

Public Agenda Launches Center for Advances in Public Engagement

The movement to engage citizens more fully in public life has grown substantially over the past decade, and the new **Center for Advances in Public Engagement (CAPE)** will be at the forefront of efforts to research, develop and disseminate new insights and best practices that help build the field's expertise and effectiveness.

CAPE aims to take a leading role in a field dedicated to creating new and better ways for citizens to confront pressing public problems.

For nearly three decades, Public Agenda has been working to help citizens understand complex problems and create momentum for change by building common ground, managing differences, creating new partnerships and inspiring citizens to be more proactive and engaged in the issues that impact their lives. Even as Public Agenda continues its on-going public engagement field projects, the new Center will work to advance the larger professional field with three distinct but interrelated strands of work:

- The **Public Engagement Research Project** will conduct and disseminate studies that clarify the dynamics and impacts of specific public engagement practices.
- The **Digital Engagement Project** will explore new Internet-based tools and their application to engaging citizens in public deliberation and problem-solving.
- The **Theory-Building Project** will promote greater interplay between researchers and practitioners to improve the field's understanding of how public deliberation works and how it can work better.

"The deliberative democracy/public

engagement movement is exploding right now, with scores of new practical initiatives underway, as well as a growing number of academic studies, and an increasing number of new players," said **Will Friedman**, Public



CENTER for **ADVANCES**
in **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

"There is a great need to understand public engagement at a much deeper level. That's where CAPE will make its contribution."

WILL FRIEDMAN

Agenda Executive Vice President and Director of the new Center. "It's important that there be ways to get a handle on what strategies and practices are truly viable, and which approaches tend to keep us in the same

ruts. For practitioners in the field as well as communities that are considering devoting time and financial resources to these kinds of efforts, there is a great need to understand public engagement at a much deeper level. That's where CAPE will make its contribution."

"With the field of public engagement expanding so fast, I can't think of a better time for the launch of the Center," said Public Agenda Chairman **Daniel Yankelovich**, who is the author the seminal works *Coming to Public Judgment* and *The Magic of Dialogue*. "The public today is over-surveyed and under-engaged. CAPE has the potential to greatly advance the

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FOREIGN POLICY INDEX

'Anxiety Indicator' is New Feature of Foreign Policy Index

"Public anxieties on foreign policy won't go away just because the Democrats now control the Congress. Issues that are at a 'tipping point' may impede either party's ability to move an agenda until significant progress occurs." This is according to Public Agenda President **Ruth A. Wooden** in a statement released to the media following the midterm elections asserting that the "tipping points" identified by the Foreign Policy Index foreshadowed the election outcome.

Public Agenda announced the results of the latest edition of the *Confidence in U.S. Foreign*



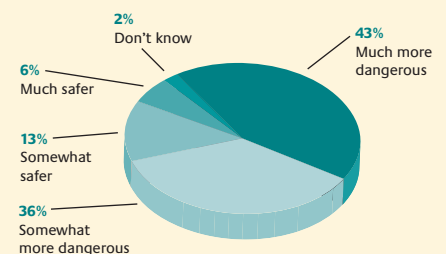
Policy Index less than a month before the mid-term elections and concluded that Americans were seeing a world of growing dangers, few solutions and little in U.S. foreign policy that seemed to be working.

With this edition of the Index, Public Agenda introduced the new "Anxiety Indicator," which measures the public's overall comfort level with the country's current international position and policies. The Fall 2006 Anxiety Indicator stood at

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A More Dangerous World for Americans

"Thinking about current U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say that the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for the U.S. and the American people?"



REALITY CHECK

Surprising Insights from Students, Teachers, Parents and Administrators

Public Agenda recently released three new reports from the Reality Check series of public opinion research on public education issues.

Released in May, *Reality Check 2006, Issue No. 2: How Black and Hispanic Families Rate Their Schools* found that blacks and Hispanics are significantly more likely to report negative classroom conditions than whites. Asked to rate their schools on key academic and social dimensions – resources, promotion policies, dropout rates, truancy, fighting, drug and alcohol abuse and others – black and Hispanic students are more likely than their white counterparts to report “very serious” problems in nearly every category.

NPR’s Morning Edition reported, “Close to one-third of black students say their teachers spend more time keeping order than teaching.” The study’s conclusion that far too many students face on a daily basis what amounts to a “hostile work environment” was reported by newspapers, television and radio across the nation.

