

**National Park Service**  
**Visitor Services Project**  
**The White House Tours**  
**Fall 1991**

**Visitor Services Project Report 44**  
**Cooperative Park Studies Unit**  
**National Park Service**

**In cooperation with:**  
**Howard University**  
**Washington, D. C.**

**National Park Service**

**Visitor Services Project**

**The White House Tours**

**Fall 1991**

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August 1992

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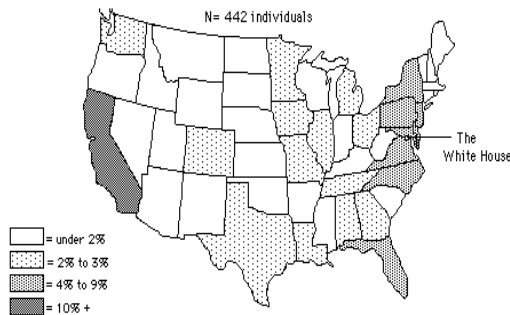
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**Visitor Services Project**  
**The White House Tours**  
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**Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a study of visitors who took the White House tours during November 19-23, 1991. Five hundred twenty-five questionnaires were distributed and 459 returned, an 87% response rate.
- This report profiles White House tour visitors. A separate appendix has their comments about the tours. Comment summaries are included in both the report and the appendix.

- Fifty-one percent of Congressional tour visitors and 49% of public tour visitors were in family groups. Visitors were predominantly adults aged 36-50. Approximately three-quarters of all visitors were on their first tour of the White House.



- Foreign visitors who took the White House public tour comprised 23% of all visitation. American visitors who took the White House public tour came from all over the country. Sixteen percent came from California.

- Congressional tour visitors averaged a 16 minute wait for their tours to begin. Public tour visitors averaged a 21 minute wait for their tours to begin.
- Sixty-nine percent of public tour visitor groups used the White House room guides.
- The services and facilities that received the highest quality rating from visitors included the map/brochure, ranger assistance, and the White House room guides. Public restrooms were rated as the lowest quality facility.
- Seventy to seventy-two percent of the visitors would likely use a White House Visitor Center on their next visit, if one were available. Tour topics suggested by visitors included history, official events, information about the First Families and architecture.
- In addition to the White House tours, respondents visited many sites in Washington, D.C. Approximately 85% of the White House visitors visited the Smithsonian Institution. The Lincoln Memorial, U.S. Capitol, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and Washington Monument were also visited by more than three-quarters of the respondents.
- Visitors provided many general comments about the White House tours.

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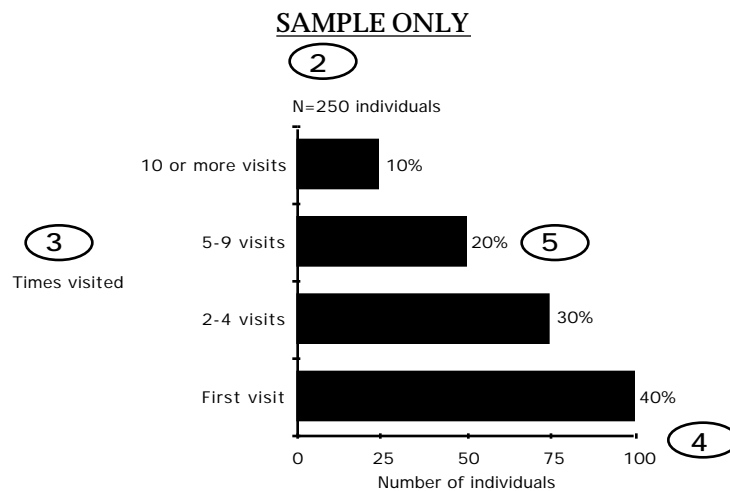


## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of White House tour visitors. It was conducted in November 1991 by the Cooperative Park Studies Unit of the National Park Service at the University of Idaho, in cooperation with Howard University, Washington D.C. There are two kinds of tours. Congressional tours are by reservation through congressional offices and have one guide assigned to a limited number of visitors. Public tours have guides stationed in each room, and tour tickets must be obtained daily on a first-come, first-served basis.

A Methods section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. Results sections are provided for the Congressional and public tours; each includes a summary of visitor comments. Next, a Menu for Further Analysis helps managers request additional analyses. The final section has copies of the Questionnaires used. The separate appendix includes comment summaries and the visitors' unedited comments.

Many of the report's graphs resemble the example below. The large numbers refer to explanations following the graph.



(1) Figure 4: Number of visits

- 1: The figure title is a general description of the graph's information.
- 2: A note above gives the "N," or number of cases in the sample, and a specific description of the information in the chart. Use **CAUTION** when interpreting any data where the sample size is less than 30 as the results may be unreliable.
- 3: Vertical information describes categories.
- 4: Horizontal information shows the item number in each category; proportions may be shown.
- 5: In most graphs, percentages are included to provide additional explanation.

## METHODS

### General strategy

Interviews were conducted and questionnaires distributed to a sample of visitors touring the White House from November 19 through November 23, 1991. Visitors completed the questionnaire after their tour and returned it by mail. The questionnaire, interview and sampling methods were designed to provide comparable data to earlier White House Studies (Visitor Services Project Report #23 and Visitor Services Project Report #40).

### Questionnaire administration and sampling

Five hundred sixty-eight visitor groups were contacted as they exited the White House onto the north grounds. A systematic interval (every  $n^{\text{th}}$  adult) was used to select visitors for the survey. These visitors were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study and asked to participate. If they agreed (92% did), a brief interview was conducted and the participants given a questionnaire. Four hundred fifty-nine visitors completed and returned questionnaires, an 87% response rate. Congressional tour and public tour response rates were similar.

Table 1 compares information collected from the total sample of visitors and the actual respondents who returned questionnaires. Non-response bias is insignificant, though the actual respondents had a smaller average group size than the total sample.

**Table 1: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents**

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondent	525	42.2	449	42.9
Group size	525	6.8	449	5.8

### Data analysis

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. Four weeks following the survey, a letter and a replacement questionnaire were sent to visitors whose questionnaires had not yet been received. Six weeks following the survey, a second letter and replacement questionnaire were sent to visitors whose questionnaires had not yet been received. Questionnaires returned within ten weeks were coded and entered into a computer.



Frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were calculated using a standard statistical software package. Respondents' comments were summarized.

### **Sample size, missing data and reporting errors**

This study collected information on both visitor groups and on individual group members. Thus, the sample size ("N"), varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 213 groups, Figure 3 presents data for 621 individuals. A note above each figure's graph specifies the information illustrated.

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions create missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from figure to figure. For example, although 222 questionnaires were returned by Congressional tour visitor groups, Figure 1 shows data for only 213 respondents.

Questions answered incorrectly due to carelessness, misunderstanding directions and so forth, turn up in the data as reporting errors. These create small data inconsistencies.

### **Limitations**

Like all surveys, this study has limitations which should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This disadvantage applies to all such studies and is reduced by having visitors fill out the questionnaire after their visit.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns during the study period of November 19-23, 1991. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors touring the White House during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "CAUTION" is included in the graph, figure or table.

## CONGRESSIONAL TOUR RESULTS

### A. Characteristics

Thirty-nine percent of Congressional tour visitors came in groups of two people, 16% in groups of three and 15% in groups of four (Figure 1). Families accounted for 51% of visitors, as shown in Figure 2. Included in the "other" category were educational, military, business and social groups.

Figure 3 shows a wide range of age groups, the most common being 36-45 (26%). Seventy-four percent were on their first Congressional tour of the White House and 24% had toured 2-4 times, as seen in Figure 4.

Foreign visitors comprised 7% of all visitation. Map 1 and Table 2 show that most foreign visitors came from two countries--the United Kingdom, and Canada. Map 2 shows that American visitors came from all over the United States. Table 3 shows that the states with the highest proportion of visitors were California (16%), Washington (6%), Maryland (6%), and Virginia (6%).

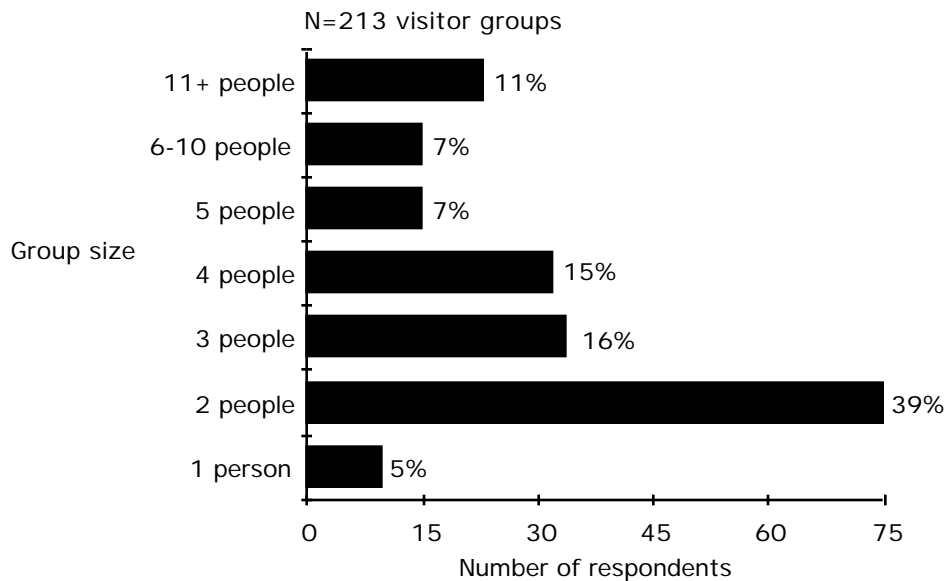


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes (Congressional tour)

