

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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The People of Maine

A Study in Values

Volume I
Executive Summary
April, 1989

Prepared for
**The Commission
on Maine's Future**



Prepared by
MARKET DECISIONS, INC.

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Prepared by
MARKET DECISIONS, INC.
22 Cottage Road
P.O. Box 2682
South Portland, ME 04106

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FORWARD

The Commission on Maine's Future was established by the Maine Legislature in 1987 to "recommend a desirable and feasible description of the state's future." Forty members were appointed by the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House to represent diverse viewpoints, backgrounds, and regions.

The Commission has sponsored research and solicited public comment to define what is truly special about Maine, and to identify possible State goals for the future. This report summarizes research on Maine values conducted on our behalf by Market Decisions, Inc., of South Portland. A second volume containing more detailed cross tabulations and analysis is also available.

A note on the special nature of this survey is in order. Polls are increasingly used to understand the preferences of voters, consumers and the general public. How many times have you read, "X percent of Maine voters support Y policy?"

Yet opinion polls have limitations. They may not explain *why* citizens or voters support one position rather than another. And they often fail to communicate a breadth of viewpoints.

Maine is small in numbers but diverse in its ethnic, religious, and social character. The farmer in Aroostook, the mill worker in Rumford, the retiree in Camden, the lawyer in Portland, the sales clerk in Newport -- all have different ways of seeing the world, different ideals and values. These in turn underpin differing views on the role of government and business, of church and family.

This survey is different from a conventional opinion poll. It is called a "psychographic" survey. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first ever conducted in Maine, and possibly the first ever conducted in the United States by a state-sponsored public policy body. Its purpose is to characterize the diverse beliefs and values of Maine people. We hope to explore in the following pages:

- o Maine people's unique feeling for the land
- o why some education reforms receive strong support, and others do not
- o why Mainers are optimistic about changes in their *quality* of life, but concerned about changes in their *way* of life
- o how traditional religious values co-exist with a tolerance of alternative ways of life and
- o why some Mainers are alienated from government, and others feel actively part of it.

Opinions change. Values endure. Maine's future should be shaped, not by passing fads, but by the bedrock ideals and values of Maine people. This research helps to identify those values and thus hopefully contributes to charting a future direction for Maine.

Annette Ross Anderson, Chair
Commission on Maine's Future

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by a telephone poll of 784 Maine residents. Each resident was asked 79 questions; 60 were "agree/disagree" on a scale of 1 to 5 on belief statements, such as "Prayer and my relationship to God are important for my day to day decision-making;" four were choice statements, such as "If you won the lottery, would you quit work, change jobs, or do something else?"; and 15 were demographic questions about age, income, etc.

The sample provides accuracy to within 3.5% at the 95% confidence level. This means that if the survey were conducted, like a Census, over the entire population, 95 times out of 100 the results would be within 3.5% plus or minus of the results actually obtained. At the subgroup level, the degree of accuracy declines.

The results were analyzed by a technique known as "factor analysis." This is a statistical procedure which identifies correlations among different belief statements. Six different levels of analysis were employed to reduce the principal belief statements to an essential core; to identify patterns among belief statements, and to identify discrete "psychographic" groups within the Maine population which share common values.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We Mainers are a complex lot -- a mixture of old and young, religious and free-thinking, rural and urban, newcomers and old-timers.

Contradictions

Our attitudes embrace many contradictions. We favor change and growth, but resist the loss of our small-town lifestyle. We are rugged individualists, but compassionate towards our neighbors. We celebrate our social diversity, but fear that it may be leading to moral breakdown.

Consensus

There are some things practically all of us agree on, no matter what our backgrounds. We see Maine as a special place; we would rather live here than move, even if a move were to mean more income. Part of Maine's attraction is its "simple" lifestyle. A big part is its natural beauty, and our access to the outdoors, which we won't sacrifice for any price -- not for jobs, nor for lower taxes, nor for exclusive private property rights. We are individualists, and feel our personal future is in our own hands. But at the same time we are community-oriented and feel that government should guarantee basics like housing and health care.