Reality Check 2006: Issue No. 3: Is Support for Standards and Testing Fading? made news and has raised important questions in educational circles since its release in June. This report concluded that, five years into the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act and over a dozen years into the standards movement in American education, the public now sees these reforms as “necessary, but not sufficient.” This is consistent across a number of indicators among all groups

surveyed by Public Agenda – parents, students, teachers and administrators.

Jean Johnson, Executive Director of Public Agenda’s Education Insights said, “It is important to remember that much of the public’s initial support for raising standards grew out of anxiety over basics and the fear that too many youngsters were floating through the system without

mastering even fundamental reading and math skills. But as promotion standards toughened, as graduation standards were raised, as parents began to see their own children doing harder work than they did when they were in school, the problem of ‘low standards’ began


to lose its edge.”

Released in September, *Reality Check 2006, Issue No. 4: The Insiders: How Principals and Superintendents See Public Education Today* showed major disconnects between the priorities of national policy-makers versus those of local school leaders on issues like teacher quality, standards and the need to ramp up science and math coursework. Public Agenda found that even when they see the same problems, the two groups seem to strive for different solutions.



While a strong majority of principals say they are “very satisfied” with the teachers in their school and most superintendents believe the quality of new teachers is improving, federal officials enforcing No Child Left Behind said in Summer 2006 that not a single state in the nation has yet met

its benchmarks for insuring more qualified teachers. And while just more than half of the nation’s superintendents consider local schools to be “excellent” and relatively few say low standards are a serious problem where they work, the Department of Education says only 10 states have testing systems that meet its standards.

The Reality Check tracking surveys will be repeated periodically as a service of Education Insights, Public Agenda’s initiative to help those on the front lines of education reform cooperate more effectively to achieve key education goals. The 2006 Reality Check research is supported by the GE Foundation, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and The Wallace Foundation. 

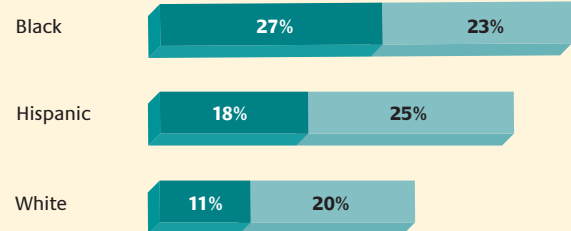
“Public Agenda...does excellent work in teasing out public attitudes, especially about education, and this report, like others I’ve written about is worth a look.”

LINDA SEEBACH,
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Minority Students Say Kids Aren’t Expected To Learn Enough

Academic standards are too low, and kids are not expected to learn enough

■ Very serious problem ■ Somewhat serious problem



Just the
FACTS

28%

of Americans say that religious faith is “the most important” influence in their lives. Another 40% say it was “very important,” 17% say “somewhat important,” 8% say “not too important” and 7% say “not at all important.” Source: *Religion and Public Life 2004*

Can Public Libraries Help Solve Urgent Community Problems?

Americans continue to prize public libraries in the Internet Age, a Public Agenda research report concluded in June. As local communities and states contend with tight budget constraints for public services, the public sees libraries as potential solutions to many communities' most pressing problems, from universal access to computers to the need for better options for keeping teens safe and productive.

“Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century”

reports the results of a national study of the general public as well as interviews with national and local civic leaders. This multi-level public opinion study identifies a troubling issue for library advocates: While Americans give their public libraries an “A” more often than any other community service asked about (45% give communities an “A” for maintaining well-run libraries) and a large majority of the public (71%) says their local library uses public money well, few Americans are aware of the increasingly tenuous financial picture faced by many libraries.

Most Americans say that if their library shut down because of lack of funding they would feel “that something essential and important has been lost, affecting the whole community” (78%). In contrast, just 17 percent said “while something important was lost, it really only affects a few people in the community” and only 3 percent said “the loss would not be important.”

Four areas of opportunity resonated most with the public and leaders alike: (1) providing stronger services for teens, (2) helping address illiteracy and poor reading skills among adults, (3) providing ready access to information about government services, including making public documents and forms readily available and (4) providing even greater access to computers for all.



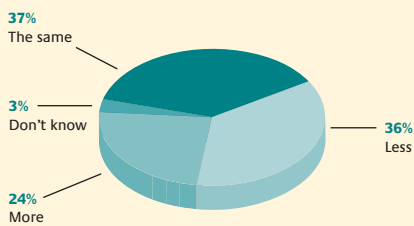
The research was conducted by Public Agenda with support from the **Americans for Libraries Council** with funding from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**.

