

**YALE UNIVERSITY SURVEY OF
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

SURVEY D

2008-09

We are interested in high school students' interest in politics and government. This is not a quiz and we do not expect you to know all of the answers. Your responses are confidential; no one at your school – not even your teacher – will see what you write. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to.

Thank you for your help.

Name _____

Civics Teacher _____

School _____

Period/Time _____

Date _____

Yale University Survey of High School Students

Your Interest in Politics

1. Here are some ways that people get their news and information. Please place a check next to each activity you have done over the past week:

- Read a newspaper
- Watched news on television
- Listened to news on the radio
- Read news on the Internet
- None of these

2. How often do you discuss politics with friends?

- Never
- Maybe once or twice in the past year
- Pretty often
- A lot

3. How often do you talk about politics at home with family members?

- Never
- Maybe once or twice in the past year
- Pretty often
- A lot

4. In general when it comes to politics, do you think of yourself as a

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent
- None of these
- Don't know

5. In the past year, have you been actively involved with a political campaign?

- Yes
- No

6. Some people are not interested in politics at all. Other people love politics and follow it all the time. How about you? Mark the statement that you agree with the most.

- I don't like politics.
- I like politics, but don't follow it.
- I like politics and follow it sometimes.
- I really like politics and follow it a lot.

7. During the past year, have you run for student government, voted in a student election, or helped a candidate for student office?

- Yes
- No

8. Have you turned 18 years old yet? Yes No

If so, have you registered to vote? Yes No

If not, will you register to vote when you do turn 18?

Yes No

9. Which statement comes closest to your own thoughts about voting? (Circle one)

- A. It's important for me to vote in town, state, and national elections.
- B. It's only important for me to vote in presidential elections.
- C. My one vote doesn't make much difference so voting isn't that important for me.

10. Can you name the candidates for president and vice-president in the 2008 election?

Republican Candidate for President: _____

Republican Candidate for Vice-President: _____

Democratic Candidate for President: _____

Democratic Candidate for Vice-President: _____

What Do You Think? Circle the letter of the response that is closest to your own opinion.

11. Which statement comes closest to your views on criminal justice?

- A. It's a waste of resources to pay for trials for people who are obviously guilty.
- B. Even those who are guilty of a crime deserve a fair trial.

12. What do you think about burning the U.S. flag?

- A. Flag burning should be prohibited by the U.S. Constitution.
- B. Flag burning is an act of symbolic speech that should be protected by the Constitution.

13. When a criminal refuses to confess his crimes, the authorities:

- A. should be able to pressure him until he does.
- B. have no right to push him around, no matter what.

14. When it comes to public high school sports events:

- A. coaches should have the right to lead a short prayer before football and other games.
- B. it is inappropriate for school officials to lead prayers at a public high school event.

15. What is your opinion of jury duty?

- A. Serving on a jury seems like a major hassle. I hope I never get called to serve.
- B. Although serving on a jury can be time consuming, I don't mind serving if I get called.

A Constitutional Case Study

Members of a town called Dexter are fed up with a small group of people that have moved in and started a new church that no one has ever heard of. The church members are trying hard to recruit new members by going door-to-door and passing out literature. Neighbors persuaded the town to hold an open meeting to decide what action to take. After lengthy debate, almost everyone in the room voted to have the new church closed. There are currently 28 members of this church, and about 8,500 other residents of the town.

16. Name two rights under the Bill of Rights that are at stake here:

1. _____

2. _____

17. If the majority of the town votes to close a religious organization that it doesn't like, the minority of people who are members have no right to keep it open.

Agree _____

Disagree _____

18. If I lived in that town, I would:

- A. Vote to have the new church closed.
- B. Vote to let the church stay open but ban them from going door-to-door.
- C. Allow the church to stay open and allow them to go door-to-door.

U.S. Government Multiple Choice: Circle the letter of the correct answer.

19. The amendment process was included in the U.S. Constitution in order to:

- A. remove government officials from political office.
- B. check the power of the Supreme Court.
- C. allow government to meet the changing needs of society.
- D. preserve the federal system of government.

20. A system of checks and balances was included in the U.S. Constitution because the authors were concerned about:

- A. one branch of government becoming too strong.
- B. the states having too much power.
- C. the people having a voice in government.
- D. the military gaining control of the United States.

21. "Illegally obtained evidence cannot be used in a court of law." This statement is based on a person's constitutional right to:

- A. face an accuser in open court.
- B. protection against double jeopardy.
- C. a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury.
- D. protection against unreasonable search and seizure.

22. The major reason the Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution was to:

- A. limit the power of the state governments.
- B. protect individual liberties against abuse by the federal government.
- C. provide for equal treatment of all people.
- D. separate powers among the three branches of government.

23. In the U.S. Congress, differences between Senate and House of Representatives versions of a bill are usually resolved by accepting the version that is:

- A. preferred by a majority of the State legislators.
- B. supported by the Supreme Court.
- C. agreed to by a joint conference committee of both Houses.
- D. preferred by the House in which the bill originated.

24. "...no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause,...and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." This section of the 4th amendment to the U.S. Constitution addresses the issue of:

- A. states' rights.
- B. separation of powers.
- C. implied powers.
- D. limits on governmental power.

25. Which factor has made the strongest contribution to the development of religious freedom in the United States?

- A. Most citizens have shared the same religious beliefs.
- B. Religious groups have remained politically unified.
- C. School prayer has been ruled constitutional by the Supreme Court.
- D. Guarantees in the U.S. Constitution have encouraged religious expression and toleration.

