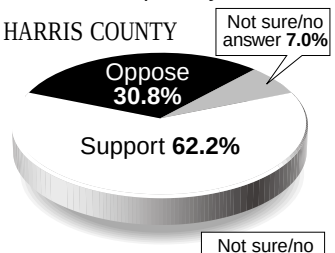
# Chronicle Poll

*The Houston Chronicle commissioned a poll to see how public opinion about the death penalty varies across the country. The questions were designed to gauge the level of support for the punishment under a variety of circumstances, to determine whether people believe it is carried out fairly and to see what effect, if any, aggressive application of the penalty might have on Texas' and Harris County's image.*

**Q** Do you support or oppose the death penalty?

HARRIS COUNTY

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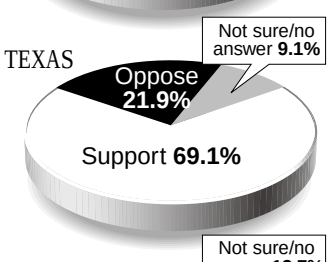


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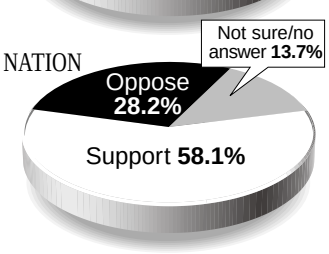
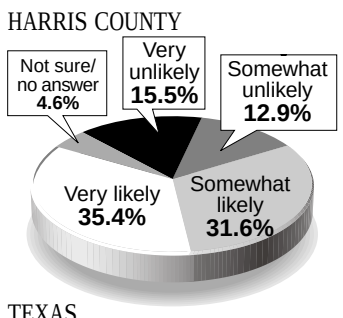



**Q** How likely is it, in your opinion, that an innocent person or people have been executed since the United States resumed applying the death penalty?

HARRIS COUNTY

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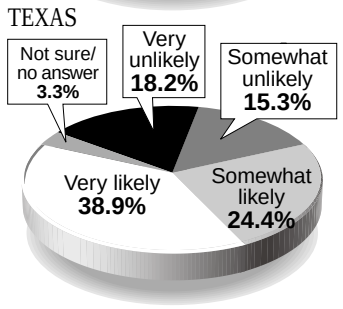


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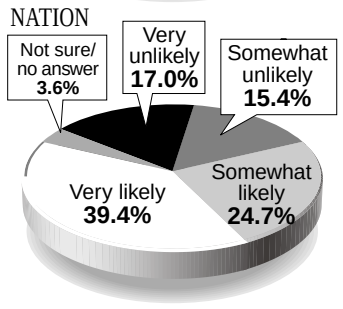
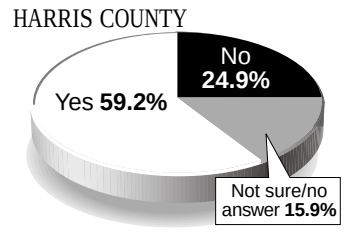



**Q** Do you believe your state has executed an innocent person?

HARRIS COUNTY

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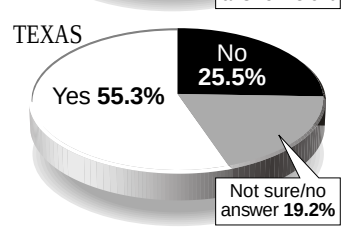


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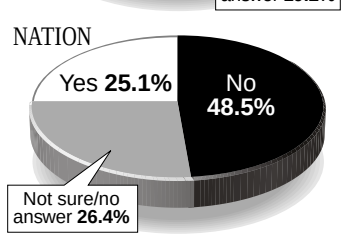
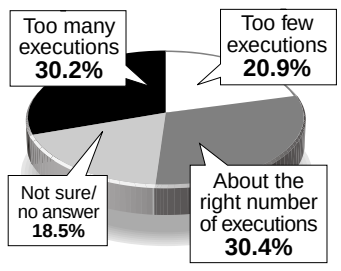



Note: Totals may not add up to 100 percent because of rounding. Texas figures exclude Harris County; national figures exclude Texas.

