

# U.S. Public Perceptions and Communications: Safety, Security and the Environment

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# Public Opinion Research

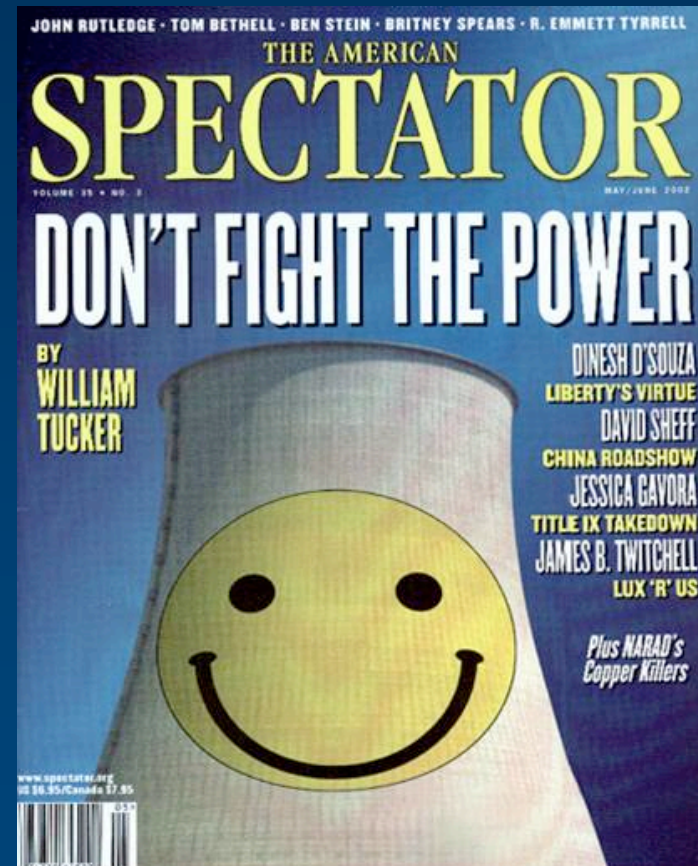
- NEI conducts national public opinion surveys 2 to 6 times each year since 1983.
- Focus groups to understand attitudes and gain insights for communications
- Research conducted by Bisconti Research

# Personal and Family Security

- Physical safety
- Healthy environment
- Comfortable lifestyle/energy security
- All are interrelated

