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**Terrorism Seen As Most Important Problem by Bush Backers;  
Kerry's Worry Most about Economy, Annenberg Data Show**

To committed Bush supporters the war on terrorism is clearly the nation's biggest problem, twice as important as the economy, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

But to Kerry backers the economy matters most, followed by the war in Iraq and health care, and only then by terrorism. The ever-smaller group of persuadable voters follows the same order as the Kerry backers.

For the nation as a whole, polling over the last year shows that concern about the economy rose through March and then declined to a point slightly below where it was a year ago. Worry about Iraq dropped last winter, then more than doubled in the spring, and has now receded is back to about where it was last November.

Among the Bush supporters, 24 percent of those interviewed between October 18 and 24 cited terrorism or the war on terror as the nation's most important problem. Twelve percent cited the economy or joblessness, 10 percent named the war in Iraq, 9 percent said health care and 7 percent cited moral issues.

Thirty percent of the Kerry backers in that sample of 1,998 registered voters picked the economy, 22 percent the war, 12 percent health care, 6 percent the war on terrorism – which they apparently consider different from the war in Iraq – and 2 percent moral issues.

Among persuadable voters, 30 percent named the economy, 18 percent the war, 9 percent health care, 7 percent terrorism and 2 percent moral issues.

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Persuadable voters are those who said they are undecided or said they have a preference between George W. Bush, John Kerry or Ralph Nader but there was a “good chance” they could change their minds. Committed voters were those who said there was either “no chance” they would change their minds or that it was “pretty unlikely.”

Among the 61,981 adults interviewed from November 1, 2003 through October 24, 2004, the economy began at 27 percent, reached 34 percent by March when the news was dominated by Democratic attacks on Bush over that issue. It slid back to 21 percent in June and July and was at 23 percent for polling in the entire month of October through October 24.

The war in Iraq started at 18 percent in November, slid to 13 percent after the capture of Saddam Hussein in December, and down to 9 percent in March. But it doubled to 19 percent in April and reached 22 percent in May and June, before receding slightly to 17 percent for the entire month of October through October 24.

There was only one month in which more respondents cited the war in Iraq than the economy. That was in June, following the spring’s spike in casualties.

The war on terrorism has increased over the year in its hold on public attention, from lows of 7 percent last November and again in April and then rising to 13 percent in August, 14 percent in September and back to 13 percent in the first 24 days of October..

Health care, a prominent element in Kerry’s campaign, began at 6 percent last November and never exceed 7 percent until this month, when 10 percent cited it. Moral issues began at 5 percent and stand at 4 percent for the entire month of October, with very little variation.

But different issues are paramount to different people, and not just to Bush or Kerry partisans.

In the October 18-24 data, the economy mattered most to 31 percent of blacks and 29 percent of liberals. But it was most important only to 17 percent of people who attend religious services more than once a week and to 15 percent of conservatives. It was the most important issue for both men and women, at 21 percent for men and 23 percent for women.

The economy’s importance to different income groups showed no clear pattern. It mattered most to 26 percent of those with household incomes over \$75,000 and 24 percent of those with incomes under \$35,000 but only to 20 percent of those with incomes between those two levels.

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The war in Iraq mattered most to 23 percent of blacks, Hispanics and people 18 to 29, but to just 11 percent of white born-again Protestants and 12 percent of 30 to 44 year-olds.

Terrorism mattered most to 17 percent of men but just 10 percent of women, to 17 percent of those with household incomes between \$35,000 and \$75,000 and but to just 8 percent of those with incomes below \$35,000. Regionally, Midwesterners were least likely to cite it as most important, with 10 percent citing that issue.

Health care mattered most to 8 percent of men and 13 percent of women, to 5 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds and 14 percent of the pre-Medicare generation of 45 to 64 year-olds. Among different income groups, it mattered most to 14 percent of those with incomes between \$35,000 and \$75,000 but to just 7 percent of those with incomes over \$75,000.

