

SURVEY TITLE: General Social Survey

ACRONYM: GSS

SPONSOR: National Opinion Research Center with primary funding from the National Science Foundation.

SURVEY PURPOSE: The basic purposes of the GSS are to gather data on contemporary American society in order to monitor and explain trends and constants in attitudes, behaviors, and attributes; to examine the structure and functioning of society in general as well as the role played by relevant subgroups; to compare the United States to other societies in order to place American society in comparative perspective and develop cross-national models of human society; and to make high-quality data easily accessible to scholars, students, policy makers, and others, with minimal cost and waiting. Since 1988, the GSS has also collected data on number of sex partners, frequency of intercourse, extramarital relationships, and sex with prostitutes.

LOCATION SAMPLED: United States.

YEARS SEXUAL ORIENTATION DATA COLLECTED: 1988-91, 1993-1994.

SAMPLE SIZE: About 1,500 for the first 19 surveys; became 3,000 when the survey became biennial in 1994.

METHOD OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION DATA COLLECTION: Self-Completed Questionnaire.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION QUESTIONS:

"Have your sex partners in the last 12 months been exclusively male, both male and female, or exclusively female?"

AND

"Now thinking about the time since your 18th birthday (including the past 12 months) how many {female/male} partners have you had sex with?"