Concerns

We also have common concerns. We emphatically think Maine is better off today than it was ten years ago, but we worry about the loss of a "way of life" which is traditional to Maine. We worry that our schools aren't doing enough to prepare our children for future jobs; that government is unresponsive to average people; that the Maine "work ethic" is being lost.

Diversity

A more detailed examination of attitudes reveals underlying diversity. For example, three out of four Mainers are optimists, feel control over their future, and look forward to change. The other one in four see change as a negative force. One in four Mainers is provincial, and is unhappy with new in-migrants and change; but an equal proportion welcomes influence from "away.". Three out of five are risk-takers, in the sense of being

open to change, both in their personal lives and in the larger community; the rest are worried or cautious about change.

Regional Variations

Value patterns vary around the state. Aroostook residents tend to be more conservative in matters of morals and provincial in outlook, but are the most welcoming of economic change. Downeast residents are more alienated from government, more cautious about change. Central Corridor and Western Maine residents, like Aroostook residents, tend to hold strongly to traditional moral values but are more tolerant than the County of alternative lifestyles. Residents of Southern and Midcoast Maine tend to be more worried about economic growth and change in the state but less concerned about social transformation.

Age Variations

Maine, like other states in the nation, has a large proportion of its population in the 25 to 44 age group. This is also known as the "baby boom generation," born in the high birth rate years following World War II. The survey indicates that this group has significantly different values than its elders. Baby boomers are much less likely to be traditional in morals or religious values, more likely to be tolerant of alternative lifestyles, and are much less likely to be alienated from government. These differences may portend important changes in the profile of Maine values in the future as aging baby boomers play an increasingly major role in our state's consumer markets, government and culture.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Attitudes and values do not exist in isolation. They form part of a web of opinions, a "worldview" that explains and forms judgments on a wide variety of questions. This section is a brief summary of the general values and beliefs expressed by our survey respondents.

About Change

- o Concern about change in Maine, and its threat to a way of life, is genuine and 4 in 10 agree that they want it to stop.
- o At the same time, a majority --in all parts of the state--think Maine and its communities are better off now than they were 10 years ago. Many believe their communities will be better places in the year 2000 than they are today; fewer than 1 in 4 do not. And more than half think it is healthy to have new people moving into Maine.
- o Mainers also look forward to their personal futures with a great deal of optimism. Nearly 6 in 10 "are excited by the future and all the changes it will bring," and 3 in 4 believe they have control over their future quality of life.
- o A significant minority of Mainers consider Maine a tough place to make a living and tend to have a backwater image of the state.
- o But most think Maine remains unique among states despite its recent growth, think good educational and cultural opportunities are available and believe life here continues to be simpler than elsewhere. They overwhelmingly would still choose to live in Maine even if they could get better jobs and homes elsewhere, and they think the state's children will be more fulfilled if they choose to stay in Maine as adults.

About Personal Finances

- o A majority "never seem to get ahead" financially, but most believe they have the incomes they need, and there is general optimism that they will have more money to spend next year.

About Education

- o Mainers place high value on education, both for their children and themselves.
- o Eighty three percent agree that "lifelong learning" is key to their future.
- o Mainers tend to see the main purpose of education as being preparation for a job, rather than stimulation of creativity and personal growth.
- o A plurality thinks Maine's public schools "are failing to prepare children for the future."

About the Land

- o Four Mainers in five agree that the natural beauty of Maine should be preserved, even if it means spending more public money or interfering with private investment decisions.
- o Three in four agree that "the people of Maine should have the continued right to use private wilderness and forest land at no cost." Most Mainers do not believe that private owners should be able to keep people off beaches or that property owners should be able to keep junk in their yards without community regulation.
- o By a two-to-one margin Mainers disagree with the statement that "our first priority should be to get quality jobs, not to preserve natural conditions."

