

Appendix J – Attitudes toward Science and Medical Research

Q1: “Scientific research is essential for improving the quality of human lives.” Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

	<i>2004</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>
Strongly agree	56	59	48
Somewhat agree	36	31	42
Somewhat disagree	5	6	6
Strongly disagree	2	3	3
Don't know	1	1	1
No answer	0	1	0

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences Survey, September 7-17, 2004, N=1004.

Q2: On the whole, have developments in science helped make society better or not?

	<i>2004</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>
Better	90	87	86	86
Not better	4	7	7	5
Don't know	4	3	6	7
No Answer	1	2	1	2

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences, September 2003, N=1003.

Q4: “New technology used in medicine allows people to live longer and better.” Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

	<i>2004</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>
Strongly agree	63	60	57
Somewhat agree	29	31	34
Somewhat disagree	5	5	6
Strongly disagree	2	4	2
Don't know	0	1	0
No answer	0	0	1

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences, September 2003, N=1003.

Q5: Of all the developments made in science over the last 30 years, which one would you say has made the most positive contribution to society? (Open-ended responses recorded verbatim and coded into categories.)

	<i>Percentage</i>
Medical and health (e.g., vaccines, research, devices, medicines)	27
Computers and Internet	24
Mass communication (e.g., cell phones, satellites, TV, radio)	5
Biotechnology (e.g., cloning, embryo research, DNA, genetic research)	2
Other specific issues (e.g., transportation, space exploration)	2
Nothing positive occurred in past 30 years	0
Other	9
Don't know/not sure/no response	30

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences, September 2002, N=1000.

Q6: How much do you agree or disagree with the following: "Scientific research these days doesn't pay enough attention to the moral values of society." Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with that statement?

	<i>2004</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>
Strongly agree	25	28	29	28
Somewhat agree	36	35	40	45
Somewhat disagree	22	23	20	15
Strongly disagree	12	9	9	8
Don't know	4	2	2	4
No answer	2	3	0	2

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences, September 7-17, 2004, N=1004.

Q7: "Scientific research has created as many problems for society as it has solutions." Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with that statement?

	<i>2004</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>
Strongly agree	17	19	18	18
Somewhat agree	34	36	41	36
Somewhat disagree	30	29	28	26

	2004	2003	2002	2001
Strongly disagree	15	14	11	14
Don't know	4	2	2	4
No answer	0	1	1	2

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences, September 2003, N=1003.

Q8: For each of the following, please tell me if it is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important to you personally. How about medical researchers finding cures for diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, heart disease, and spinal cord injury?

	Percentage
Very important	82
Somewhat important	16
Not too important	1
Not at all important	1

CNN/ USA Today/ Gallup Poll, July 20, 2001, N=998.

Q34: Even if it brings no immediate benefits, scientific research which advances the frontiers of knowledge is necessary and should be supported by the federal government. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?

	Percentage
Strongly agree	19
Agree	62
Disagree	15
Strongly disagree	1
Won't say	*
Don't know	3

National Science Foundation, Public Attitudes Towards and Understanding of Science and Technology Trend Survey, February 28-April 30, 2001, N=1574.

Q110: If you were making up the budget for the federal government this year, would you increase spending for ... scientific research ... decrease spending for ... scientific research ... or keep spending the same for this?

	<i>Percentage</i>
Increase spending	41
Decrease spending	10
Spending the same	46
Don't know/refused	3

Pew Research Center, April 18-22, 2001, N=1202.

Q111: We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on ... supporting scientific research?

	<i>Percentage</i>
Too little	34
About right	47
Too much	13
Don't know	6

General Social Survey, February 6-June 26, 2002, N=2765.

Q112: Now for a different type of question. People have frequently noted that scientific research has produced both beneficial and harmful consequences. Would you say that, on balance, the benefits of scientific research have outweighed the harmful results, are about equal, or have the harmful results of scientific research been greater than its benefits? Would you say that the balance has been strongly in favor of beneficial results, or only slightly? Would you say that the balance has been strongly in favor of harmful results, or only slightly?

	<i>Percentage</i>
Balance strongly in favor of beneficial results	47
Balance slightly in favor of beneficial results	25
About equal	19
Balance slightly in favor of harmful results	7
Balance strongly in favor of harmful results	3

National Science Foundation, Public Attitudes Towards and Understanding of Science and Technology Trend Survey, February 28-April 30, 2001, N=1574.

Q95: “The temptation to make money from new technologies puts pressure on scientists to pursue research ideas that violate ethical principles.” Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree?

	<i>Percentage</i>
Strongly agree	30
Somewhat agree	39
Somewhat disagree	19
Strongly disagree	8
Don't know	3

Virginia Commonwealth University Life Sciences, September 2002, N=1000.