Source: The Houston Chronicle poll was conducted by the University of Houston's Center For Public Policy Survey Research Institute, which conducted random telephone interviews with 1,773 adults over age 18. The poll was conducted in three phases from Nov. 29-Dec. 21. The margin of error varies between 3.5 and 5 percentage points.

**Q** About 600 people have been executed in the United States since the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty. Do you think this is . . .

HARRIS COUNTY

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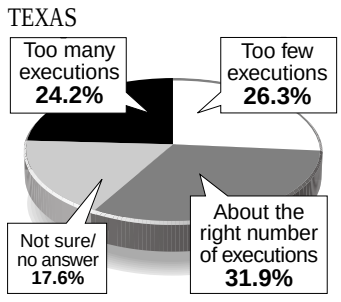


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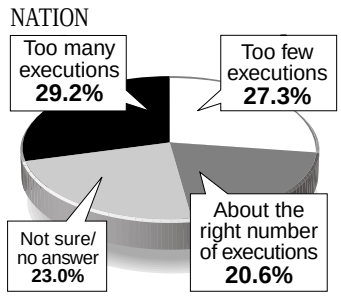
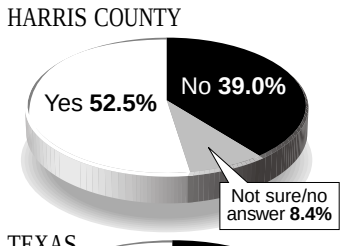



**Q** In general, do you think the death penalty is fairly applied in the United States?

HARRIS COUNTY

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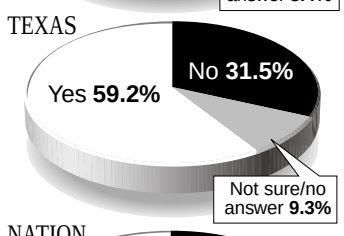


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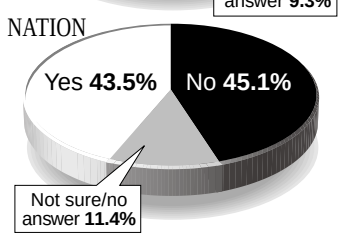
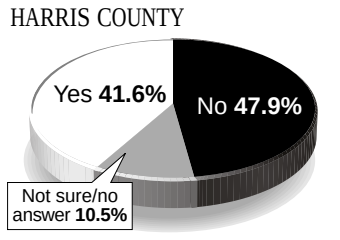



**Q** Do you believe the death penalty is applied fairly and equitably to persons of different races or ethnic groups?

HARRIS COUNTY

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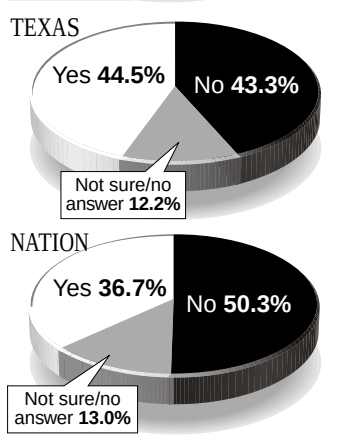


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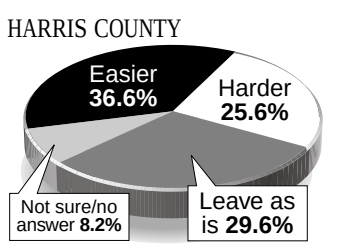
**Q** Some states have large death row populations of persons awaiting execution. Do you think it should be easier for these states to carry out the death penalty, harder, or should things be left as they are?

HARRIS COUNTY

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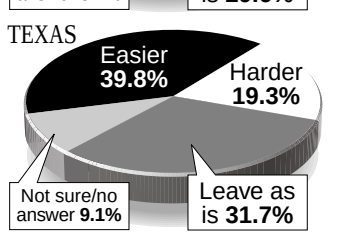


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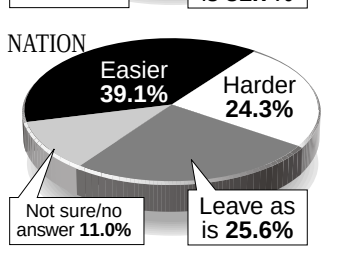
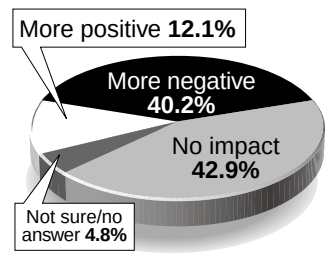



**Q** Texas leads the nation in executions since the death penalty was reinstated, with more than 200 persons put to death. Does this higher rate of carrying out death sentences give people a more positive image of Texas, a more negative image, or does it have no impact?