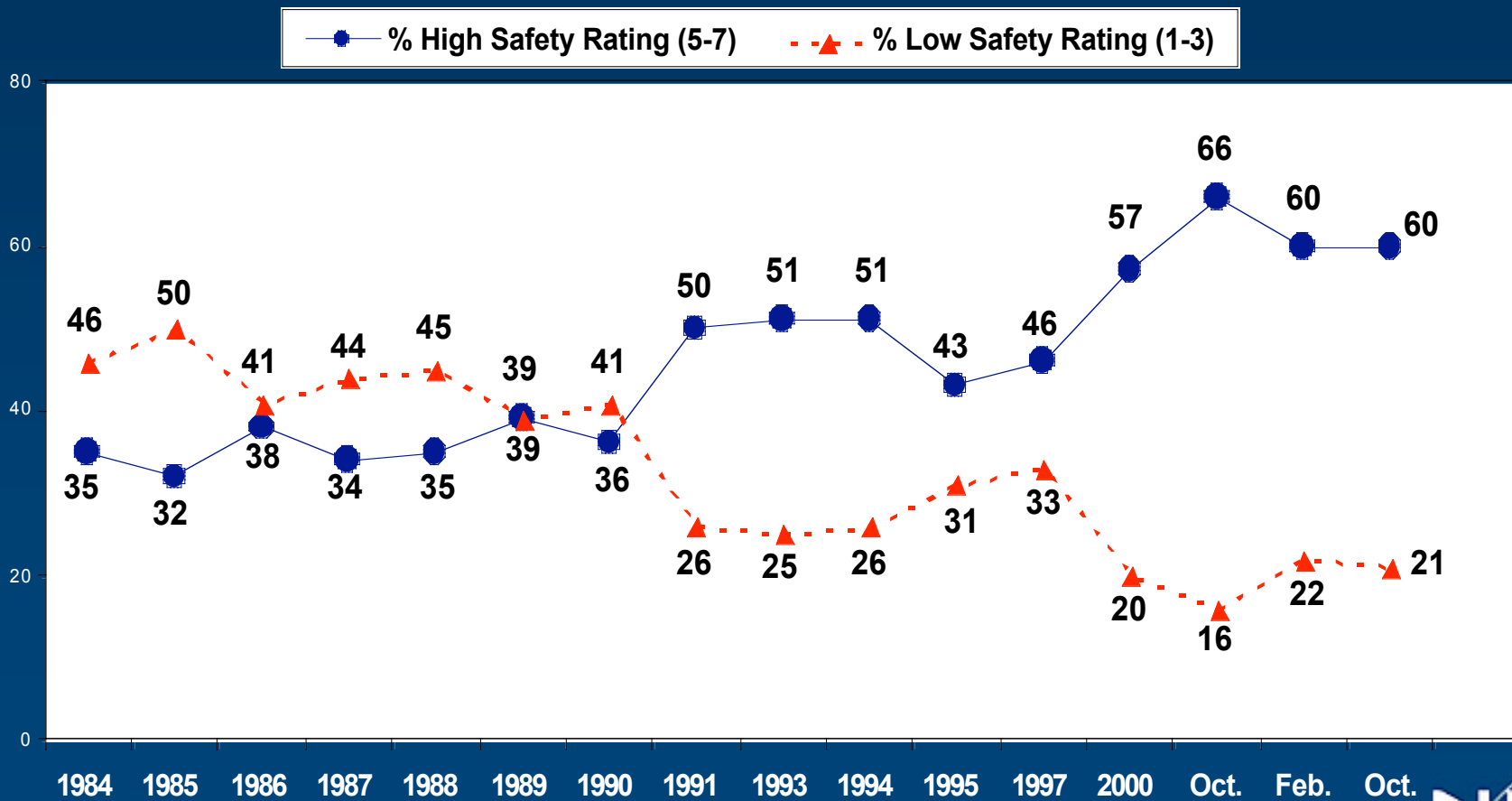
# Public Approval of Safety

- Perceptions of nuclear power plant safety have