26. The major role of political parties in the United States is to:

- A. protect the American public from corrupt public officials.
- B. insure that free and honest elections are held.
- C. nominate candidates for public office and conduct campaigns.
- D. meet constitutional requirements for choosing the President.

27. The system of checks and balances is best illustrated by the power of:

- A. the President to veto a bill passed by Congress.
- B. Congress to censure one of its members.
- C. a governor to send the National Guard to stop a riot.
- D. state and federal governments to levy and collect taxes.

28. The authors of the U.S. Constitution believed that the voice of the people should be heard frequently. Which part of the Government was instituted to respond most directly to the will of the people?

- A. Senate
- B. House of Representatives
- C. Supreme Court
- D. Presidency

29. "Protection of free speech would not protect a man who falsely shouts, 'Fire!' in a theater and causes a panic. "

- Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes

Which interpretation of the Bill of Rights does this statement illustrate?

- A. The needs of the government are more important than civil liberties.
- B. Constitutional protections of liberty are not absolute.
- C. The Supreme Court can eliminate freedoms listed in the Bill of Rights.
- D. The Bill of Rights does not safeguard individual liberties.

30. The two major political parties make their final selection of a Presidential candidate through:

- A. delegates' votes at a national party convention.
- B. decisions of the electoral college.
- C. actions of the State legislatures.
- D. citizens' choices in public opinion polls.

31. As a result of the Supreme Court ruling in *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), a person accused of a crime is entitled to:

- A. a speedy trial.
- B. reasonable bail.
- C. a reading of his or her rights at the time of arrest.
- D. protection against cruel or unusual punishment.

32. Which action could eliminate the electoral college?

- A. A Supreme Court ruling
- B. A Presidential order
- C. Passage of legislation by Congress
- D. Ratification of a constitutional amendment

33. Which level of government in the United States has the power to coin money?

- A. Federal
- B. State
- C. Local (town or city)
- D. All of the above

34. The “clear and present danger” ruling of the Supreme Court in *Schenck v. United States* illustrates the continuing conflict between:

- A. the use of search warrants and the rights of the accused.
- B. free speech and governmental authority.
- C. state powers and federal powers.
- D. religious freedom and separation of church and state.

35. The United States Constitution requires that a census be taken every ten years to reapportion:

- A. membership to the House of Representatives.
- B. the number of delegates to national nominating conventions.
- C. Federal aid to localities.
- D. agricultural subsidies.

36. The Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) was based on the constitutional principle of:

- A. protection of property rights.
- B. freedom of speech.
- C. right to privacy.
- D. freedom of religion.

37. Among the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment is the right to:

- A. the free exercise of religion.
- B. keep and bear arms.
- C. due process of law.
- D. a speedy and public trial.

38. Which fact about American government reflects the principle of federalism?

- A. Power is divided among legislative, executive, and judicial branches.
- B. Private organizations in the United States do much of the work that is performed by local governments in other countries.
- C. Citizens in the United States are subject to both state and national laws.
- D. Citizens in the United States have a right to protection from intrusion into their private affairs.

Freedom of Speech versus Public Safety: Please read the news article below and answer the question that follows.

Klan Tests University's Commitment to Free Speech

SAN DIEGO, Ca. – How far is San Diego State University prepared to go to protect freedom of speech? The Ku Klux Klan has requested a permit to conduct a speech and rally on the San Diego State University campus during the fall of 2009. Officials and administrators will decide whether to approve or deny the request in July.

Numerous courts have ruled that the U.S. Constitution ensures that the Klan has the right to speak and hold rallies on public grounds and that individuals have the right to hear the Klan's message if they are interested. Many of the Klan's appearances have been marked by violent clashes between Klan supporters and counterdemonstrators who show up to protest the Klan's racist activities. In a recent confrontation in Ann Arbor, Michigan, several bystanders were injured by rocks thrown by Klan supporters and protesters. Usually, a large police force is needed to control the crowds.

Opinion about the speech and rally is mixed. Many San Diego State students, faculty, and staff worry about the rally but support the group's right to speak. One observer remarked: "The Klan has the right to speak, and people have the right to hear them if they want to. We may have some concerns about the rally, but the right to speak and hear what you want takes precedence over our fears about what could happen."

39. How strongly do you agree with the following statement?

"San Diego State should allow the Ku Klux Klan to hold a rally on campus."

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

Landmark Court Cases: Match each court case with its constitutional issue by placing the correct letter in the space provided.

- A. *Texas v. Johnson*
- B. *Griswold v. Connecticut*
- C. *Brown v. Board of Education*
- D. *Kyllo v. United States*

40. _____ The decision of a married couple to use artificial birth control is protected by the right to privacy.
41. _____ Use of heat seeking devices without a warrant while looking for marijuana plants is unreasonable and therefore a violation of a protection against warrantless search and seizure.
42. _____ Burning of the American flag is protected by the First Amendment.
43. _____ Segregation in schools was ruled to be unconstitutional.

Do You Agree or Disagree? Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please circle your response.

44. It is better to live in an orderly society, even if some freedoms are limited, rather than to allow people so much freedom that they can become disruptive.

Agree _____

Disagree _____

45. Your U.S. history, civics, and government classes have prepared you for the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Agree _____

Disagree _____

Thank you for participating in this survey. We want to assure you, again, that the information that you have provided will remain confidential. It will be used by researchers to help design courses and lessons for high school students about politics and government.