HARRIS COUNTY

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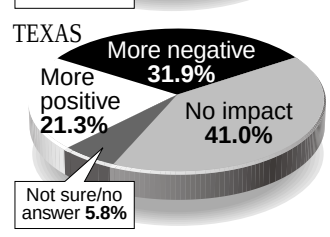


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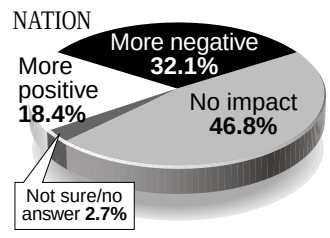
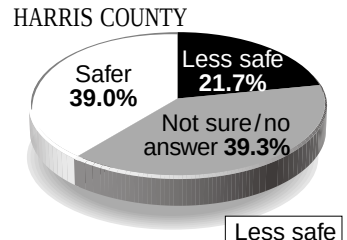



**Q** Given its higher number of executions, do you think Texas is a safer or more dangerous place to live compared with other states?

HARRIS COUNTY

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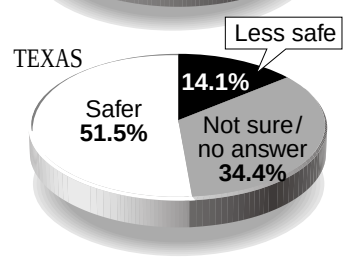


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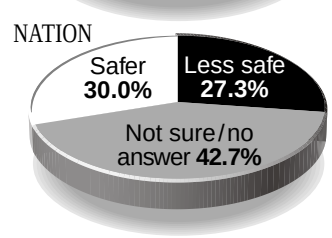
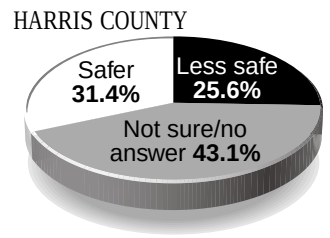



**Q** Harris County accounts for a disproportionate percentage of persons in the state sentenced to death and executed since the death penalty was reinstated. Does this higher rate of executions make the Houston area a safer or more dangerous place?

HARRIS COUNTY

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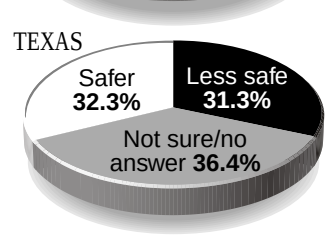
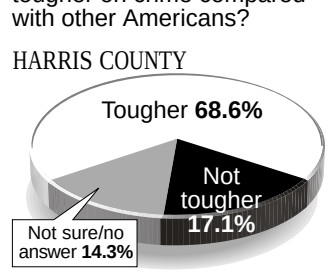



**Q** Does Texas' rate of executions make you think Texans are tougher, or not tougher on crime compared with other Americans?

HARRIS COUNTY

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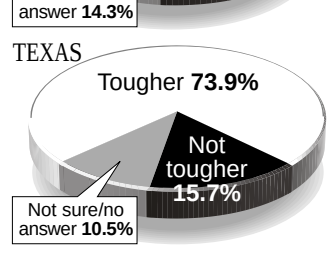


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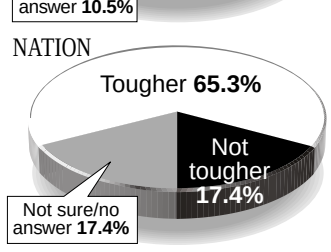
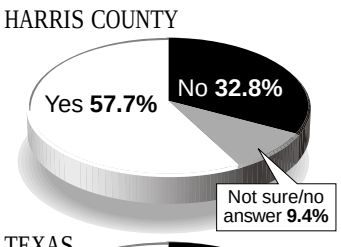



