51
Persons convicted of crimes are not given severe enough punishment by judges	52	23	24
Judges should have no leeway in how they sentence convicted criminals	23	7	70
Lack of jail space should be considered by judges when sentencing criminal defendants	24	5	70
Most judges do not contribute enough to their community thorough donations of time, legal services, or money	33	38	26
The best lawyers are selected to serve as judges	27	22	50

TABLE 4
Attitude Statement Ratings Among Total Respondents (n=1000)
(Continued)

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree Nor Disagree <u>Nor Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
<u>Lawyers</u>			
Most lawyers are more concerned with their own self-promotion than their client's best interests	45	22	33
Most lawyers try to serve the public interests well	47	16	36
Lawyers do not keep their clients informed of the progress of the case	36	27	35
Most lawyers do what's right for their clients, and still do what's good for the public	41	18	40
Lawyers work harder and longer hours than do people in most other jobs	28	15	57
It would be easy to get a lawyer if I needed one	69	6	25
Most lawyers choose their cases based on how much publicity they will get	29	20	50
Lawyers spend too much time finding technicalities to get criminals released	68	11	21
Most lawyers do not contribute enough to their community through donations of time, legal services, or money	43	31	23
We would be better off with fewer lawyers	51	18	30
Lawyers try to help make divorce simpler and less painful	28	21	50

TABLE 4
Attitude Statement Ratings Among Total Respondents (n=1000)
(Continued)

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree <u>Nor Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
<u>Lawyers (continued)</u>			
Some costs for lawyers' services are reasonable	53	9	37
A lawyer from a smaller firm takes more interest in his or her client than does a lawyer from a larger firm	43	27	28
The legal profession does a good job of disciplining lawyers	29	24	46

TABLE 4
Attitude Statement Ratings Among Total Respondents (n=1000)
(Continued)

	Strongly Agree/ <u>Agree</u> %	Neither Agree Nor Disagree <u>Nor Disagree</u> %	Strongly Disagree/ <u>Disagree</u> %
<u>The Police</u>			
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat whites and minorities alike	39	10	50
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat poor people and wealthy people alike	34	9	56
Law enforcement officials and police try to treat males and females alike	45	12	43