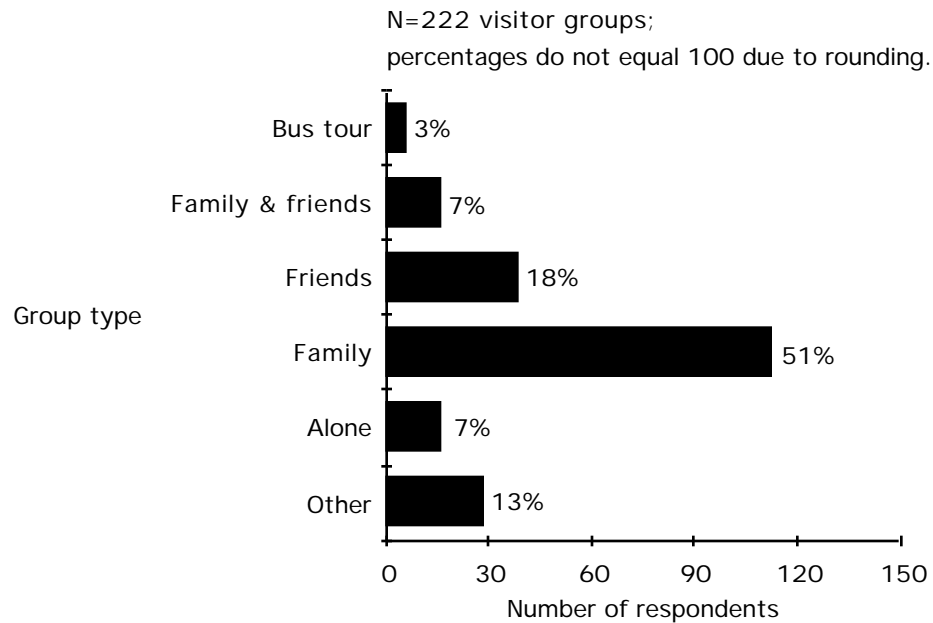


Figure 2: Visitor group types (Congressional tour)

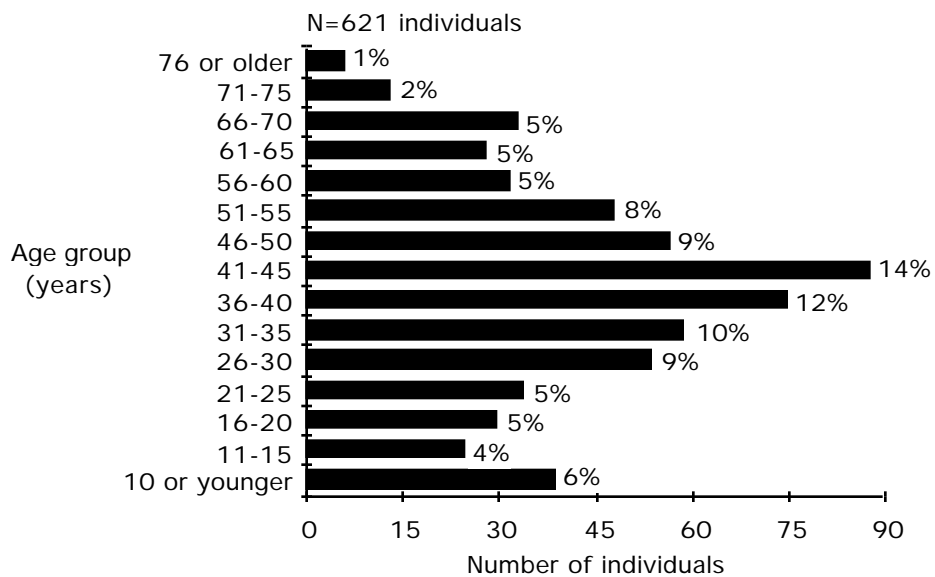


Figure 3: Visitor ages (Congressional tour)

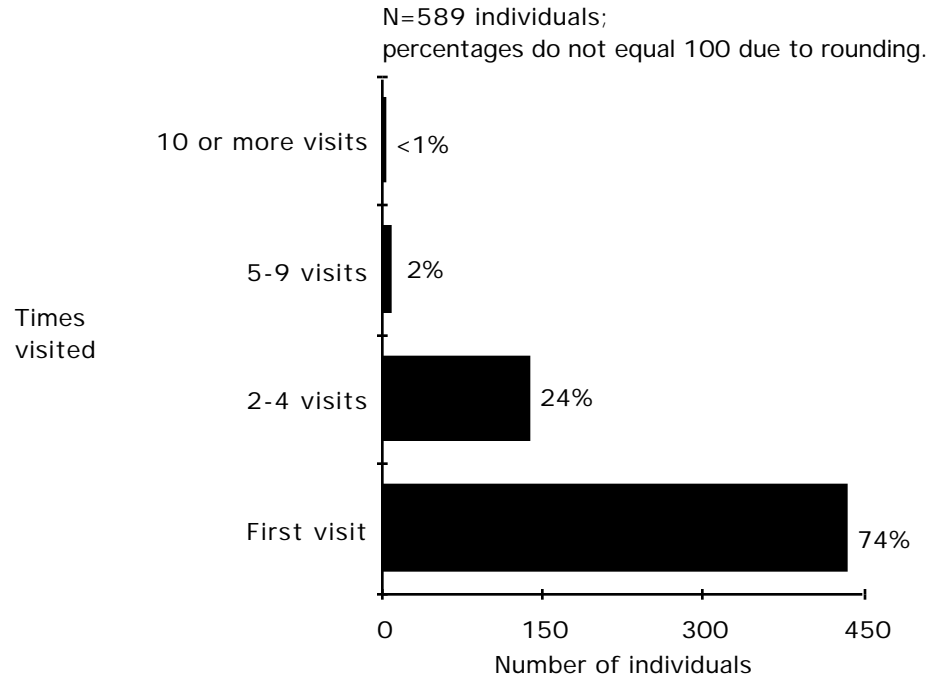


Figure 4: Number of visits made by visitor groups (Congressional tour)

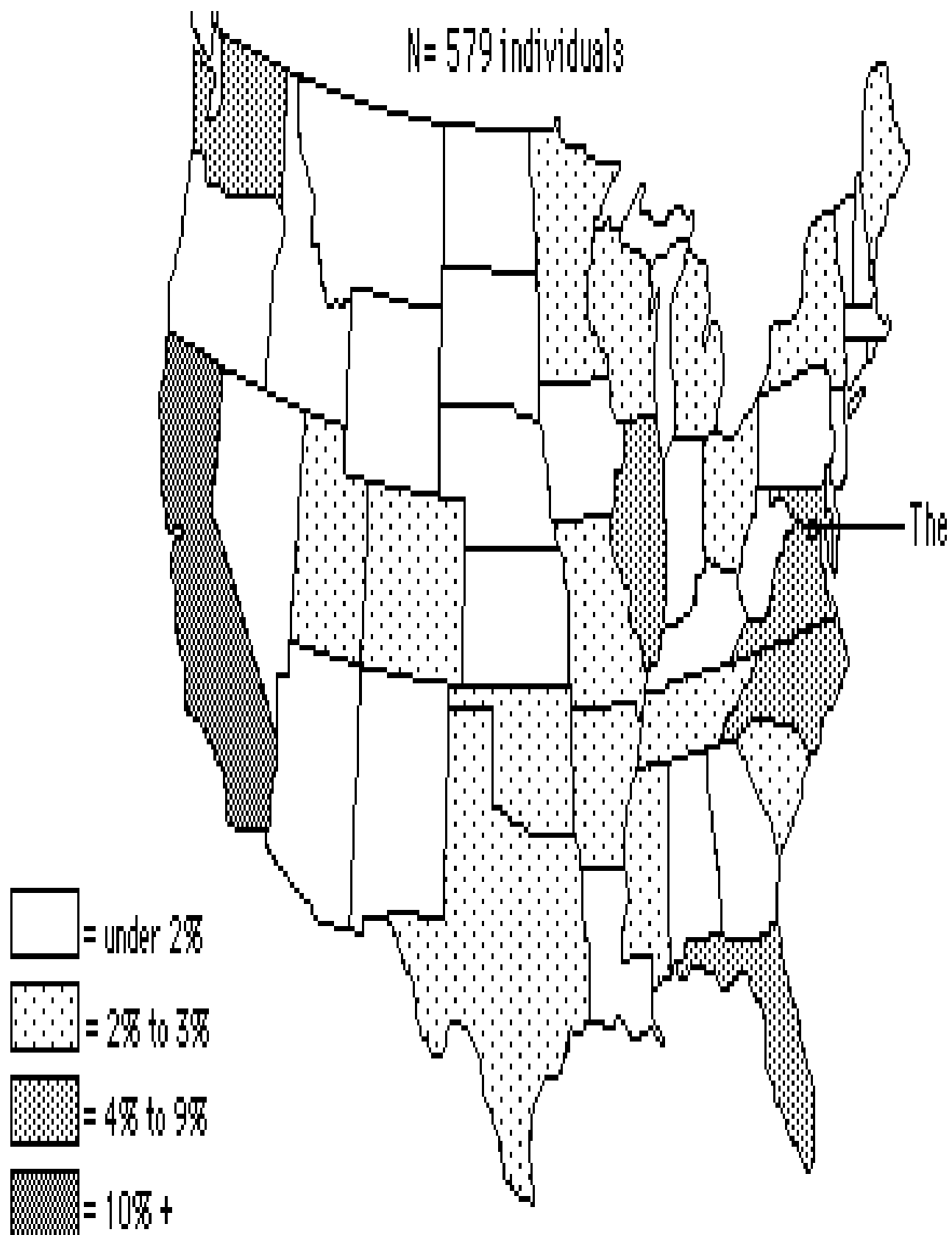


Map 1: Proportion of foreign visitors by country (Congressional tour)

Table 2: Proportion of visitors from foreign countries (Congressional tour)

N=42 individuals from foreign countries;  
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Country	Number of individuals	Percent of foreign visitors
United Kingdom	8	19
Canada	6	14
Latvia	3	7
Taiwan	3	7
Australia	2	5
Germany	2	5
Ghana	2	5
Italy	2	5
Namibia	2	5
Netherlands	2	5
Spain 2	5	
Sweden	2	5
Brazil1	2	
Ecuador	1	2
France	1	2
Pakistan	1	2
Philippines	1	2
Saudi Arabia	1	2



## Map 2: Proportion of visitors from each state (Congressional tour)

**Table 3: Proportion of visitors from each state (Congressional tour)**

N=579 individuals;  
individual state percentages do not total to 100 due to rounding.