The highest readings for moral values as the nation's most important problem, at 9 percent came from people who attended religious services more than once a week and white born-again Protestants. But it was cited by just 2 percent of other white Protestants, people who said they never went to religious services, those from union households and political moderates.

The National Annenberg Election Survey is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania ([www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org](http://www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org)). Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is [FactCheck.org](http://FactCheck.org), a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at [www.FactCheck.Org](http://www.FactCheck.Org).

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## Tables

### Most Important Problem November, 2003 to October, 2004

Registered Voters only

	Economy/ Unemploy -ment	Iraq war / Situation in Iraq	Terrorism / War on Terrorism	Healthcare	Lack of moral/ family values
November, 2003	27%	18%	7%	6%	5%
December, 2003	27%	13%	9%	6%	5%
January, 2004	29%	12%	10%	7%	5%
February, 2004	31%	10%	7%	7%	7%
March, 2004	34%	9%	10%	6%	6%
April, 2004	25%	19%	10%	4%	5%
May, 2004	25%	22%	8%	4%	5%
June, 2004	21%	22%	11%	5%	5%
July, 2004	21%	18%	11%	6%	5%
August, 2004	23%	16%	13%	7%	5%
September, 2004	24%	17%	14%	7%	4%
October 1-24, 2004	23%	17%	13%	10%	4%

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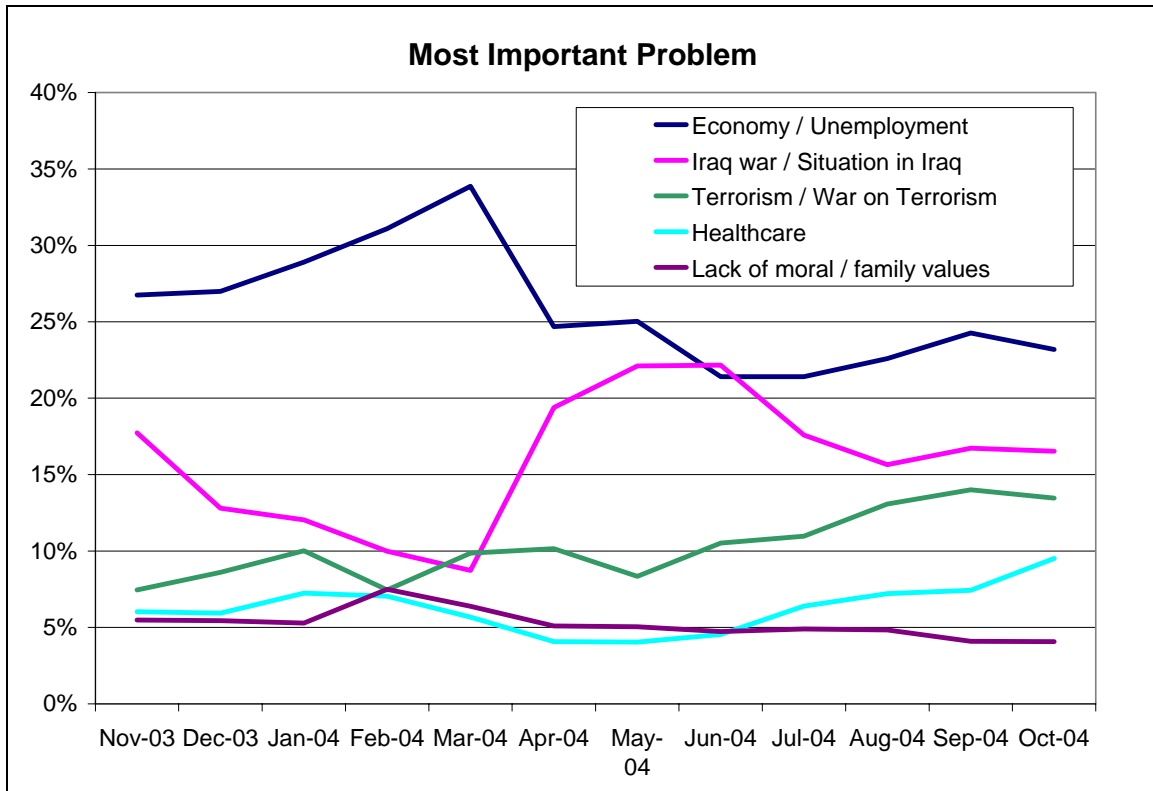
## Most Important Problem October 18-24, 2004