“Libraries are poised to solve a number of urgent community problems,” said **Diantha Dow Schull**, President of Americans

for Libraries Council. “It is gratifying to see that libraries continue to meet public demand as information leaders in the digital age. Now we have an opportunity to build on that trust to expand the work libraries are already doing to provide safe places for our teens; provide quality health information; expand access to technology; and so many other crucial community roles for the 21st century. The public support is there, and the library community is ready.”

Libraries: Still Relevant in a Digital Age

In today's world, with Internet access, online databases and large booksellers such as Amazon.com, Borders or Barnes & Noble, do you think libraries have become more, less or the same in importance to their communities?



Improving Math and Science Education: A Communities Approach

For national business leaders, ramping up math and science education is a top priority for public schools. Meanwhile, most parents say their kids' science and math education is just fine as it is. Is that the end of the story? Not with the work underway in two new Education Insights projects that will dig deeper on a community-by-community basis.

Public Agenda has joined the **Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation** in its newly-launched, 10-year education initiative that focuses on improving math and science achievement among Kansas City area students.

Public Agenda has completed focus groups and individual interviews with key leaders and stakeholders in the Kansas City region, including students, parents, K-12 teachers, K-12 and post-secondary administrators and employers and will also create a public engagement “toolkit” with a video discussion starter and guides for organizers, facilitators and participants at community forums. Public Agenda will also field a Reality Check survey of parents and students focused on attitudes about math and science schoolwork in the Kansas City region and is developing a 3-year public engagement campaign.

The **GE Foundation** is also joining the effort to promote broader understanding of the math/science challenge. Later this year, Public Agenda will work with the Foundation on two projects aimed at improving access, equity and the quality of public education in GE communities. Public Agenda will survey teachers in Erie, PA and Atlanta, GA — two GE communities — to explore how they view the math and science education issue.

**EDUCATION
INSIGHTS**

52% of 18-25 year olds said say that their **high school counselors** usually made an effort to really get to know them and treated them as an individual; 47% said of their counselors, “I was just another face in the crowd.” Source: *Life After High School* 2005

60% of Americans say improving the **treatment of women in other countries** should be “very important” to our nation's foreign policy. An additional 30% said “somewhat important.” Source: *Foreign Policy Index* Fall 2006

ISSUES IN POLLING

Measuring Anxiety

By Daniel Yankelovich, Chairman, Public Agenda

In the Fall 2006 edition of the Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index, we introduced a new measure of public opinion called the Anxiety Indicator. The indicator sums up Americans' overall comfort level with the country's foreign policy using a simple numerical score. It offers a clear, unadorned benchmark of how well Americans think the country is doing in the international arena – much the way the Consumer Confidence Index captures the public's views of the economy or the way a student's grade point average sums up overall scholastic ability.

The Foreign Policy Index will continue to offer detailed results from its comprehensive survey containing more than 100 questions about America's role in the world. And it will continue to provide performance ratings from the public on issues ranging from terrorism to trade to energy independence to global development. But as informative as the specifics are, we believe a more succinct and overarching reading of Americans' state of mind is needed.

Apart from the war in Iraq, how secure and confident are most Americans about the nation's course? Is the country divided? Are most people feeling confident and positive about our role in the world? Or is the bulk of the country feeling anxious and ill-at-ease? We've introduced the Anxiety Indicator to gauge this overall sense of well-being.

It is important to know whether the country's leaders are pursuing foreign policy goals that are widely shared and initiatives that have broad public support. It is also important to know when public dissatisfaction with government policy may be reaching a "tipping point" that leaders have to address.

Within the larger Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index, Public Agenda has

created five questions that we believe capture the public's fundamental comfort level with the country's position in the world and which are used to calculate the Anxiety Index number:

- Whether U.S. relations with the rest of the world are on the right or wrong track
- Whether the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for Americans
- Whether the public believes the rest of the world sees the United States in a positive or negative light
- How successful the United States is as a leader working toward a more peaceful and prosperous world
- The degree to which Americans say they worry about the way things are