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of individuals</b>	<b>Percent of visitors</b>
California	90	16
Washington	37	6
Maryland	36	6
Virginia	32	6
Illinois	27	5
North Carolina	26	4
Florida	23	4
Missouri	17	3
Ohio	17	3
Texas	17	3
Tennessee	16	3
Arkansas	11	2
Maine	11	2
Oklahoma	11	2
Mississippi	10	2
New York	10	2
South Carolina	10	2
Utah	10	2
Colorado	9	2
Michigan	9	2
Minnesota	9	2
Wisconsin	9	2
Other states (23)	91	16

### B. Transportation type

Most Congressional tour visitors arrived for their White House tour by walking (34%), private vehicle (28%) and subway (28%). Figure 5 shows the proportion of visitor groups that used each type of available transport.

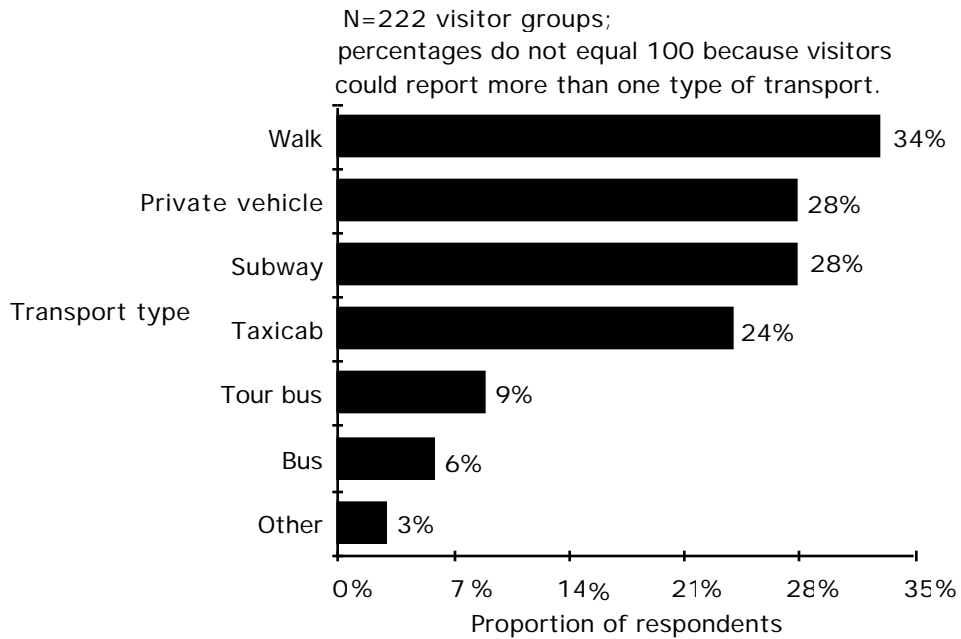


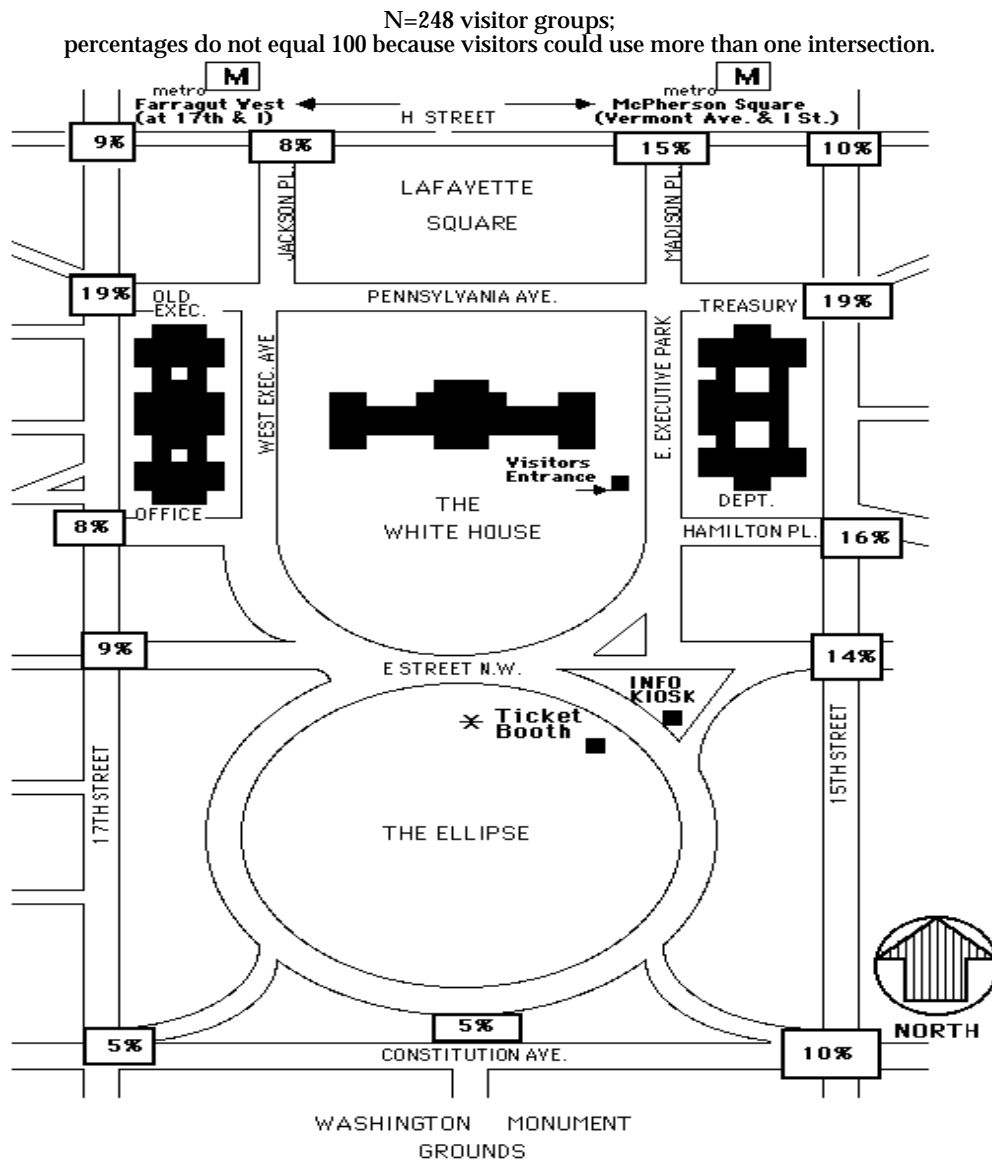
Figure 5: Proportion of visitor groups using each transport type (Congressional tour)