Registered Voters only

	Economy/U nemploy- ment	Iraq war / Situation in Iraq	Terrorism / War on Terrorism	Health care	Lack of moral/ family values
Total	22%	16%	13%	10%	5%
Men	21%	13%	17%	8%	4%
Women	23%	19%	10%	13%	5%
White	21%	15%	15%	10%	5%
Black	31%	23%	5%	9%	4%
Latino	28%	23%	11%	7%	3%
Age					
18-29	22%	23%	10%	5%	3%
30-44	23%	12%	12%	10%	5%
45-64	23%	13%	16%	14%	4%
65 & older	20%	21%	13%	9%	6%
Education:					
High School or Less	20%	18%	13%	11%	4%
Some college	25%	16%	13%	12%	6%
College degree or more	23%	13%	14%	8%	5%
Household income:					
Less than \$35,000	24%	21%	8%	10%	4%
\$35,000 to \$74,999	20%	13%	17%	14%	5%
\$75,000 or more	26%	13%	14%	7%	3%
Union household	22%	14%	12%	11%	2%
Someone in household unemployed	25%	17%	8%	10%	3%
Married or living as married	22%	13%	15%	12%	5%
Gun in household	22%	12%	16%	9%	6%
Attend religious services:					
More than once a week	17%	13%	11%	6%	9%
Once a week	21%	16%	15%	12%	6%
Once or twice a month	25%	16%	13%	10%	3%
A few times a year	24%	15%	14%	11%	3%
Never	22%	19%	12%	11%	2%

	Economy/ Unemploy- ment	Iraq war / Situation in Iraq	Terrorism / War on Terrorism	Health care	Lack of moral/ family values
White born-again Christians	16%	11%	17%	8%	9%
Other white Protestants	23%	16%	14%	13%	2%
White Catholics	23%	19%	14%	10%	3%
Conservatives	15%	12%	21%	8%	8%
Moderates	26%	20%	11%	11%	2%
Liberals	29%	15%	5%	13%	3%
Republicans	14%	10%	23%	7%	6%
Democrats	27%	22%	7%	13%	3%
Independents	25%	15%	12%	11%	5%
Northeast	24%	17%	14%	10%	4%
Midwest	25%	13%	10%	12%	4%
South	21%	15%	15%	10%	5%
West	20%	19%	14%	9%	4%
Urban	22%	16%	12%	9%	5%
Suburban	23%	15%	16%	11%	4%
Rural	21%	19%	11%	9%	5%
Committed to Bush	12%	10%	24%	9%	7%
Committed to Kerry	30%	22%	6%	12%	2%
Persuadables	30%	18%	7%	9%	2%

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## Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue past Election Day.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with two interviewing periods. From October 12 through 18, 2004, 1,998 registered voters were interviewed. In theory, in 19 out of 20 cases, results for all registered voters will differ by no more than two percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults over the same time periods. For smaller subgroups, such as committed Bush voters or committed Kerry voters, the margin of sampling error would be plus or minus three percentage points, and for persuadable voters it would be plus or minus six percentage points.

The report also deals with interviewing of 61,891 adults conducted from November 1, 2003 through October 24, 2004.. No data are reported for the total sample, but instead for each month. The totals per month varied from 3,000 registered voters in April, 2004, to 7,613 in September, 2004.. For the months of November, 2003 and January, March, April and June, 2004, the margin of sampling error was plus or minus two percentage points. For December, 2003, and February, May, July, August, September and October, 2004, it was plus or minus one percentage point.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

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