

# **Two-thirds of Americans upset about moral climate of the nation, but most younger Americans are gene**

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## **Two-thirds of Americans upset about moral climate of the nation, but most younger Americans are generally satisfied**

WASHINGTON (RNS)—An annual Gallup Poll found that nearly two-thirds of Americans are dissatisfied with the country's moral and ethical climate.

But the same poll showed younger people seem to be less pessimistic than their elders.

Gallup's annual Mood of the Nation poll found that 64 percent of Americans are dissatisfied with the country's moral climate, while 35 percent say they are satisfied.

Pollsters say the “fairly dim view” on American morality was likely influenced by corporate scandals involving Enron and Martha Stewart, Janet Jackson's “wardrobe malfunction” at the Super Bowl halftime show and increasing attention paid to gay marriage.

Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 seem more optimistic—in the 2003 and 2004 polls, 53 percent of younger Americans said they are satisfied with the country's morality.

Among older adults, the highest level of satisfaction—38 percent—was found among those ages 30 to 49.

Among Americans ages 65 and older, only 29 percent were satisfied.

Gallup contributing editor Heather Mason described the generational divide as “a pattern that has existed for several years.”

“Adults under the age of 30 grew up in the era of the Internet, music videos and cable television shows that continued to push the moral envelope and may not remember a time when profanity and sexual content were more taboo,” she said in Gallup's Briefing report.

The annual poll of 1,004 adults, conducted each January, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Among respondents ages 18 to 29, the margin of error is plus or minus 6 percentage points.

### **Percentage of Americans Who Are Satisfied or Dissatisfied with the Country's Moral and Ethical Climate:**

Total: 35 percent satisfied/64 percent dissatisfied

18-29 years: 53 percent satisfied/47 percent dissatisfied

30-49 years: 38 percent satisfied/63 percent dissatisfied

50-64 years: 31 percent satisfied/67 percent dissatisfied

65+ years: 29 percent satisfied/71 percent dissatisfied

*Source: Gallup Tuesday Briefing*

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