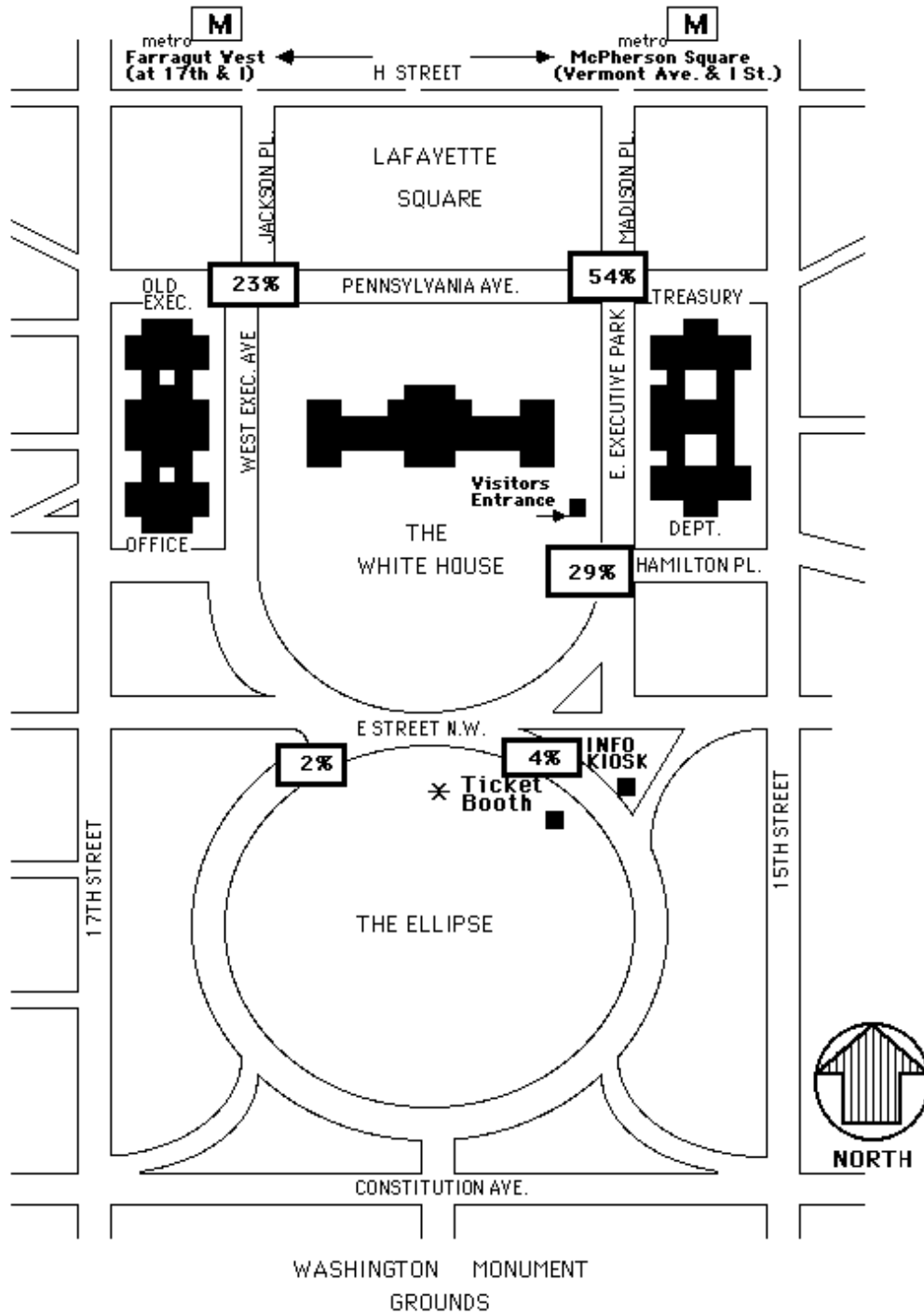
**C. Routes traveled**

Visitors indicated routes they used to arrive at the Visitor's Entrance of the White House. Map 3 shows the proportion of Congressional tour visitors using each "outer" intersection to enter the White House area. Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street (19%) and Pennsylvania Avenue and 17th Street (19%) had the highest use.

Map 4 shows the proportion of Congressional tour visitors using each "inner" intersection in the immediate White House area. Pennsylvania Avenue and East Executive Park (54%) and East Executive Park and Hamilton Place (29%) were used most often.



Map 3: Proportion of visitor groups using outer intersections (Congressional tour)



WASHINGTON MONUMENT  
 GROUNDS  
 N=248 visitor groups;  
 percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could use more than one intersection.

Map 4: Proportion of visitor groups using inner intersections  
 (Congressional tour)

#### D. Information sources

Prior to their Congressional tour, 65% of the visitors consulted Congressional offices for tour information. Figure 6 shows the proportion of visitors that consulted each identified source. Other commonly used information sources were friends and relatives (47%) and previous visits (20%). Two percent consulted the National Park Service.



Figure 6: Proportion of visitor groups using each information source (Congressional tour)

### E. Ticket arrangements

Thirty-five percent of Congressional tour visitors received their tickets by mail. Thirty-four percent of Congressional tour visitors received their tickets in person (see Figure 7). Respondents that specified "other" ways to get tickets reported their tours were prearranged by friends and relatives or a government agency.

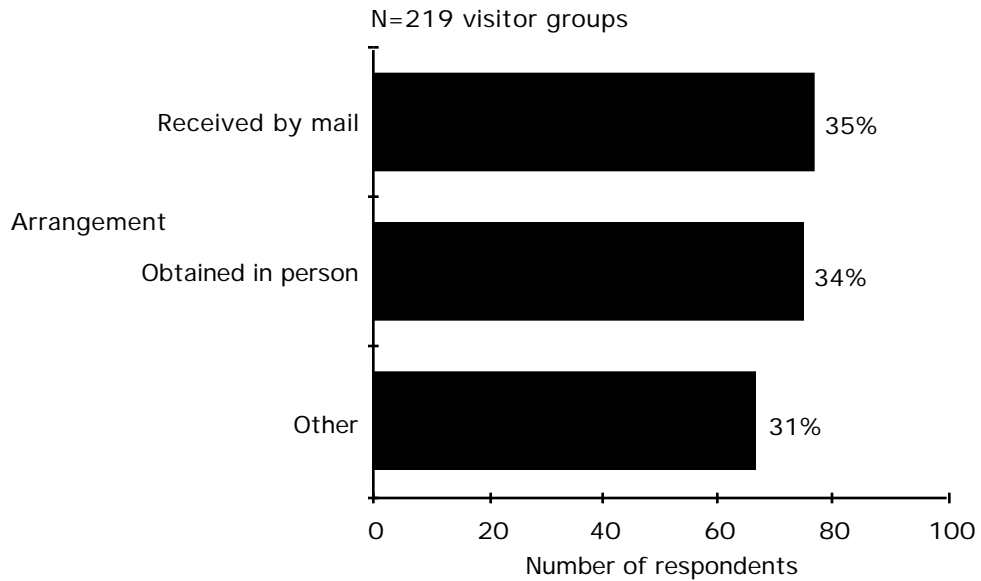


Figure 7: Arrangement for obtaining Congressional tour tickets

### F. Ticket sources

Congressional tour visitors commonly obtained their tickets from the offices of Senators (32%) or Representatives (49%), as shown in Figure 8. Some of the "other" originating offices included the institutes, military and various government agencies.

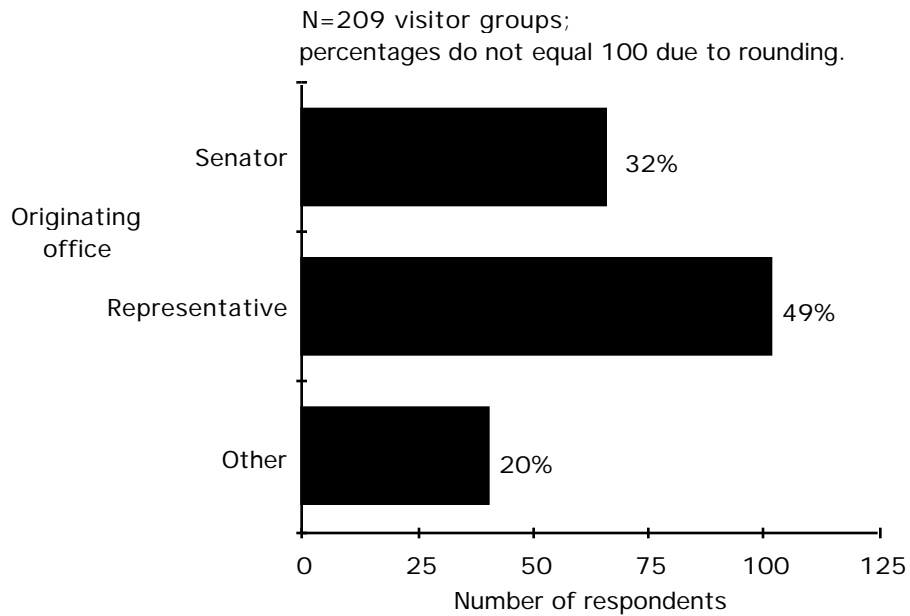


Figure 8: Originating office of Congressional tour tickets

**G. Duration of wait for tour to start**

Congressional tour visitors commonly waited less than one hour before their tours began (Figure 9). The average wait was 16 minutes.

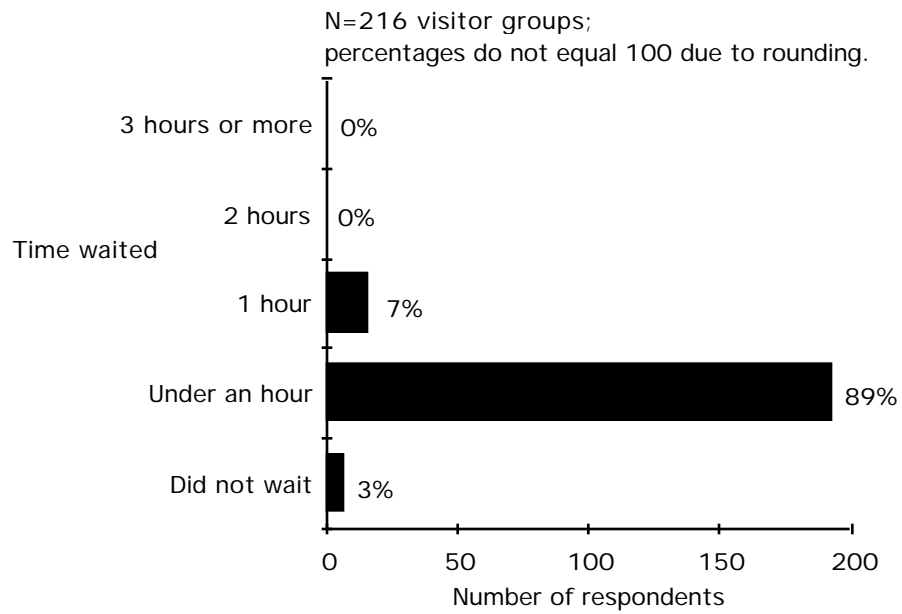


Figure 9: Duration of wait for Congressional tour to start

## H. Use of services and facilities

Congressional tour visitors used a variety of the available services and facilities (see Figures 10 and 11). The most commonly used information and interpretive services were the White House room guides (83%), the exhibits inside the White House (46%), book sales and ranger assistance (28%), as seen in Figure 10.