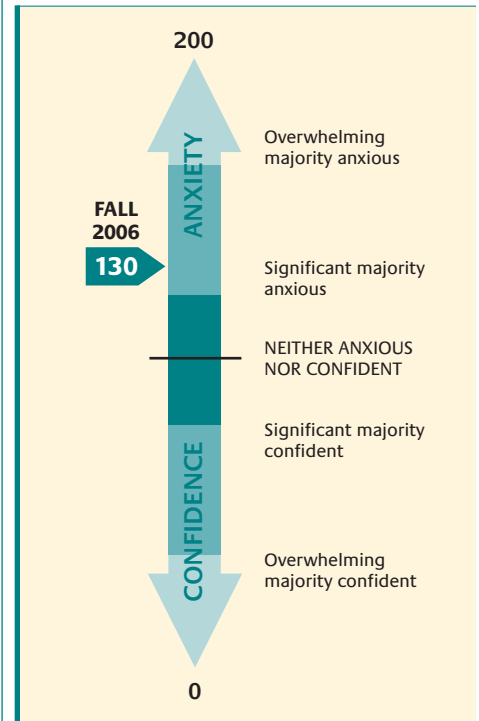
going for the United States in world affairs

To create the indicator, Public Agenda collects from more than 1,000 randomly selected Americans the responses to these five questions and plots them on a scale

of 0 to 200, where 0 is the most secure and 200 the most anxious. A rating of 100 is "neutral," a midpoint neither anxious nor confident. In fall 2006, the Anxiety Indicator stood at 130 – a number suggesting that apprehension and unease about the country's international position were

The Anxiety Indicator offers a clear, unadorned benchmark of how well Americans think the country is doing in the international arena.

Foreign Policy Anxiety Indicator



at high levels and that the public mood was nearing a tipping point.

Public Agenda will ask these five questions in all future editions of the Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index and report the Anxiety Indicator whenever we release our results. We don't expect that the indicator will ever reach the extreme points on the scale, either the 0 for confidence or the 200 for anxiety.

There may often be a time lag between world events and changes in public opinion or momentary surges or falls that quickly dissipate. Overall, however, we expect the Indicator to give us an ongoing reading of the shifts in the state of public opinion on foreign policy. 🌐

57%

of parents of K-12th graders say that "things are fine as is" when it comes to the amount of math and science their kids are being taught. 32% say their kids should be taught more math and science, 2% say less and 9% say they didn't know. Source: *Reality Check* 2006, Issue 1: Ready for More Math & Science?

31%

of black students say that it is a "very serious" problem in their schools that too many students get passed through the system without learning (another 25% say somewhat serious). Only 13% of white students say it is a very serious problem in their schools. Source: *Reality Check* 2006, Issue 2: Black & Hispanic Families

Coming Soon

Homelessness in New York City

New research from Public Agenda examines New Yorkers' attitudes and beliefs about homelessness and their implications for public action. The research is being supported by grants from the **Rockefeller Foundation** and the **Fannie Mae Foundation**. Public Agenda also provided a grant for the study from its **Wadsworth Program Development Fund**. Public Agenda consulted with the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and representatives from DHS observed the focus groups. DHS gave Public Agenda complete freedom in this study's research design, which included focus groups in all five boroughs, a citywide random telephone survey of 1,000 adult New Yorkers, and interviews with experts. The study is intended to inform DHS, other city, state and national policy leaders, the media and the public, with the goal of assessing and translating public attitudes into concrete and constructive policies to better serve the homeless, including an examination of strategies to prevent homelessness in the first place.

First Year Teachers Tell It Like It Is

When new teachers first set foot in the classroom, do they feel prepared and supported? What do they have to say about their first classroom experiences? Public Agenda's Education Insights division is taking up those question in a new national survey of first year teachers conducted for the **National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality** and **REL-Midwest**. The survey will explore how and why new teachers came to the profession, what they study in their teacher preparation programs, how they view their training, and what kinds of help and support they feel they need once they enter the classroom. One special

feature of the research will be the ability to compare the aspirations and experiences of new teachers who enter the profession through traditional schools of education versus those entering the profession through alternative certification programs such as Teach for America and Troops to Teach.

American Indians Today

Little research exists on how Native Americans and non-Native Americans view each other. This new project seeks to understand how American Indians see their role in today's America, how they define themselves in relation to their own heritage and traditions and in relation to mainstream society. We conducted six focus groups with Indians and another six focus groups with non-Indians. This unique research is made possible by the **Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation**

Why Not Choose Teaching?


Suppose there were a prestigious fellowship designed to attract some of the nation's most gifted college students to teaching as a career. Suppose the fellowship were aimed specifically at Americans who have the passion and commitment to teach in the nation's hard-to-staff urban and rural schools. Would college students take up the challenge? What about professionals in other fields who perhaps always wanted to teach? Public Agenda's Education Insights division is exploring these questions in a project for the **Woodrow Wilson Foundation**. This qualitative research will shed light on why people who might teach end up doing something else and what kinds of programs and teacher recruitment policies might be successful in bringing them into the classroom.

