

Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1996, pages 200, 201

Table 2.116

Attitudes toward laws regulating the distribution of pornography

By demographic characteristics, United States, selected years 1983-96

Question: "Which of these statements comes closest to your feelings about pornography laws:
There should be laws against the distribution of pornography whatever the age;
there should be laws against the distribution of pornography to persons under 18;
or there should be no laws forbidding the distribution of pornography?"

	1983			1984			1986			1987			1988		
	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws
	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution
National	41%	53%	4%	41%	54%	4%	43%	53%	4%	40%	55%	4%	43%	50%	5%
Sex															
Male	31	63	5	30	63	7	30	64	4	26	67	5	33	59	6
Female	49	46	4	48	48	2	52	44	4	50	46	3	51	43	4
Race															
White	42	52	4	41	54	4	43	53	3	41	54	4	45	49	5
Black/other	32	62	5	37	54	5	38	53	6	33	61	3	35	58	6
Age															
18 to 20 years	24	73	2	20	69	9	21	74	5	26	74	0	23	71	6
21 to 29 years	25	71	3	22	73	5	26	71	2	25	70	5	28	67	4
30 to 49 years	35	60	4	34	62	4	35	60	4	32	63	4	38	57	4
50 years and older	38	56	4	36	60	4	40	55	4	36	60	4	32	61	7
Education^a															
College	35	60	5	33	62	5	38	58	4	32	63	4	37	58	4
High school graduate	42	53	4	44	52	3	42	54	4	43	53	3	46	47	5
Less than high school graduate	59	31	5	54	36	5	61	31	2	56	34	7	55	30	6
Income															
\$50,000 and over	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
\$30,000 to \$49,999	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
\$20,000 to \$29,999	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Under \$20,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Occupation															
Professional/business	38	55	5	35	60	4	40	55	4	35	59	4	40	54	4
Clerical	46	50	4	43	54	2	50	48	2	51	46	3	53	44	2
Manual	38	56	5	43	51	4	40	55	4	39	55	4	41	51	6
Farmer	38	51	5	55	39	6	60	40	0	38	58	5	56	31	12
Region															
Northeast	59	33	6	62	32	4	60	34	4	57	37	4	58	32	5
Midwest	38	56	4	40	54	4	42	54	3	39	55	5	45	48	3
South	46	48	4	43	51	4	47	48	4	43	52	4	48	45	5
West	40	54	6	42	53	5	38	58	4	39	55	4	44	52	4
Religion															
Protestant	46	48	4	44	50	4	47	49	3	43	53	3	48	46	4
Catholic	36	59	5	40	58	2	40	56	3	40	56	3	40	55	3
Jewish	19	72	7	19	77	4	18	71	10	20	65	15	13	65	17
None	27	65	6	21	70	9	24	66	8	16	71	11	21	64	12
Politics															
Republican	45	49	5	44	52	3	47	49	3	44	51	4	46	48	3
Democrat	41	54	5	44	51	4	44	50	4	41	54	4	44	49	6
Independent	39	55	4	35	58	6	37	59	3	34	61	4	39	54	5

Note: The "don't know" category has been omitted; therefore percents may not sum to 100. Readers interested in responses to this question for previous years should consult previous editions of SOURCEBOOK. For a discussion of public opinion survey sampling procedures, see Appendix 6.

Source: National Opinion Research Center, "General Social Surveys, 1972-94," "General Social Surveys, 1996," Storrs, CT: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. (Machine-readable data files.) Table constructed by SOURCEBOOK staff.

^aIn 1996, education categories were revised slightly and therefore are not directly comparable to data presented for prior years.

1989			1990			1991			1993			1994			1996		
Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws	Laws forbidding distribution		No laws
What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution	What-ever the age	To persons under 18	forbidding distribution
40%	54%	5%	41%	52%	6%	40%	55%	4%	42%	54%	3%	37%	60%	3%	38%	58%	4%
29	63	7	33	59	6	26	66	6	32	62	5	26	68	5	25	70	4
49	46	3	47	47	5	49	47	3	48	48	2	45	52	2	48	48	4
41	54	4	42	51	5	41	54	4	44	53	3	38	58	3	39	56	4
38	52	7	34	57	7	31	60	6	31	60	6	31	65	3	31	64	3
36	56	8	17	65	13	16	79	0	28	59	10	15	79	3	23	70	6
27	68	3	29	67	3	30	66	3	24	72	3	25	72	2	25	72	2
30	65	4	36	60	4	33	63	4	33	64	3	28	69	3	30	66	3
59	33	6	53	36	8	54	38	5	60	34	3	54	41	4	54	39	5
34	59	5	36	57	7	36	59	4	36	60	3	30	66	3	32	63	4
43	53	4	44	51	5	42	53	4	46	49	3	42	56	2	41	57	2
59	29	7	47	38	5	51	43	4	55	39	4	54	34	9	48	43	6
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	35	60	5	32	65	2	31	65	3
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	37	60	2	34	63	3	34	62	3
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	41	53	4	35	60	4	39	56	4
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	47	49	2	41	55	3	39	54	4
37	58	4	38	55	6	35	60	4	38	58	3	32	64	3	34	62	4
48	48	3	47	50	4	45	51	4	48	48	4	43	55	1	41	56	3
39	53	6	40	52	5	41	53	4	42	54	3	35	61	4	38	57	3
44	38	12	35	59	6	25	65	5	42	53	5	38	52	5	45	47	3
36	56	5	32	62	5	34	61	3	38	56	5	32	63	4	34	60	5
39	56	4	38	54	7	41	54	5	40	56	3	34	63	2	40	56	3
44	49	6	49	44	5	39	54	5	47	49	2	43	53	3	42	53	3
40	56	4	38	55	6	44	53	3	38	57	4	32	64	3	30	65	4
46	50	4	46	48	5	43	52	3	49	47	2	43	54	2	45	51	3
34	61	2	39	56	4	38	58	4	35	62	3	32	66	2	30	65	4
24	71	6	20	53	20	4	82	9	20	80	0	20	76	5	24	63	11
22	59	16	22	66	9	18	66	11	15	75	9	17	75	7	18	73	6
42	53	4	43	50	5	43	54	2	52	45	3	43	55	2	43	53	4
44	51	5	44	47	7	38	55	4	41	55	3	36	61	2	36	59	4
34	58	5	34	60	5	38	56	5	35	60	4	33	63	4	35	61	3