Souvenir sales (29%) was the most used support facility; followed by restrooms (17%), the bus or tram tour and snack bar (5%), as seen in Figure 11.

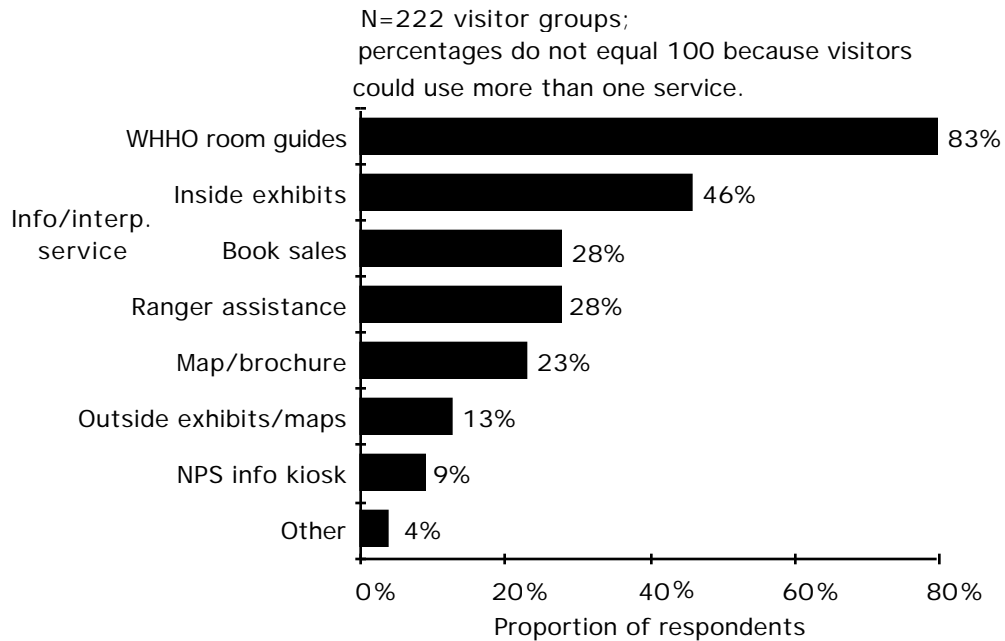


Figure 10: Proportion of visitor groups using each service (Congressional tour)

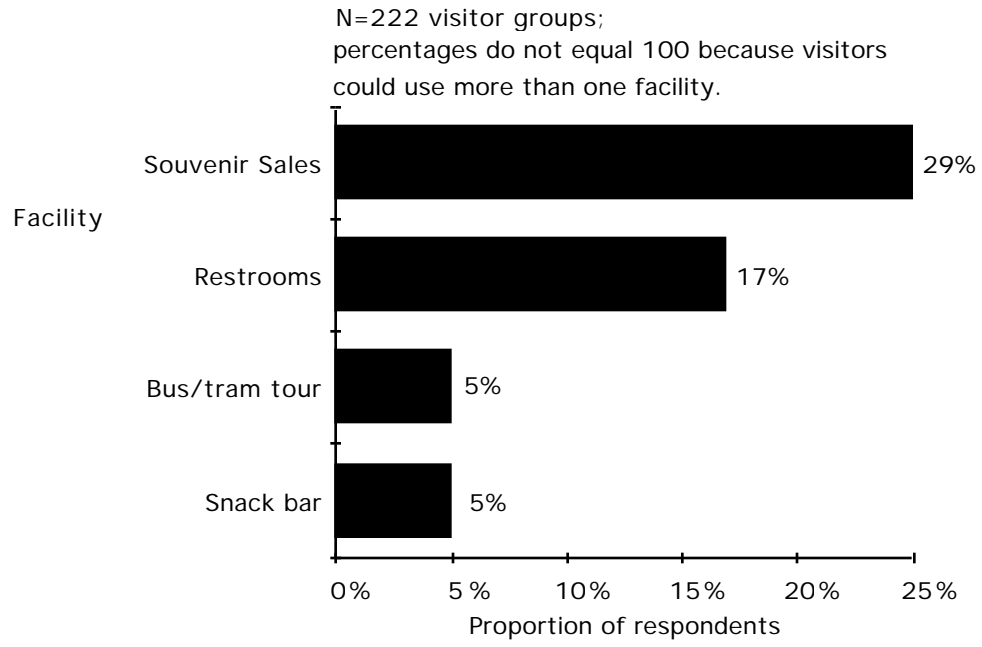


Figure 11: Proportion of visitor groups using each facility  
(Congressional tour)



### I. Evaluation of services and facilities

Congressional tour visitors rated the quality of each service and facility they used. Figures 12-23 show that visitors rated several services and facilities from "good" to "very good": ranger assistance (76%), map/brochure (75%), the White House room guides (74%), and exhibits inside the White House (73%).

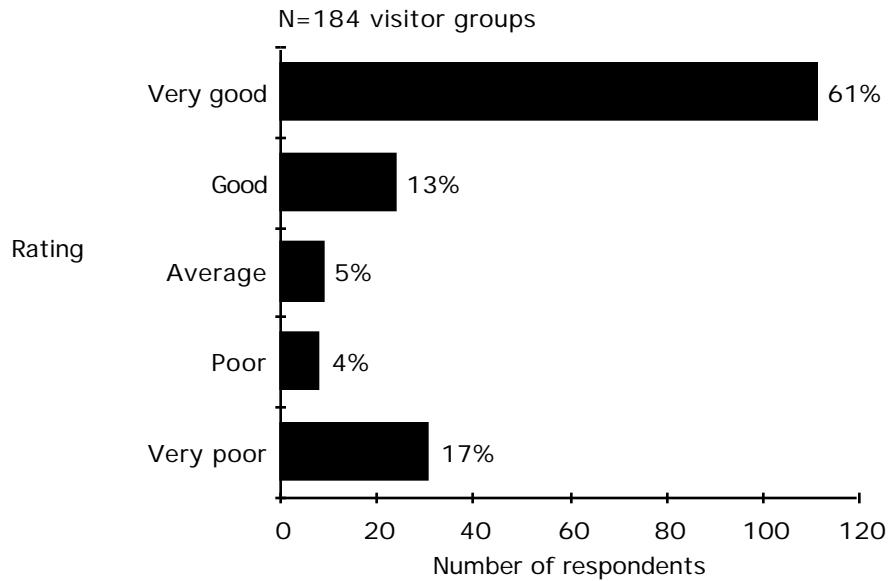


Figure 12: Quality of White House room guides (Congressional tour)

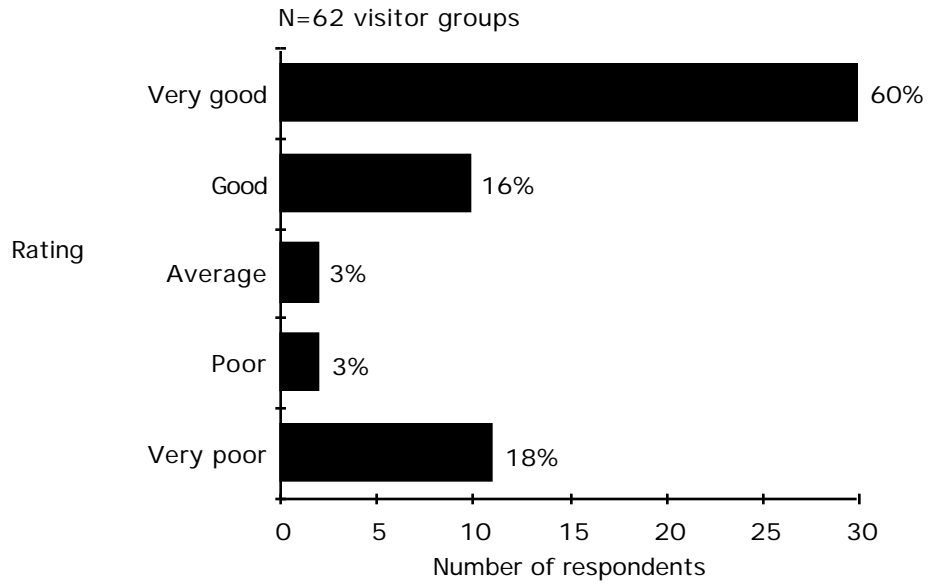


Figure 13: Quality of ranger assistance (Congressional tour)

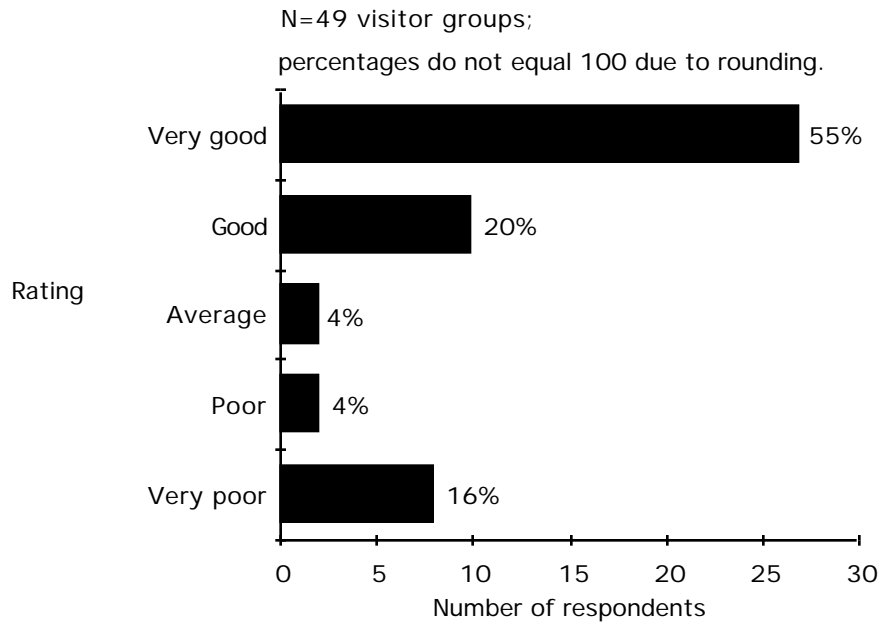


Figure 14: Quality of map/brochure (Congressional tour)