National Issues Forums Celebrate 25 Years of Growing Movement

National Issues Forums, the nonpartisan, nationwide network of locally-sponsored public forums, is celebrating its 25th Anniversary and – with Public Agenda's help – calling attention to hundreds of organizations and individuals in communities across the nation striving to produce substantive citizen deliberation on tough issues.

NIF forums are dramatically different from the so-called “town meetings” that either stack the deck or turn into brawling free-for-alls. “These are not the quaint ‘town hall gatherings’ of nostalgia,” said **William Winter**, National Issues Forums Institute Chairman and former Governor of Mississippi. “NIF is at the center of a modern movement to ensure that systematic, productive deliberation by real people guides our nation's public discourse. It is a growing movement of committed individuals and organizations who have witnessed important outcomes resulting from forums and believe that increasing the frequency and prominence of deliberation is a crucial antidote to the ills of today's vicious partisan politics.”

National Issues Forums Institute is the organization dedicated to supporting the NIF network and the independent organizations holding forums around the country.

Growing out of a 1981 conference of 25 leaders from national and local organizations interested in public policy education, NIF now includes more than 40 Public Policy Institute (PPI) centers across the nation where each year hundreds of citizens receive training in how to conduct public forums in their communities and tap into the network's resources to help move democracy forward. For more information on NIF: www.nifi.org 

15% of parents of K-12th graders say that in local schools **low academic standards** and low expectations is a “very serious” problem, whereas 39% say “schools not getting enough money to do a good job” and 34% say “too many kids lack respect for teachers” are serious problems.
Source: *Reality Check 2006, Issue 3: Standards & Testing*

63% of Americans “strongly agree” that **public libraries are essential** for maintaining a productive community. 29% somewhat agree, while only 6% somewhat or strongly disagree.
Source: *Long Overdue 2006*

Public Engagement Updates

PUBLIC ON FEDERAL BUDGET: WE CAN HANDLE THE TRUTH

In December, Public Agenda and its partners in the “Facing Up to the Nation’s Finances” initiative, announced the release of new research detailing the public’s perspective on dealing with the federal deficit.

The initiative released two public opinion research studies simultaneously, one from Public Agenda and one from **Viewpoint Learning**, both of which concluded that the public has only modest difficulty understanding the magnitude of the fiscal challenge facing the nation and, with some additional learning and structured dialogue, is willing to consider tough tradeoffs to address the growing national debt and long term fiscal challenges. But the public’s support for program cuts, reforms or tax increases comes with a major obstacle and key condition: they need to be assured that leaders share their willingness to face up to the tough choices and spend taxpayer money responsibly and for the purposes intended.

Both reports are available at: www.facingup.org.

Public Agenda’s opinion research report is based on a series of six focus groups held across the country in March and April 2006. The focus group research served as grounding for more in-depth ChoiceDialogues conducted by Viewpoint Learning. The ChoiceDialogue methodology goes beyond polls and focus groups to provide insight into how the public is willing to resolve tough tradeoffs on issues where they have not yet made up their minds.

“Facing Up to the Nation’s Finances” is an initiative developed by Public Agenda and Viewpoint Learning drawing on the research and analysis done at **The Brookings Institution, The Concord Coalition, and The Heritage Foundation.**

“Americans are willing, but is our government able?” asked **Alice Rivlin**, Senior Fellow and Director of the Economic Studies Program at The Brookings Institution and a Public Agenda board member. “These two reports provide ample evidence that the public senses the gravity of the federal budget situation even if they don’t know all the details. They talk reasonably about various solutions, and are willing to consider tax increases and program cuts, but only if they believe our leaders are doing all they can to



Media representatives, policy leaders and the “Facing Up to the Nation’s Finances” project panel listen to a member of the public talk about her concerns on the federal budget.

have the long-term interests of the country in mind and can be held accountable for their actions on behalf of all citizens.”