become more favorable



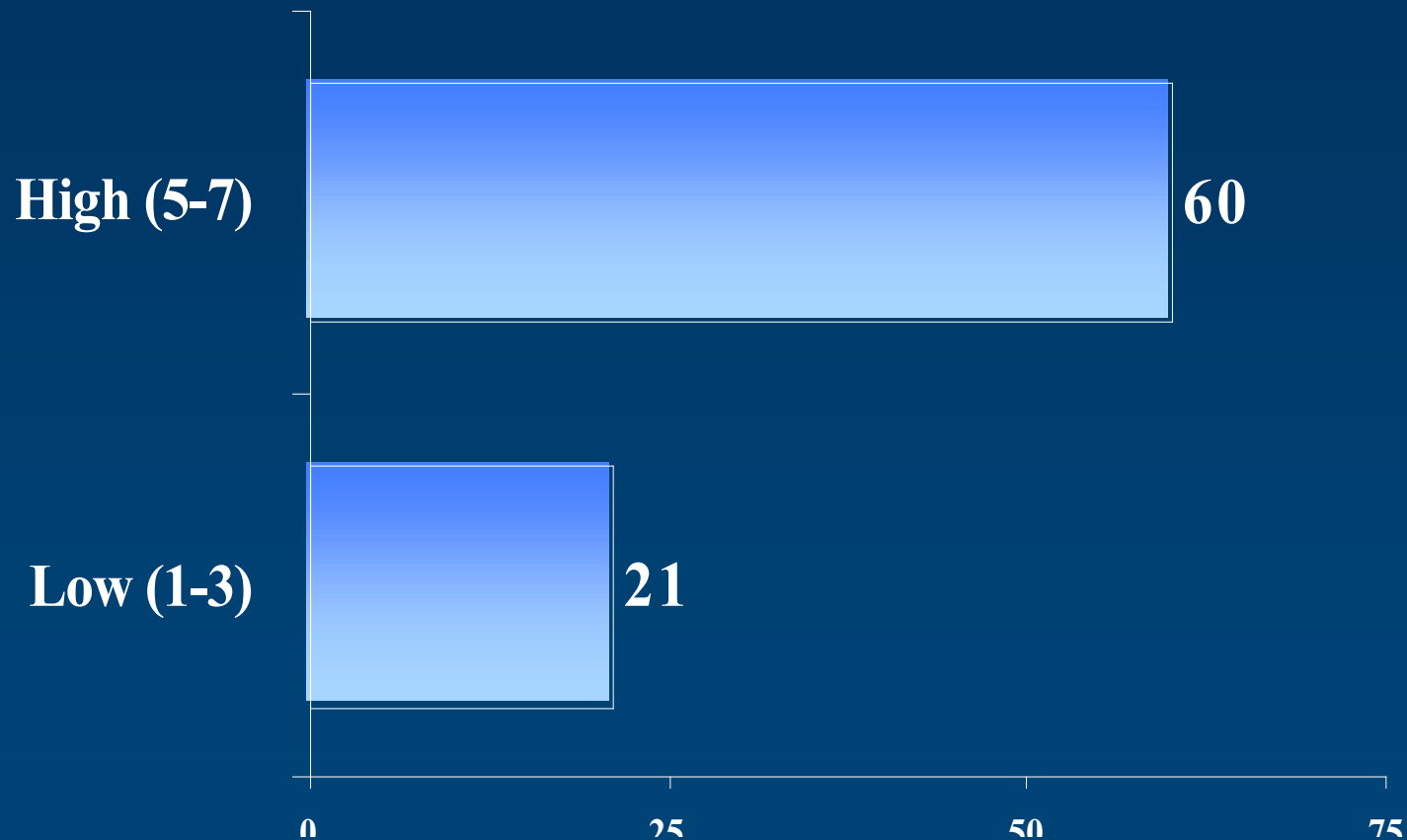
# Public Perceptions of Nuclear Power Plant Safety