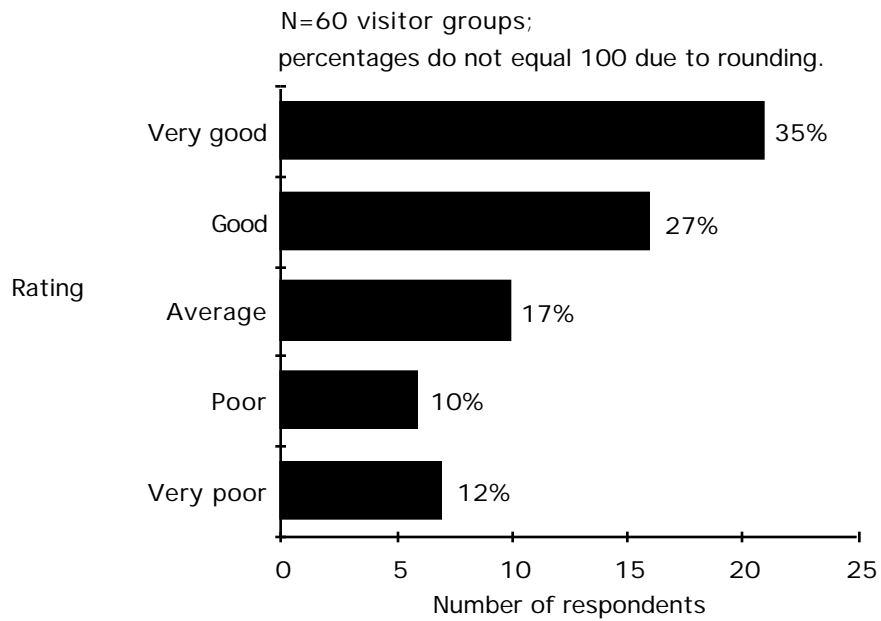


Figure 15: Quality of book sales (Congressional tour)

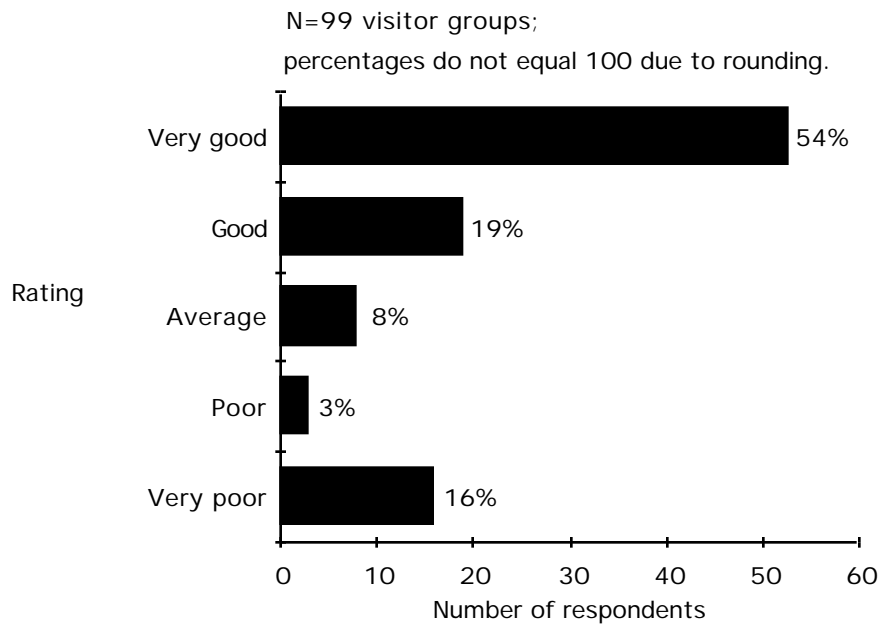


Figure 16: Quality of exhibits inside the White House (Congressional tour)

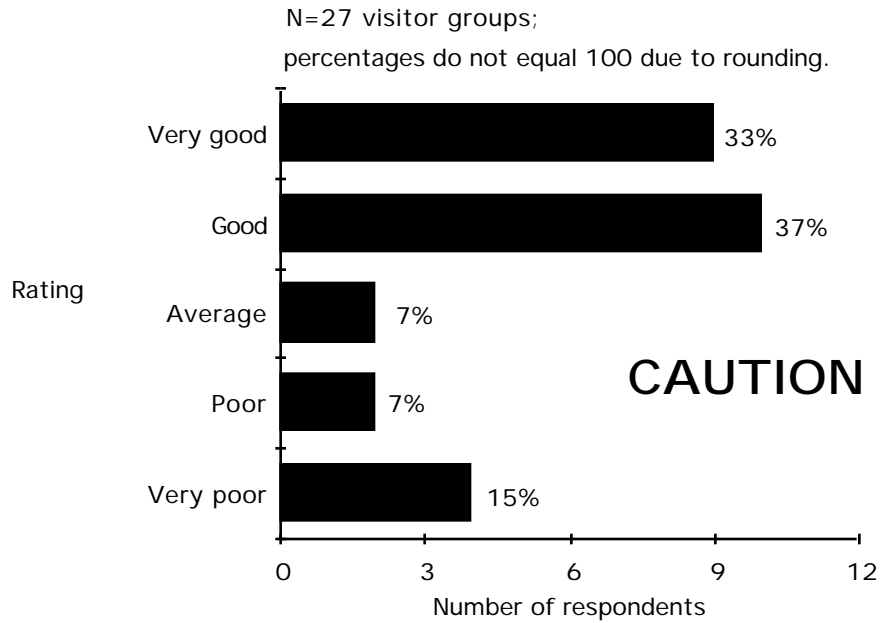


Figure 17: Quality of exhibits and maps outside the White House (Congressional tour)

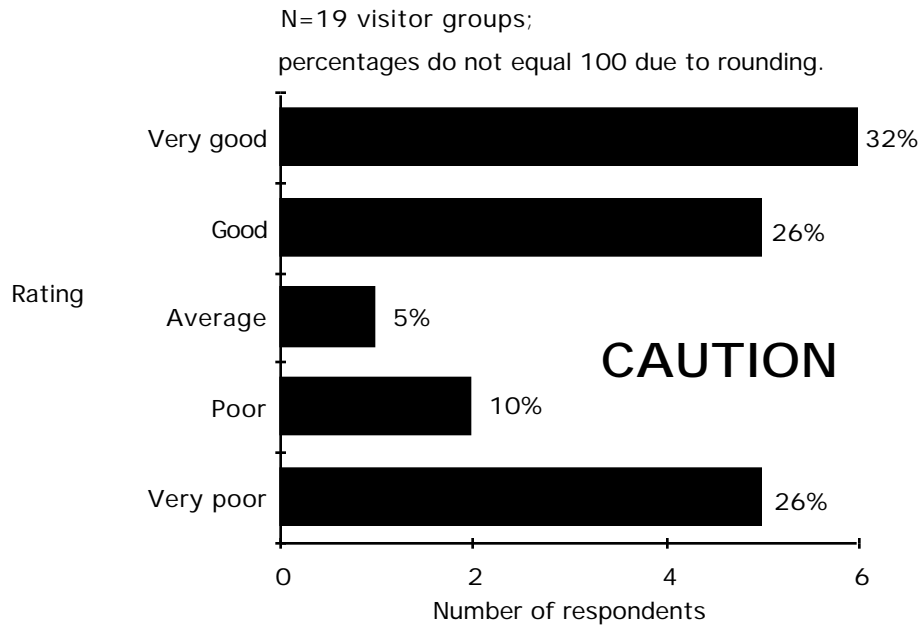


Figure 18: Quality of the NPS information kiosk (Congressional tour)

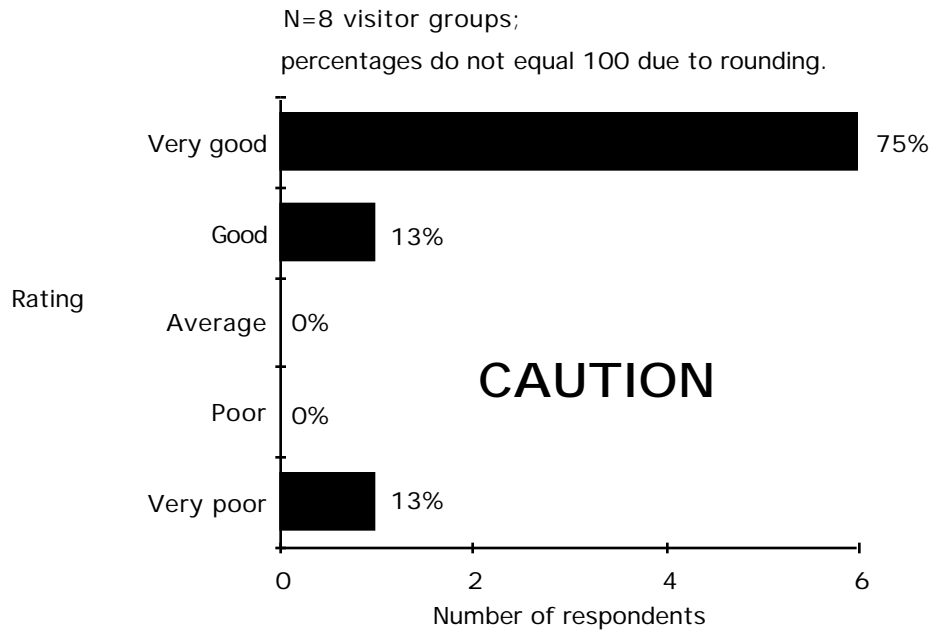


Figure 19: Quality of "other" (Congressional tour)