The “Facing Up to the Nation’s Finances” initiative involves new forms of opinion research, public engagement and intensive engagement of leadership in a multi-year project leading up to the 2008 Presidential elections and beyond. The Facing Up to the Nation’s Finances project is being supported by the **Ford Foundation.**

NEW ACHIEVING THE DREAM COLLEGES

Public Agenda has been asked to extend its work on the national Achieving the Dream project with work focusing on several community colleges in Pennsylvania. Achieving the Dream is a multi-year initiative launched by the **Lumina Foundation for Education** to increase the success of community college students, particularly those who face the greatest obstacles. Public Agenda has been working with participating colleges across the nation to engage students, faculty, communities and colleges to better understand the challenges to greater student success. With support from **The Heinz Endowments**, Public Agenda will be extending its public engagement work with an additional seven community colleges in Pennsylvania.



77% of public school superintendents say that making it easier “to **remove bad teachers** – even those who have tenure” would be very effective in public school reform. Source: *Reality Check 2006, Issue 4: The Insiders*

40% of Americans say that there is “**not much**” the U.S. can do to create a democracy in Iraq. 36% said the U.S. can do “something” to create a democracy in Iraq and 20% said “a lot.” Source: *Foreign Policy Index*, Fall 2006

MAXWELL SPEAKER SERIES

The U.S. – from the E.U. Perspective

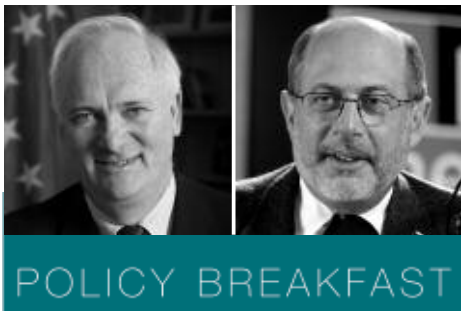
In December, Public Agenda and the Maxwell School of Syracuse University jointly sponsored a policy breakfast, the third in an ongoing series.

Our series moderator, National Public Radio's **Robert Siegel**, interviewed Ambassador **John Bruton**, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United States.

A large group of New York area business, policy and academic leaders attended the policy breakfast. The session included a lively audience Q&A session that covered topics as varied as Turkey and the integration of Muslims into western cultures; the European Union's low birthrate; why

Americans don't "get it" when it comes to global warming; bilateral trade agreements and building more commonality across the Atlantic on how businesses are regulated; common challenges for the U.S. and E.U. on aging populations and pensions; how or if to address Russia's threats to democratic functioning; and why America is "no longer cool" among young Europeans.

The Public Agenda-Maxwell School Policy Breakfast series is quickly growing in popularity, with every new meeting space being filled to capacity. The **McGraw-Hill Companies** is providing meeting space and breakfast for the series. Past policy breakfast programs have included Former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker and Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Former Chief Economist of the Council of Economic Advisers. 



 Maxwell School  PUBLIC AGENDA

'Anxiety Indicator' is New Feature of Foreign Policy Index

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130, well above the neutral point of 100 and suggested that a significant majority of the public was feeling anxious and insecure about the country's place in the world.


Public Agenda reported that the public was quite worried about many specific aspects of the nation's foreign policy, and was at or near a "tipping point" on issues like Iraq, dependence on foreign oil and protecting our borders from illegal immigration, among others.

"This level of public anxiety, combined with Americans' disapproval of the nation's current course, is not something leaders can just dismiss," Public Agenda Chairman **Daniel Yankelovich** said at the

time of the report's release. "It's not just one event or one specific policy that is worrying people — it's Iraq, it's the danger of a terrorist attack, it's energy dependence, it's our diminished reputation around the world, it's the rise of violent Muslim extremism. People see the country in trouble on multiple fronts."

The Anxiety Indicator number is derived from results of five survey questions (contained within the larger survey of more than 110 questions) which will be asked consistently in future editions of the Foreign Policy Index (see more about the Indicator in "Issues in Polling" in this newsletter).

The full report is available online at: www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=102

The next edition of the index will be released in late Spring 2007. 


Court Users Judge for Themselves

In December 2006, Public Agenda released "Trust and Confidence in the California Courts: Public Court Users and Judicial Branch Members Talk About the California Courts." This report on focus groups and in-depth interviews, commissioned on behalf of the **Judicial Council of California**, examines attitudes about the state

courts among both the general public who have had recent experience in the state courts, as well as the judicial administrators and

officers who serve there. This was phase two of research, following a large scale quantitative study of the public conducted in 2005.

"Trust and Confidence in California Courts" finds that court users had generally high levels of confidence in the state's courts and judges but often confused the roles and responsibilities of courts with other agencies such as law enforcement and prisons. The cost of hiring a qualified attorney is by far the most common barrier preventing citizens from using the court system cited in focus groups. There are increasing numbers who enter the court systems representing themselves without any legal assistance, causing significant delays in the system.