About Moral and Social Values

- o Half of Mainers regularly attend a place of worship and nearly 6 in 10 consider prayer important in their day-to-day decision-making.
- o More than 6 in 10 think society is not as morally strong as when they were growing up, and half think that "if people were more religious, the country would be better off."
- o Concern about a less moral society does not translate into desire for conformity at the community level. A majority oppose censorship in community-supported libraries, and there is general preference for, or at least acceptance of, living in places where there are people of different backgrounds and beliefs.
- o Traditional values stiffen at the family level: for example, two-thirds believe that children need both a mother and a father at home to be "properly raised," and nearly half think "we would be better off if more women stayed at home to raise their children."
- o The gay and lesbian lifestyle is a potentially divisive issue among Mainers. There is virtually an even split over whether the gay and lesbian lifestyle should be accepted "as just another way of life." A slight plurality would be troubled by a gay person teaching their children.
- o There are significant differences on moral values by several demographic variables, most prominently age and length of residency in Maine. The "baby boom" generation (roughly 25-44 years old), which makes up nearly 48% of the adult population, and those who have lived in Maine 5 years or less, who make up about 8% of the adult population, are considerably less traditional and conservative in their values than older residents and longtime (21+ years) residents.

About Government

- o Mainers, especially older residents, lower income residents, and longtime residents, are skeptical about a powerful state bureaucracy.
- o More than half believe that big corporations have too much influence over government.
- o But a majority of Mainers still believe they can affect government.
- o Mainers profess self-reliance in theory, but in practice a majority believe government should assure such basics as housing and health care. There is a split on whether or not it ought to be the family's responsibility to financially care for aging parents.

About Workplace Relationships

- o If there was ever consensus about employer-employee loyalties and quality of workmanship, there no longer is. Mainers are split on whether there is a sense of loyalty anymore, and 4 in 10 don't think workers care about the quality of their work as much as workers in the past.
- o Forty five percent consider labor unions necessary to protect the jobs and rights of workers.

The following pages detail survey participants' overall responses to specific value statements.

Table 1

MAINE: SPECIAL OR DIFFICULT? OR BOTH?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
Maine will always be a tough place to make a decent living.	33.4%	19.3%	47.3%
With all the new people and the growing problems, Maine has become just like any other state.	29.1%	18.9%	52.1%
Maine is too far away from places that offer good educational and cultural activities.	14.0%	10.5%	75.5%
Life is simpler in Maine than it is in most places.	69.9%	14.3%	16.1%
If one needs sophisticated services or highly technical equipment, it probably is necessary to go outside of Maine to find them.	38.8%	20.0%	41.2%
Even if I could get a better job or a better house in another state, I would still choose to live in Maine.	86.3%	6.0%	7.7%
For those who are children today, and who choose to stay in Maine during their adulthood, life will be more satisfying than for those who decide to leave the state in their adult years.	51.7%	34.1%	14.3%

Table 2

CHANGE: FOR THE BETTER?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
Maine is generally a better place to live than it was 10 years ago.	60.6%	26.3%	13.1%
My community is generally not as good a place to live as it was 10 years ago.	28.7%	22.2%	49.1%
My community will be a better place to live in the year 2000 than it is today.	40.9%	35.1%	24.0%
The change in Maine over the last several years threatens our way of life, and it has to stop.	42.5%	22.2%	35.2%
It is healthy to have new people moving into Maine because they bring new ideas and new ways of looking at things.	57.3%	20.7%	22.1%
When I think of the future and all of the changes it will bring, I am excited by the prospect.	57.8%	23.0%	19.3%
The way things are going for me, I really don't look forward to the future.	15.6%	7.8%	76.7%
If my job were eliminated tomorrow, it would be difficult for me to change careers.	35.6%	16.7%	47.6%
I feel I have control over my future quality of life.	76.4%	11.9%	11.7%
I fully expect to enjoy a comfortable retirement.	71.4%	12.5%	16.1%