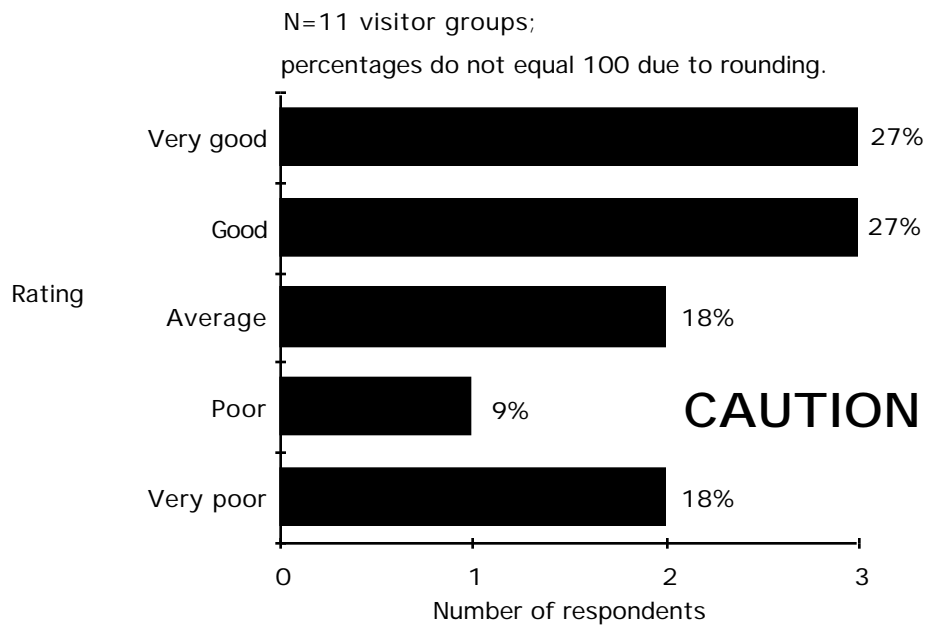


Figure 20: Quality of snack bar (Congressional tour)

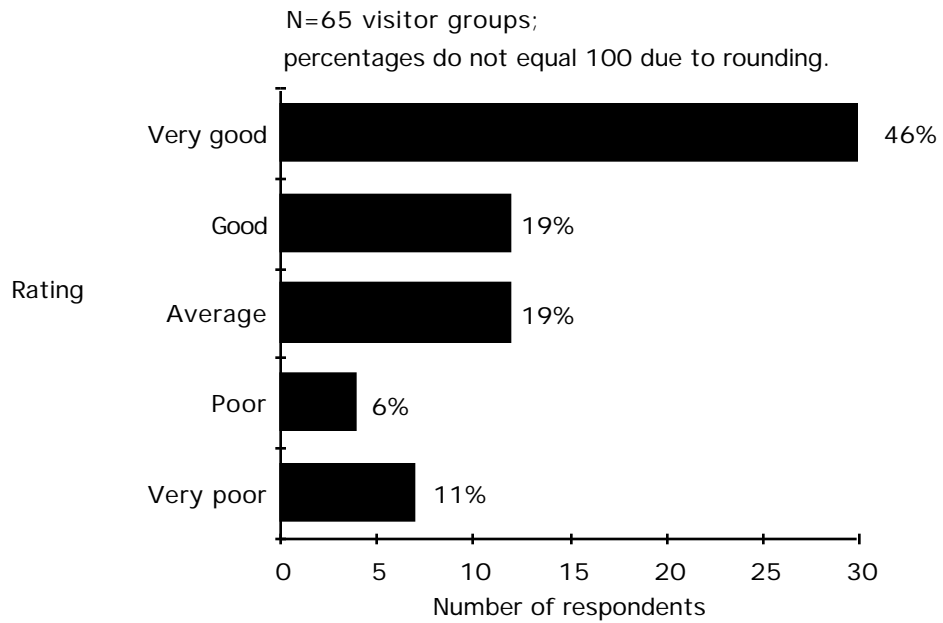


Figure 21: Quality of souvenir sales (Congressional tour)

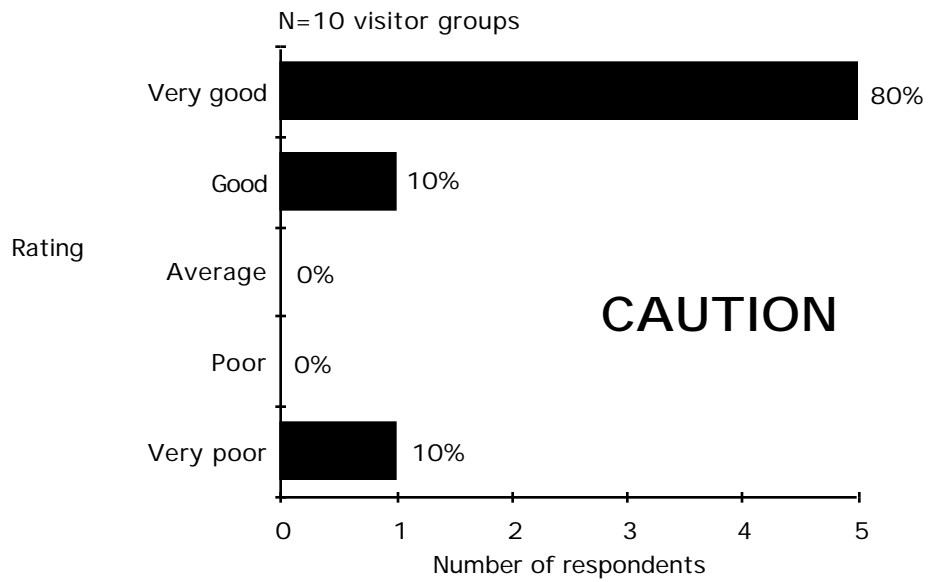


Figure 22: Quality of bus tour or tram (Congressional tour)

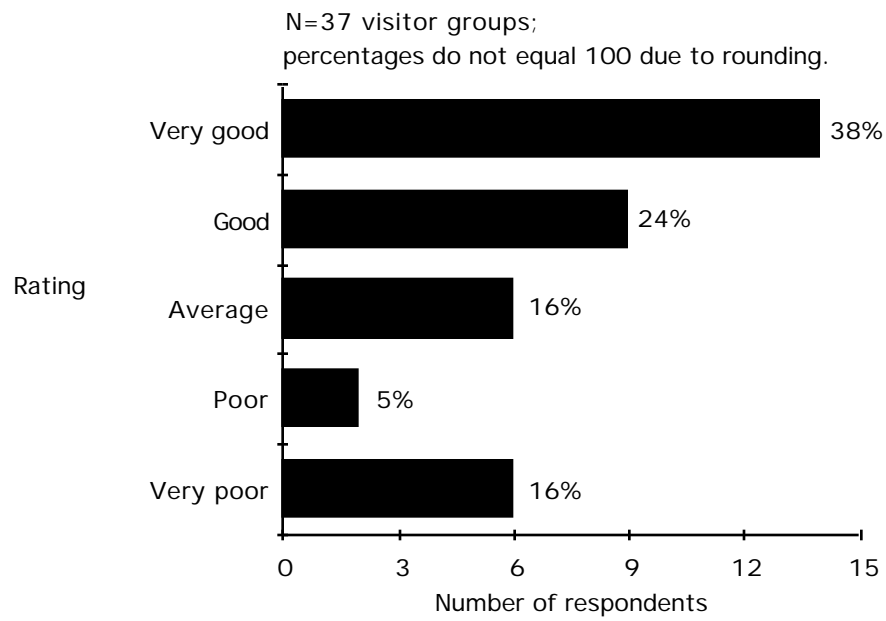


Figure 23: Quality of restrooms (Congressional tour)

### J. Subjects of interest for future tours

Congressional tour visitors suggested many different topics for future White House tours (see Table 4). The most popular subjects included history, architecture, official events, personal information on the presidents and their families and current events.

**Table 4: Future tour subjects of interest (Congressional tours)**

N=255 subjects; many visitors mentioned more than one subject.

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>No. of times mentioned</u>
History	68
Architecture	34
Official events	30
More personal information about presidents and their families	29
Current events	18
Presidential anecdotes	12
Furniture	12
Typical day in the White House	8
How the rooms are used by their occupants	8
Gardens/outside grounds	7
Secret Service/security	6
Previous presidents/occupants	5
White House expenses	3
Blair House	2
Historical comments on dress	2
Other comments (< 2 each)	11



**K. Potential use of a White House Visitor Center**

Seventy-two percent of the Congressional tour respondents felt they would likely use a nearby White House Visitor Center, if it were available; 18% felt they would be unlikely to do so (see Figure 24).