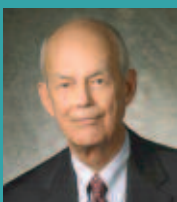
The increasing diversity of the California population presents many challenges for the courts, and both participants and court administrators noted the need for more qualified interpreters. Importantly, public confidence and trust in the California courts depend as much, and perhaps more on whether people perceive court procedures to be fair than on the actual outcome of their specific cases. Commissioned by the Administrative Office of the Courts and conducted by Public Agenda and Doble Research Associates, the report is available at: http://publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=103. 



Board Member News



The name of Public Agenda co-founder **Cyrus R. Vance** now graces an annual award given by the state of West Virginia for international education. The Cyrus R. Vance Award for International Education in West Virginia, bestowed by the Secretary of Education and the Arts, is presented to educators or educational organizations at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels that best exemplify Mr. Vance's dedication to the understanding of international issues and affairs. Mr. Vance, a native of West Virginia, was the Secretary of State in the Carter Administration. He died in 1999. In November 2006, Public Agenda Executive Vice President Jean Johnson gave the keynote speech at the awards ceremony in Charleston, West Virginia, this fall.



Public Agenda board member **Bobby Inman** has recently been awarded an Eisenhower Medal of Service to Democracy from the American Assembly, a public policy organization affiliated with Columbia University. The retired Admiral, technology industry leader and former dean of the University of Texas's LBJ School of Public Affairs, was honored for a career that included positions as director of the National Security

Agency and deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Admiral Inman was also recently awarded the University of Texas Presidential Citation as one who has "brought great distinction to the University and who exemplifies the values of our institution."



Frank Stanton, a Public Agenda board member emeritus who The New York Times described as "a central figure in the development of television broadcasting in the United States and the industry's most articulate and persuasive spokesman during his nearly three decades as president of CBS," died December 24, 2006. He was 98.

Dr. Stanton was the right-hand man of William S. Paley, who built the CBS empire from a handful of struggling radio stations in 1928. The Times noted, "From 1946 to 1973, they operated as probably the greatest team in the history of broadcasting, making CBS, for a time, the most powerful communications company in the world, and the most prestigious. It was under Dr. Stanton and Mr. Paley that CBS, mixing entertainment programming with high-quality journalism and dashes of high culture, earned its reputation as the Tiffany Network."

Public Agenda Senior Advisor and former President Deborah Wadsworth said of Mr. Stanton, "Throughout Frank Stanton's

long trusteeship on behalf of Public Agenda, he could be counted on for wise and penetrating guidance, cutting through the extraneous and providing nurturing support. Even in his retirement, he remained a good friend and constant advocate. We will miss him dearly".



The Institute for International Economics, a Washington think tank, has a new name: the **Peter G. Peterson Institute for International Economics**. The new name honors the Public Agenda board member who has been a supporter of the Institute since it began in 1981. Peterson, who is Chairman of The Blackstone Group, a former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and the Secretary of Commerce in the Nixon administration, is an authority on business and the economy and is the author of numerous books, most recently "Running on Empty: How the Democratic and Republican Parties Are Bankrupting Our Future and What Americans Can Do About It."

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Former U.S. Secretary of State

Homecoming for Doble in Research Department

Public Agenda is pleased to announce some exciting new developments in its research division. The department is expanding and will have a new Director and Senior Vice President, John Doble.

Doble is the founder and President of Doble Research Associates, a nonpartisan public interest consulting firm specializing in exploring public and leadership opinion on complex issues. Prior to starting his own firm, Doble was Vice President and Director of Research at Public Agenda. He is returning to Public Agenda after 14 successful years running his own organization, with a diverse roster of clients that includes the Kettering Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Crime and Justice Institute, The North Carolina Council of Churches and the Delaware Governor's Family Council.

Doble brings to Public Agenda not only

a stellar knowledge of social research methods, several ongoing research projects and a growing research niche in state justice system issues, but also two bright additions to our research staff. Janay Cody and Laura Kelsky will be joining the existing research staff at Public Agenda to work on both new and ongoing projects.