Table 3

PERSONAL FINANCES: PROSPEROUS OR JUST GETTING BY?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
Our household income is enough to satisfy nearly all of our needs and important desires.	62.1%	12.6%	25.1%
We'd save more if we could, but we never seem to be able to get ahead financially.	54.5%	15.7%	29.7%
Our household will probably have more money to spend next year than we do now.	48.5%	17.4%	34.1%
Going into debt is a perfectly acceptable way of buying things you want.	19.5%	13.1%	67.2%

Table 4

EDUCATION: VALUED, BUT FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
Maine's public schools are failing to prepare our children for the future.	43.4%	24.4%	32.3%
Maine's public schools are doing a good job of teaching children to be creative and curious.	48.0%	30.0%	22.1%
If I could afford it, I would send my children to a private school.	37.0%	14.4%	48.6%
The most important purpose of an education is to prepare a person to get a job.	50.4%	15.7%	33.9%
It is essential these days that children not only graduate from high school but also go on to college.	69.0%	15.7%	15.2%
I feel it's important for me to continue my education throughout my life.	83.2%	9.4%	7.4%

**Set of values more important
to instill in children**

Value Set	Percent choosing as more important
Discipline and respect for authority and love of country	58.2%
Creativity, curiosity and love of freedom	40.1%
No opinion	1.8%

Table 5

MAINE LAND: COMMODITY OR RESOURCE?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
The people of Maine should have the continued right to use private wilderness and forest land at no cost.	74.9%	10.3%	14.8%
The natural beauty of Maine should be preserved even if it means spending more public money or interfering with private investment decisions.	81.1%	11.4%	7.5%
Our first priority should be to get quality jobs, not to preserve natural conditions.	22.3%	28.4%	49.2%
Managing growth in Maine may very well disrupt private business and undercut prosperity.	29.9%	35.5%	34.6%
If my neighbor wants to keep junk in his yard, that ought to be his right.	26.7%	14.9%	58.4%
No one should be able to own a beach and keep everyone else off.	49.7%	18.2%	32.0%

Table 6

MORAL VALUES

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
I usually attend a place of worship at least once a month.	49.2%	11.1%	39.7%
Often, material things are more important in my life than spiritual values.	18.9%	20.0%	61.1%
Prayer, and my relationship with God, are important in my day-to-day decision-making.	58.0%	20.3%	21.7%
If people were more religious, the country would be better off.	49.8%	26.5%	23.7%
Our society is as morally strong today as it was when I was growing up.	23.2%	16.3%	60.5%
Libraries that are supported by tax revenues should keep some books from its shelves that the community would generally find offensive.	27.9%	12.9%	59.2%

Table 7

SOCIAL VALUES

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
I prefer living in a place where people generally have the same kinds of backgrounds and beliefs that I have.	31.5%	19.3%	49.2%
Children need both a mother and a father at home in order to be properly raised.	65.4%	11.2%	23.3%
It can be healthy for people to live together before marriage.	45.8%	18.5%	35.7%
We would be better off if more women stayed home to raise their children.	46.6%	20.2%	33.3%
Young people have too much freedom today.	62.6%	16.8%	20.5%
The gay and lesbian lifestyle should be accepted as just another way of life.	39.8%	22.2%	38.0%
I wouldn't mind a gay person teaching my child.	36.9%	19.9%	43.2%

Table 8

GOVERNMENT: A LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
It's government's responsibility to assure such basics as housing and health care.	51.0%	22.5%	26.5%
I would think it's o.k. if one of my friends avoided paying some taxes and got away with it.	6.6%	6.8%	86.6%
People should rely more on themselves rather than ask the government to do so much.	73.6%	14.5%	11.9%
People like me are unable to affect or change the policies of government.	33.7%	14.0%	52.2%
Government does mostly what the big corporations want it to do.	55.2%	23.6%	21.2%
The state bureaucracy is so strong that things will stay pretty much the same no matter whom we elect to office.	37.1%	18.0%	44.9%
It ought to be the family's rather than government's responsibility to financially care for aging parents.	40.7%	28.1%	31.3%

Table 9

MAINE'S WORK RELATIONSHIPS: WE VERSUS THEY?

