

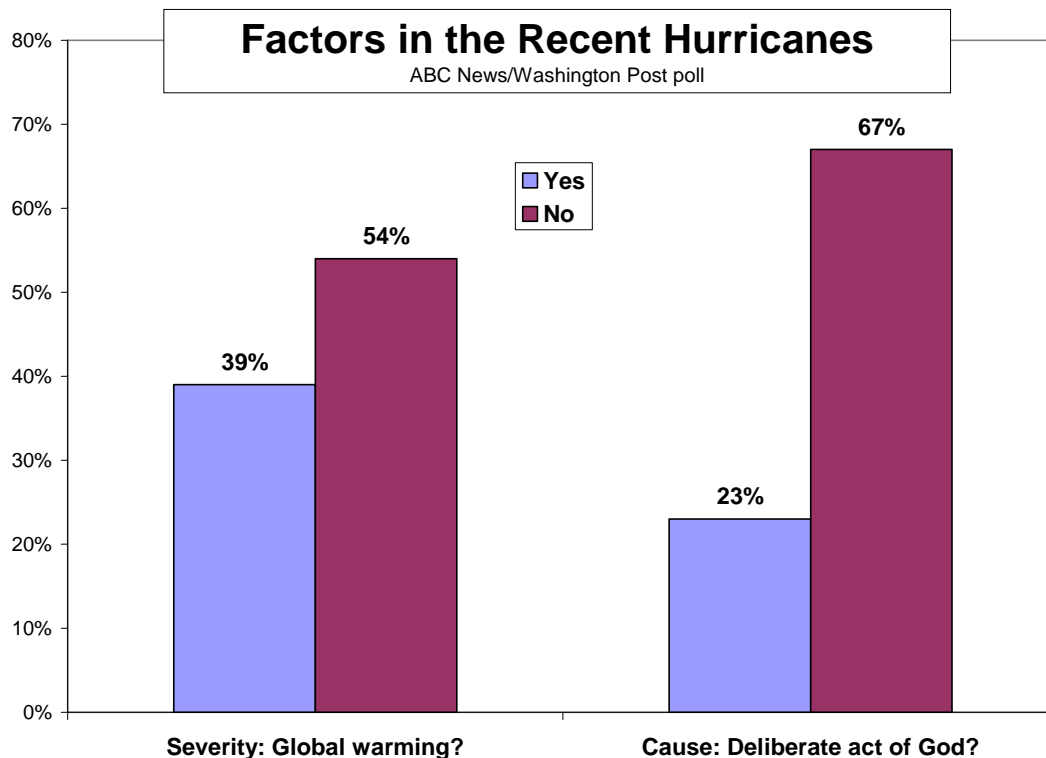
Most Rule Out God or Warming As a Direct Cause of Hurricanes

Most Americans rule out either a deliberate act of God or the effect of global warming as direct causes of the recent Gulf Coast hurricanes.

Just under a quarter in this ABC News/Washington Post poll see the hurricanes as "a deliberate act" of God; two-thirds instead see them as an occurrence on God's Earth, but not a deliberate act on God's part. (The rest have no opinion, or don't believe in God.)

Separately, 54 percent think that the severity of recent hurricanes mainly reflects "severe weather events that happen from time to time," rather than the effects of global climate change. Just under four in 10 think climate change is mainly to blame.

That's not to say most people doubt global warming; 56 percent are convinced it's under way. It's just that fewer are persuaded that it's increased hurricane severity.



RELIGION – Broad majorities across demographic groups don't think the hurricanes are a deliberate act of God. But one in three evangelical Protestants think they are, compared

with 13 percent of non-evangelical Protestants, 15 percent of Catholics and 17 percent of non-religious people.

Young, low-income and less educated Americans are also more likely than others to think these hurricanes are a deliberate act of God.

	Are the hurricanes a deliberate act of God?	
	Yes	No
All	23%	67
Evangelical Protestants	33	61
Non-evangelical Protestants	13	76
Non-religious	17	65
Catholics	15	78
18-34	32	60
35+	19	71
<\$25K	34	57
\$75K+	21	70
HS grad/Less	31	61
College+	11	79

PUNISHMENT? – Alabama state Sen. Hank Erwin, R-Montevallo, recently called Hurricane Katrina a punishment from God, saying New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast "have always been known for gambling, sin and wickedness. It is the kind of behavior that ultimately brings the judgment of God."