Doble Research partnered with Public Agenda last year on a major research project for the State of California on public trust and confidence in the state's courts. (See article page seven) In addition, there has been a good deal of collaboration between Public Agenda and Doble Research Associates in work done over the years for the Kettering Foundation. 🌐

IN MEMORIAM Cole Campbell



Public Agenda is mourning the loss of a dear friend and colleague, Cole Campbell. Cole was deeply involved in the public engagement movement, a leader in civic journalism and, most recently, the Dean of the School of Journalism at the University of Nevada. Long associated with **The Kettering Foundation**, Cole most recently worked with Public Agenda in November as the moderator for the Washington, DC, roundtable discussion "Democracy's Challenge: Reclaiming the Public's Role." His humor and deep knowledge produced great insights in this and countless other discussions over the years. He died in a car accident January 2, 2007. *The New York Times* said Cole was "one of the first newspaper editors to embrace the idea that journalism should help readers be engaged citizens" when he was the Editor of *The Virginian-Pilot*. A leader in the field of journalism said that Cole, "was a towering intellectual among newspaper editors, astonishingly well-read, and curious about all ideas." We simply called him a friend. And we will miss him. 🌐



Public Agenda's new Senior Vice President and Director of Research John Doble (center) and new Research Associates, Janay Cody (left) and Laura Kelsky.

Public Agenda Launches Center for Advances in Public Engagement

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practice of public engagement and bring important new insights into how and why true public dialogue really works."

Major start-up support for the Center is

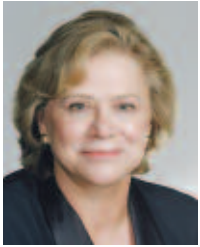
being provided by the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** and the **Rockefeller Brothers Fund**. CAPE is also doing collaborative research with the **Kettering Foundation**, and discussions are underway with several other foundations to examine specific lines of inquiry and specific policy issues to promote greater effectiveness within the civic engagement field.

For more information on CAPE and Public Agenda's public engagement work, contact **Alison Kadlec**, CAPE's Associate Director, at 212-686-6610 x 40 or akadlec@publicagenda.org. Also, visit the public engagement section of Public Agenda Online. 🌐

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Advancing on Multiple Fronts

By Ruth A. Wooden



When Public Agenda releases a public opinion study, it often makes headlines. Our research on foreign policy, education and dozens of other topics over the years has contributed major insights on those issues and, we believe, advanced public dialogue in a way that significantly strengthens our nation's democracy.

While many know Public Agenda primarily for our nonpartisan, national-wide polling research, quantitative surveys are only a part of how we fulfill our mission. Public Engagement programs are an equally important aspect of our work. And as this newsletter's cover article on Public Agenda's new Center for Advances in Public Engagement (CAPE) makes clear, we are dedicated not only to the many individual public engagement projects we are working on across the nation, but also to the larger field and to making sure that it has the expertise, credibility and public understanding it deserves.

Public Agenda's chairman and co-founder Daniel Yankelovich has recently said, "The public today is over-surveyed and under-engaged." It is his belief, and one I share, that survey research serves an important role in understanding public knowledge of issues, but vigorous and extensive engagement directly and intensively with citizens is necessary to really help the public understand issues and participate fully in the formulation of solutions. The essence of Public Agenda's mission is to foster modern "public

spaces" where citizens can learn more about critical policy issues and make informed decisions, which then must be considered by leaders in a truly democratic legislative process.

Just as our public opinion research has always been regarded as the gold standard in polling research for its depth, evenhandedness and ambition in exploring the consequences and trade-offs of various policy options, we believe that our work in public engagement is also leading the pack in terms of quality and integrity. The diversity and importance of our public engagement projects certainly speak to the reputation we are building for results-oriented, fact-based discussions that simultaneously address tough issues and build community problem-solving capacity and democratic functioning. I am very proud of the public engagement work we have been doing and I'm excited that it continues to grow in scale and topic matter.

With the World Wide Web's proliferation of blogs, chat rooms, and social networking sites, we see great potential in the internet to provide opportunities for serious public problem-solving. But right now, most sites either preach to the converted or spew deliberately provocative commentary. Public Agenda plans to build online spaces that replicate our traditional community forums, where Choicework leads to productive consideration of the consequences of tough decisions, where people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives work together to exchange opinions and build understanding, and where shared desires to work for the common good prevail. We have seen the power these kinds of conversations can have in communities, and now we're aiming to make them accessible to vastly more people via the internet.

Public engagement has been at the core of Public Agenda's work since its inception over 30 years ago. Our new work in public engagement carries that tradition to a whole new level. The last two decades have witnessed incredible changes in our lives brought about by new thinking and new technologies. Our democratic practices may soon be catching up and we believe that our advances in public engagement will be a major contribution to that change. 🌐



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