*Selected statements rated on a 1-to-5 scale
Where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree*

	1 - 2 Agree	Neutral or Uncertain	4 - 5 Disagree
There is no sense of loyalty between employers and their workers anymore.	34.8%	23.9%	41.3%
Today's workers care as much about the quality of their work as much as workers ever have.	36.4%	23.0%	40.7%
Labor unions are necessary to protect the jobs and the rights of workers.	44.8%	21.4%	33.8%
People should only work more than 40 hours a week if they get paid at least time and a half for it.	76.5%	10.3%	13.1%

THE PEOPLE OF MAINE

A PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The Market Decisions survey allows us to identify nine discrete "psychographic" groups of Maine people, each sharing common values and views of the world. Each is given a shorthand title to give flesh and blood to the descriptions. However it is important to recognize that such titles are at most suggestive. The divisions represented below are established by *values*, not by professions or incomes or other socio-economic distinctions. A lobsterman can be a "suburbanite;" a professor can be a "traditionalist" -- when it comes to values. It is true that the clusters of values described tend, on a statistical basis, to be more descriptive of some populations than of others. That is why the titles and demographic data are also given. But the distinguishing characteristic of each group is not who or where they live, but what they believe.

SUBURBANITES -- 19% of population

- WHO: Medium term residents (0-20 years), younger (25-44), middle income, all religions, college educated.
- WHERE: Metropolitan areas, especially Southern Maine (though not necessarily confined to the suburbs).
- BELIEFS: Moderate in moral and family values, optimistic about personal futures, welcoming change, sideliners about government, tend to be tolerant of alternative lifestyles.
- OPINIONS: Satisfied with Maine, personal situation, tend to favor active governmental role.
- COMMENT: Suburbanites are upbeat, see the bright side of Maine's development, and are confident of their ability to control the future.

TRADITIONALISTS -- 18% of population

- WHO: Long-time residents, 45 or older, disproportionately women, moderate to middle income, Protestant or Catholic, high school to college education.
- WHERE: Rural Central Corridor and Western Maine.
- BELIEFS: Strong traditional moral beliefs, low tolerance for alternative lifestyles, sideliners about government, personally optimistic and welcoming of growth and change.
- OPINIONS: Satisfied with the direction Maine is headed, expect improvement in personal economic situation, tend to favor less active government role.
- COMMENT: Traditionalists are conservative in moral beliefs, free-market in economic and regulatory matters.

YANKEES -- 16% of population

- WHO: Long-time residents, 45 years or older, low to moderate income, Protestant or Evangelical, high school education.
- WHERE: Central and Western Maine, rural.
- VALUES: Strong traditional religious and moral beliefs, low tolerance of alternative lifestyles, cautious about changes in Maine, alienated from government, less optimistic about their personal future.
- OPINIONS: Yankees are wary, concerned over the apparent breakdown in work relationships. They tend to favor an inactive role for government.
- COMMENT: Yankees have traditional rural Maine values -- self-reliance, skepticism, "show me" pragmatism.

BYSTANDERS -- 14% of population

- WHO: Long-time residents, all ages, moderate to middle income, Protestants or non-believers, all educational backgrounds.
- WHERE: Coastal and Southern Maine, rural.
- BELIEFS: Middle of the road in religious, moral beliefs, and tolerance. Cautious about change, tend to be ambivalent in their view of government.
- OPINIONS: Generally satisfied with the direction Maine is going, strong in commitment to natural resources, worried about employment relations, slightly favor active government role.
- COMMENT: Bystanders tend to be satisfied with the way Maine is going, have middle of the road beliefs, and give the impression of being primarily observers of, rather than "belongers" in government.