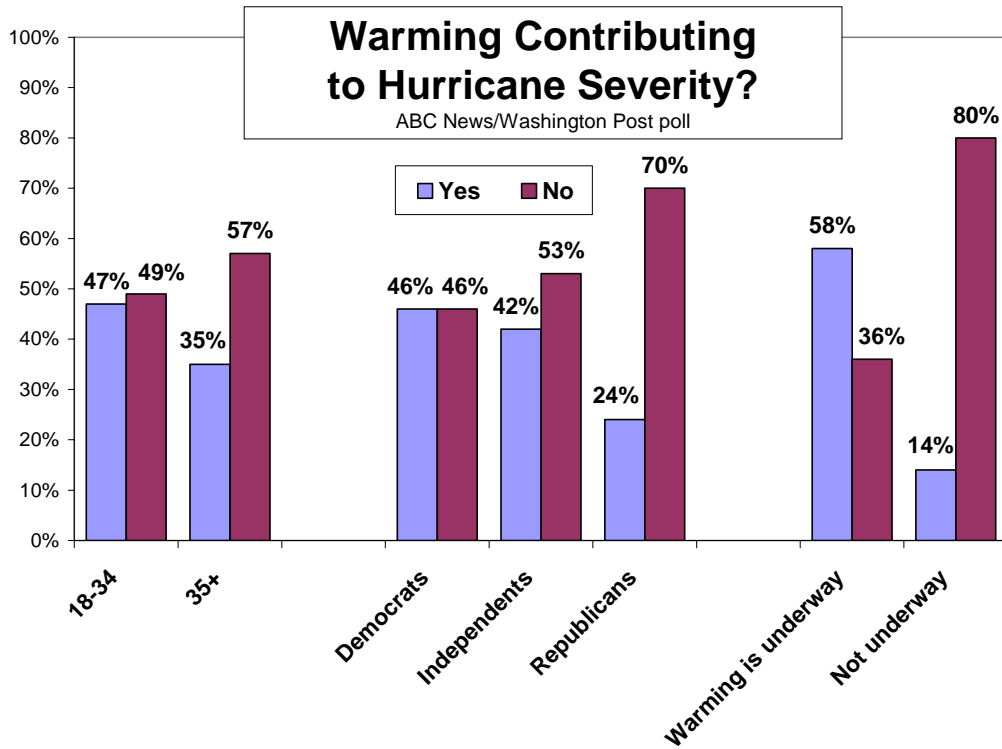
In this survey, though, among people who think the hurricanes are a deliberate act of God, just eight percent see it as a punishment. About half instead see it as a warning sign, just over a quarter say it's for a reason we cannot understand and 14 percent say it's a test of faith.

GLOBAL WARMING – Blame on climate change, naturally, peaks among people who are convinced that global warming is under way. Fifty-eight percent in this group think climate change is mainly responsible for recent hurricane severity, rising to two-thirds among those who are completely convinced that global warming is happening.

Among people who aren't at least somewhat convinced that global warming is occurring, by contrast, eight in 10 people don't blame it for hurricane severity.

Similarly, people who see global warming as an urgent problem requiring immediate government action (41 percent) are 30 points more likely than others to think it's a main cause of hurricane severity.

Among groups, younger Americans are more likely than their elders to blame global warming for hurricane severity. Democrats split, while seven in 10 Republicans think instead that they represent occasional severe weather events.



The number of adults who call global warming an urgent problem that needs immediate government action is about the same now as in June (41 percent vs 38 percent). Fewer call it a longer-term problem that needs more study – 47 percent, compared with 58 percent in June; that’s partly because more in this survey express no opinion.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 23-27, 2005, among a random national sample of 1,019 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

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Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. How convinced are you that global warming or the greenhouse effect is actually happening – would you say you are completely convinced, mostly convinced, not so convinced or not convinced at all?

	-----Convinced-----			-----Not Convinced-----			No
	NET	Completely	Mostly	NET	Not so	Not at all	op.
9/27/05	56	23	33	40	22	17	4
6/5/05	59	23	36	40	24	16	2

2. Do you think global warming is (an urgent problem that requires immediate government action), or (a longer-term problem that requires more study before government action is taken)?

	Urgent problem	Longer-term problem	Not a problem (vol.)	No op.
9/27/05	41	47	6	6
6/5/05	38	58	3	1

3. Do you think the severity of recent hurricanes is most likely (the result of global climate change), or is it (just the kind of severe weather events that happen from time to time)?

	Climate change	Just happens	No opin.
9/27/05	39	54	7

4. Do you think the hurricanes the country has been experiencing are a deliberate act of God, or an occurrence on God's Earth but not a deliberate act on God's part?

	Deliberate	Not deliberate	Neither/Don't believe in God	No op.
9/27/05	23	67	4	5

5. (IF DELIBERATE, Q4) Do you think God has sent these hurricanes as a test of faith, as a warning sign, as a punishment, or for some reason we cannot understand?

	Test	Warning	Punishment	Can't understand	No op.
9/27/05	14	49	8	27	2

END