(Annual Averages 1984-2003)



# In 2003, 3 to 1 Say Nuclear Power Plants “Safe”

October 2003



# Reasons for More Favorable Perceptions of Safety

- Improved performance
- Growing perceptions of electricity need: California crisis, August 2003 blackout
- Concern about fossil fuels: Middle East instability, soaring cost of natural gas
- Positive industry attitude and opinion leader support
- Media interest in nuclear “renaissance”

# Nuclear Power in the News

The New York Times

Nuclear Power's Second Act

USA  
TODAY

Time for Nuclear Power

REUTERS

Record Gas Prices Breathe Life Into Nuclear Power

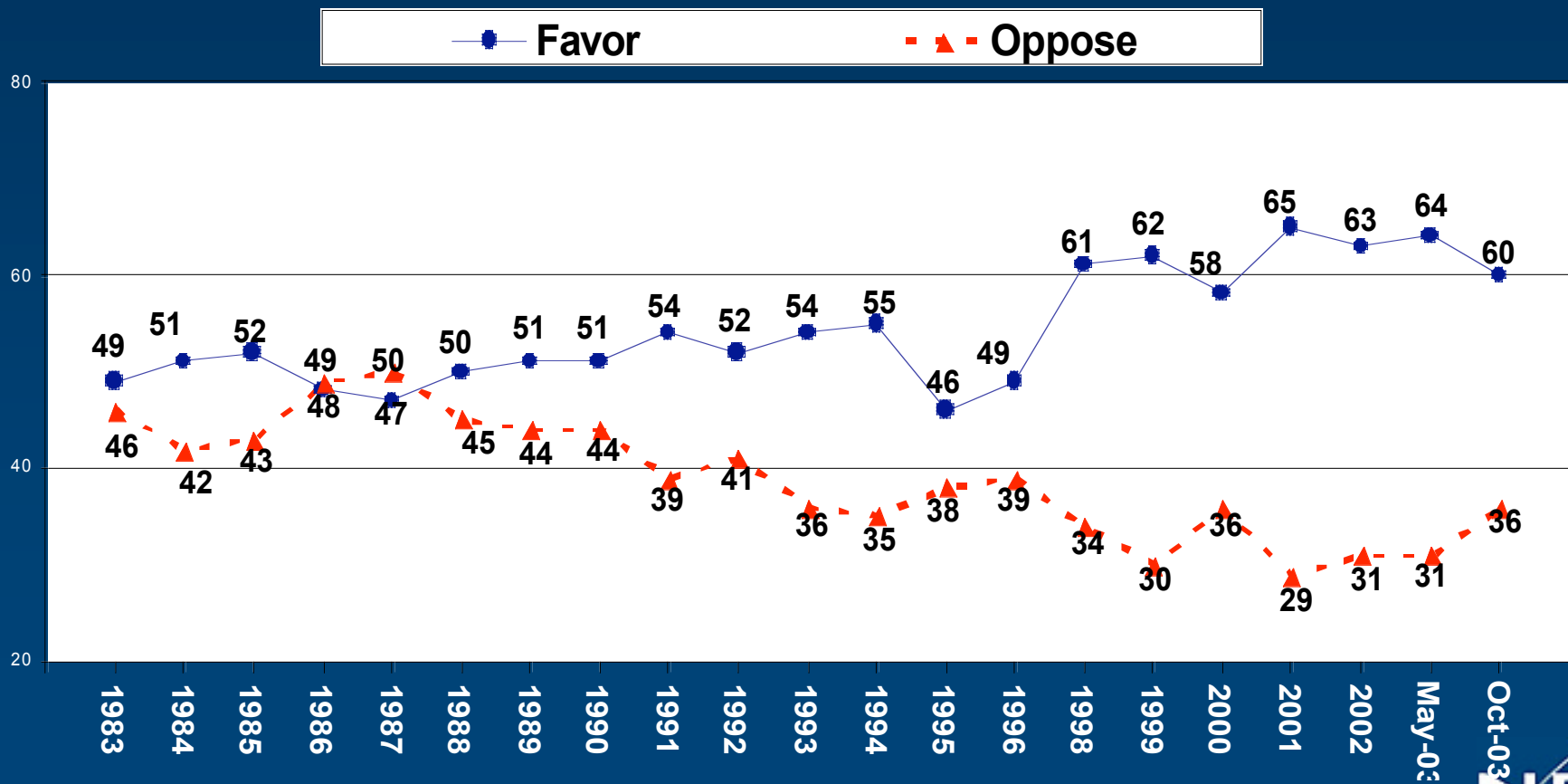
The Boston Globe

Hot Properties: Nuclear Power Plants



# Percent Favor/Oppose Use of Nuclear Energy

(Annual Averages 1984-2002)



# Clean Air Benefits: Adding New Idea Strengthens Public Favorability



# How to Talk Clearly about Clean Air Benefits?

- Industry communications about clean air benefits often hard to understand.
- Example: How can absence of emissions reduce emissions?

# Focus Groups: New Idea Strengthens Favorability

- Start of focus groups: “nuclear energy and environment” evoked accidents and waste more than clean air.
- End of focus groups: participants recommended building more nuclear power plants to meet clean air goals.

# New Information: Best Message

“We need reliable sources of electricity for the future and we also need clean air. With nuclear energy we can have both.”

- It's positive, simple.
- It's credible.

# New Information Convincing

- New nuclear power plants are needed to comply with clean air regulations in the most cost-effective manner.

# Believable Concepts

- Need new electricity supplies for the future
- Need clean air and electricity—nuclear is needed to have both
- Need reliable sources—solar and wind are not as reliable
- Need predictable cost—gas cost is not predictable

# Strengths and Weaknesses of Terms

- **“Clean air energy:”** Positive, not as definitive as emission-free
- **“Emission-free:”** Clear, strong, all-encompassing; may evoke thoughts of radiation
- **“Produces three-fourths of all emission-free electricity:”** More informative, needs comparative data and explanation



# Strengths and Weaknesses of Terms

- “Reduces greenhouse gas emissions, global warming, climate change:”
  - Less relevant than clean air
  - Not sure if global warming is real
  - Raises question: How can nuclear energy reduce emissions?

# “Prevents” Emissions Easier To Understand than “Avoids”

- “Prevents emissions” preferred over “avoids emissions” and “reduces emissions”
- Preventing emissions more proactive than avoiding emissions.

NUCLEAR.

## Electricity & Clean Air Today & Tomorrow.



Kids today are part of the most energy-intensive generation in history. They demand lots of electricity. And they deserve clean air.

That's why nuclear energy is so important to America's energy future. Nuclear energy already produces electricity for 1 of every 5 homes and businesses. And our 103 nuclear power plants don't burn anything, so they don't pollute the air.

We need reliable sources of electricity for the 21st Century—and we also need clean air. With nuclear energy, we can have both.



*As our population and economy grow, we'll need more electricity from major sources like nuclear energy.*

NUCLEAR.  
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# Clean Air Advertising Conveys Safety

- 79% “more favorable” after seeing ad
- 69% would give greater importance to nuclear energy’s clean air benefits in the future
- Comforting, gives sense of security (nonverbal message—safety was not mentioned)

# Amplify Message Through Opinion Leaders, Media

“We need new sources of electricity for the future and we also need clean air. With nuclear energy we can have both.”

- Opportunity: media intrigued by nuclear energy renaissance
- Messages are believable in context of current events