MILLTOWNERS -- 11% of population

- WHO: Long-time residents, 45 years or older, low to moderate income, Catholic, high school education.
- WHERE: Rural towns in the Central Corridor, Western, and Northern Maine.
- BELIEFS: Strong traditional religious and moral beliefs, provincial, alienated from government, optimistic about future, welcome growth and change.
- OPINIONS: Concerned over workplace relationships, but strongly favor labor unions. Personally pessimistic about financial prospects, but satisfied with direction Maine is going. Mixed attitudes on government's role.
- COMMENT: Milltowners share many Yankee values, but are more open and inviting to change and growth.

POST-HIPPIES -- 7% of population

- WHO: Disproportionately medium term residents (6-20 years), young (25-44), all incomes, Protestant or no religious affiliation, high school or some college.
- WHERE: Central Corridor and Coastal Maine.
- BELIEFS: Tend to be freethinking on moral, religious and tolerance scales. Optimistic about personal futures, welcomers of change. Alienated from government.
- OPINIONS: Satisfied with direction of Maine, moderate to strong in concern for environment, may support more land use regulation, but uncertain about role of government in social issues.
- COMMENT: Post-hippies tend toward libertarian views -- personal freedom, experimentation -- and appear distrustful of government.

YOUNG URBANITES -- 6% of population

- WHO: New and medium term residents (0-20 years), young (18-44), middle income, excellent health, tend to no religious affiliation, post-college education.
- WHERE: Urban, Southern Maine, especially in Portland metropolitan area.
- BELIEFS: Freethinkers in religious, moral, lifestyle questions. Optimistic about personal future, welcomers of change. Sideliners in terms of government.
- OPINIONS: Somewhat dissatisfied with direction Maine is going, though optimistic about personal future; moderate to strong in support of environment, favor active governmental role in social concerns. Believe work relationships are as strong as ever, and in labor unions.
- COMMENT: Young Urbanites are open to new ideas and trends, liberal in beliefs, but not involved in government.

ACTIVISTS -- 5% of population

- WHO: Disproportionately new and medium term residents (0-20 years), young (25-44), middle to upper income, consider selves to be in excellent health, tend towards no religious commitment, college educated.
- WHERE: Central Corridor, Coastal and Southern Maine, urban.
- BELIEFS: Cautious about change in Maine, yet personally optimistic about their future. Believe they can influence government. Middle of the road to freethinking on moral issues.
- OPINIONS: Strong commitment to environment, dissatisfaction with trends in Maine, tend to support active government role.
- COMMENT: Activists are dissatisfied with Maine's development, but feel they can get involved and make a difference for the future.

EXPATRIATES -- 3% of population

- WHO: Medium term residents (6-20 years), young (25-44), moderate income, no religious affiliation, post-college education.
- WHERE: Rural Coastal and Southern Maine.
- BELIEFS: Freethinking on questions of morals, religion, lifestyle. Cautious about change. Tend to be alienated from government.
- OPINIONS: Dissatisfied with Maine's development, ambivalent about personal economic future. Strongly committed to environment, favor more active governmental role on land use and social issues. Do not think workplace relationships are as strong as before, but favor labor unions.
- COMMENT: Expatriates are non-conformists. They disagree with prevailing religious beliefs, and with the widespread feeling that the direction Maine is heading

is good. They ideally favor a strong government role, but in reality are pessimistic about government's actual performance. The data suggest that many Expatriates have moved to Maine from elsewhere, and have come with a high level of formal education.

Conclusion

By far the majority of Maine people are conservative and cautious in temperament. Most hold traditional religious and moral beliefs. Among these groups there is some difference in outlook over the direction Maine is going (Milltowners say yes, Yankees are less certain); and a high degree of alienation from government.

Several of the smaller groups have more liberal bents; some more on moral and religious questions, some more on the role of government. Their degree of optimism and pessimism, sense of alienation and belonging to government, varies widely across the spectrum.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

There has been some rhetoric in recent years about the "Two Maines" -- one northern, one southern. There is also continuing discussion of issues in Maine politics in terms of "conservative" and "liberal" beliefs.