**Q** Should there be a higher threshold of proof of guilt before a jury may impose a death sentence?

HARRIS COUNTY

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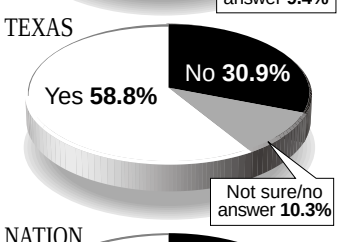


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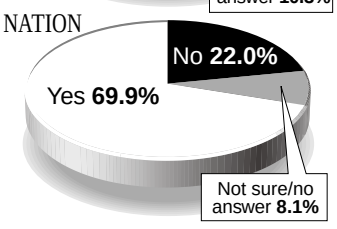
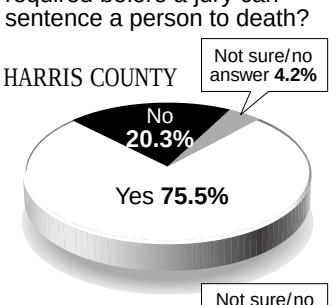



**Q** Should scientific evidence, such as DNA testing, be required before a jury can sentence a person to death?

HARRIS COUNTY

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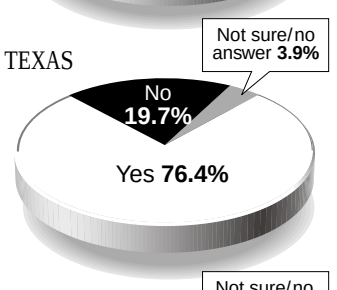


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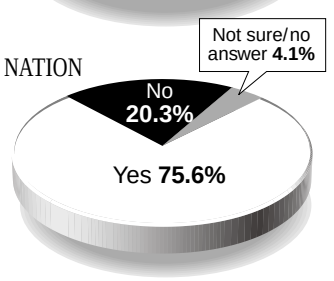
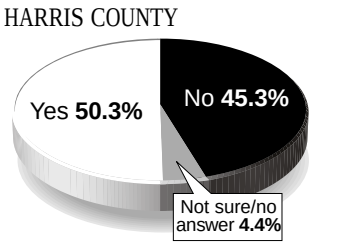



**Q** Do you believe the death penalty is a deterrent to crime?

HARRIS COUNTY

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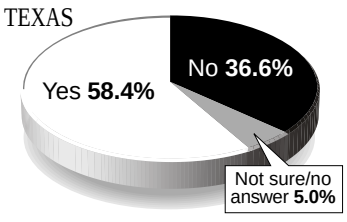


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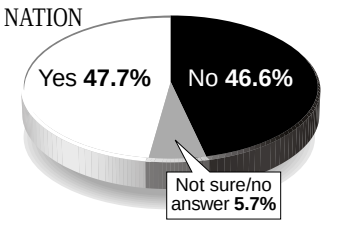
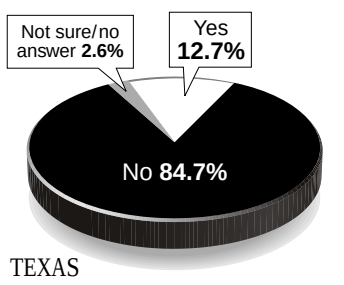



**Q** Do you believe executions should be televised?

HARRIS COUNTY

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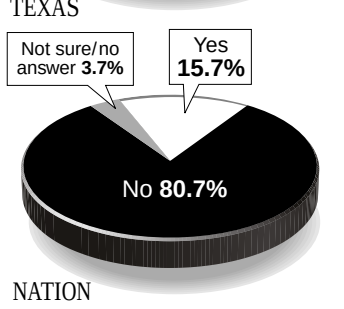

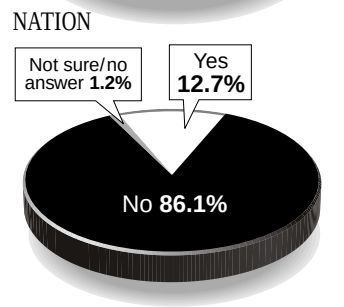
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