This study shows that both of these categorizations are simply inadequate. Neither scale truly reflects the diversity and beliefs of actual Maine people.

Often public policy issues are analyzed in terms of material gains and losses for groups of people in Maine. This survey shows that most Mainers feel that spiritual values are more important in their lives than material values (though they don't agree on the content of those values, "spiritual" in this context meaning a commitment to a higher purpose in life than money or power).

These facts indicate that efforts to ground public discourse in simple geographic or economic divisions among Mainers is misleading. Place of origin, or material self-interest, are not necessarily the bases of decision-making for most Mainers.

This study has only touched the surface of the values which unite and divide Maine people. By doing so, it gives clues about future policy discourse and decisions. These clues include:

- o Maine's decision-makers should recognize "quality of life" and "way of life" as different concepts. This is not semantics: the difference goes to the heart of the debate in Maine and helps explain apparent contradictions in how the State's growth is perceived.

On the one hand, Maine people are open to change and even favor growth. Quality of life appears to be viewed as an economic concept, and Mainers think their quality of life has improved and wish to see more.

But not all change is desirable: it is sometimes feared. Change that threatens Maine's "way of life" -- the simple lifestyle, the

natural beauty, access to the outdoors -- is unacceptable.

Future policymakers must find the path (and it will be a narrow one) that enhances quality of life while preserving way of life.

- o Maine remains a conservative state in its religious, social, and family values. However, two demographic forces for change are at work.

First, the baby boom generation is aging into the family formation and career years. These 25-44 year-olds are significantly less conservative than their elders. Although their views and opinions may moderate as they age and face new responsibilities, the basic value orientations they hold today are likely to continue. This portends a future shift in dominant religious, moral, and family values in Maine.

The other force is the newcomer to Maine. Newcomers comprise about 8% of the adult population and hold less conservative values than long-time residents.

- o Among other things, these two groups tend to accept and perhaps expect a more active government in addressing social issues. They also have lived a greater part of their adult lives with the idea of government involvement in land use decisions. Whereas older, long-time residents consider relative freedom from regulation as part of Maine's simpler way of life, the two newer groups may be more tolerant of such restrictions.
- o While conservative in their values, Mainers appear tolerant of different beliefs, backgrounds, and to a growing extent, lifestyles. While they may accept change only slowly and in small doses, they are unlikely to support legislative attempts to impose conformity.
- o Mainers give priority to preservation of the state's natural beauty and public access over the creation of jobs and the exclusive rights of property owners. The survey was conducted at a time of almost unprecedented prosperity in Maine, and it is impossible to know how attitudes might be tempered if unemployment were high. However, the consistency of the responses,

across all categories of people, was unmistakable.

- o Many Mainers feel alienated from their government. Forty percent believe the state bureaucracy is unresponsive to their needs. A large state bureaucracy is new in the state's experience. One of the serious challenges facing the state is finding ways to respond to public policy requirements without building a bureaucracy that seems to stand between citizens and their elected officials.
- o There is a consensus for investment in education, but only insofar as it furthers career opportunities. Education in the sense of liberal arts and personal development does not have a broad base of support. However, this may change in the future; younger, financially better off, and newly arrived residents are more likely to support a broader view of education.
- o The survey reveals a growth of subcultures in Maine, held together not by geography or income but by common values and lifestyles. This, in turn, has led to some mistrust and intolerance among groups; ways to enhance communication among, and understanding between, different groups should be pursued.

The psychographic tool developed by this survey lends depth of understanding to how people stand on important issues, and why. As a result of the survey, this tool is available for use in future opinion and attitude surveys. More research needs to be done to fully understand the relationship of values to actual lifestyles of Maine people -- patterns of work, leisure, housing, use of the outdoors -- to understand how these values are translated into positions on particular public policy questions facing the state and to understand better the attitudes each group hold towards the others. It is the hope of the Commission on Maine's Future that this ground-breaking study will be followed by further public research and discussion of Maine values.

The Commission on Maine's Future
State House Station #38
Augusta, Maine 04333

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