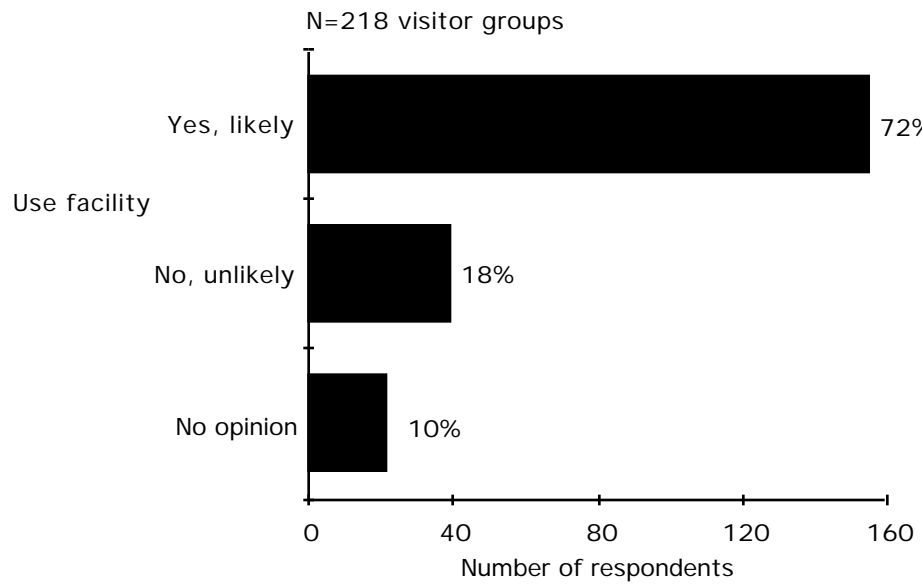


Figure 24: Potential use of a White House Visitor Center (Congressional tour)

### L. Downtown sites visited

Respondents either planned to visit or had visited many other downtown Washington, D.C. sites (see Figure 25). Most (85%) either visited or planned to visit the Smithsonian Institution. The U.S. Capitol (83%) and the Lincoln Memorial (81%) were the next most popular sites. Forty-six percent of visitors specified "other" sites, including the FBI Building, Ford's Theater, the Supreme Court, Mount Vernon, the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, and the National Archives.

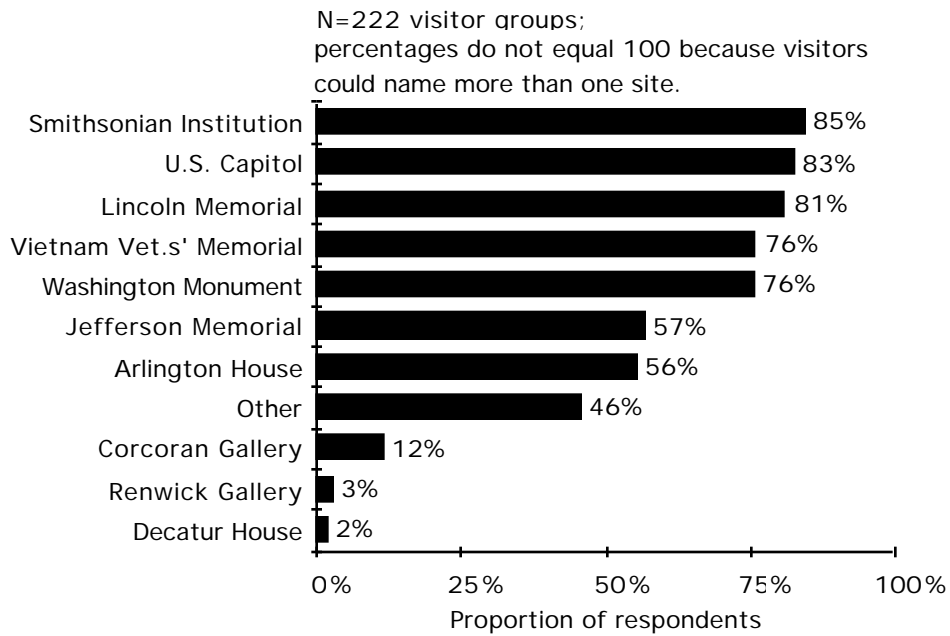


Figure 25: Downtown sites visited (Congressional tour)

### M. Comment summary (Congressional tour)

Visitors were asked if there was anything else they wanted to tell us about their White House Tour. A summary of these comments appears below and in the separate appendix, which also contains their unedited comments. Their comments mention a variety of subjects.

#### Visitor comment summary (Congressional tour)

N=252 comments; many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>Secret Service</b>	
Guides friendly/knowledgeable	47
Guides should lead tours	2
Other comments	4
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
White House brochure should be handed out to visitors	4
Other comments	8
<b>Personal</b>	
Enjoyed tour	68
White House tour too short/rushed	28
Tour group too large	21
Tour should offer more rooms	15
Want tour of grounds	9
Other comments	3
<b>FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Appreciated flower arrangements inside White House	4
Better maintenance needed inside of White House	2
Other comments	1
<b>CONCESSIONS</b>	
Need to have souvenir and book sales available after tour	9
Need to sell a variety of souvenirs	3
Other comments	1

**GENERAL IMPRESSIONS**

Would like to have met the president	4
Good job	4
Traffic was difficult	3
Did not have to wait long for tour	2
Other comments	10

## PUBLIC TOUR RESULTS

### A. Characteristics

Forty-five percent of public tour visitors came in groups of two, and 23% in groups of three or four (Figure 26). Families accounted for 49% of visitors, as shown in Figure 27. Some of the "other" kinds of groups included school groups, business associates and scouting groups.

Figure 28 shows a wide range of age groups, the most common being adults 36-50 years of age (33%) and 21-35 years of age (28%). Eighty percent were on their first White House tour, and 17% had toured 2-4 times, as shown in Figure 29.

Foreign visitors comprised 23% of public tour visitors. Most came from Canada (12%), and the United Kingdom (10%); see map 5. Map 6 and Table 6 show that the states with the largest proportion of visitors were California (16%), Virginia (8%) and New York (7%).

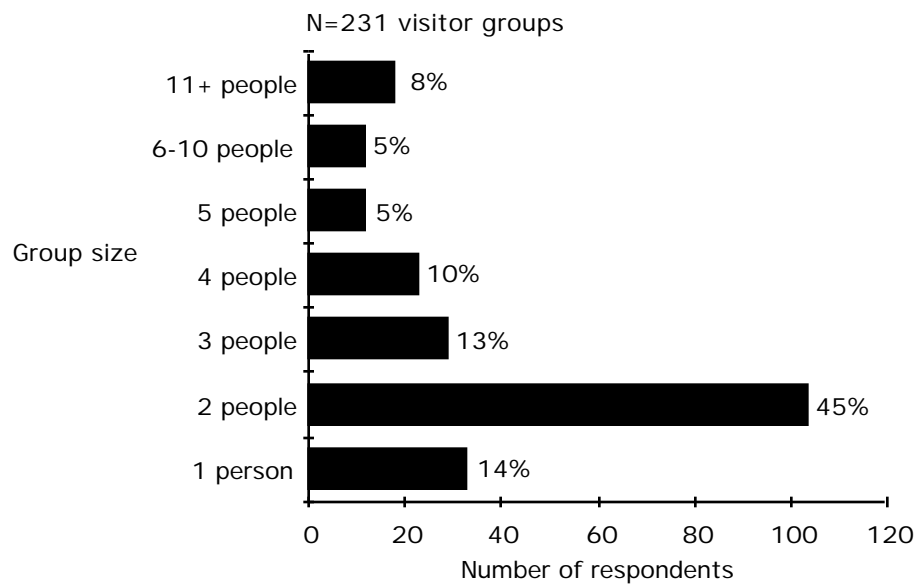


Figure 26: Visitor group sizes (public tour)

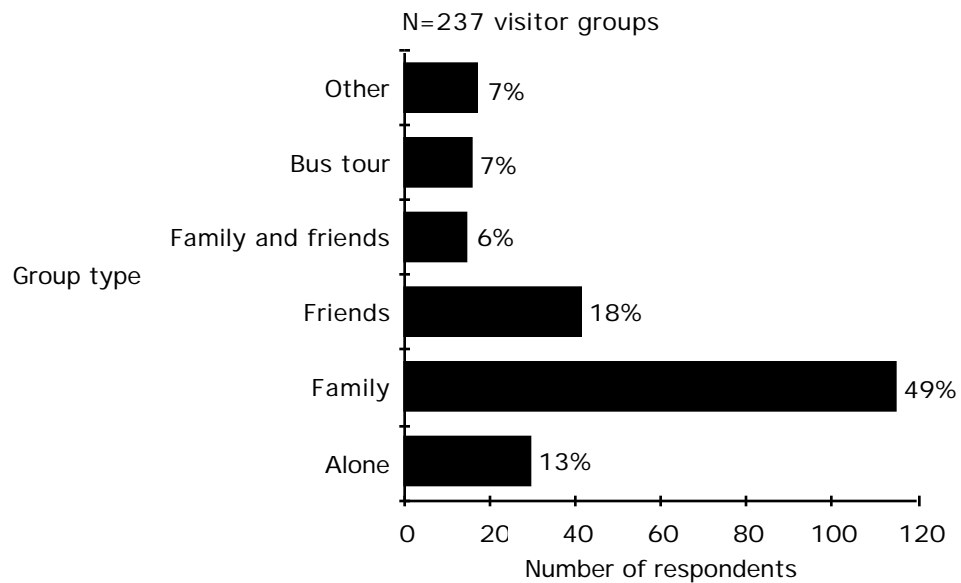


Figure 27: Visitor group types (public tour)

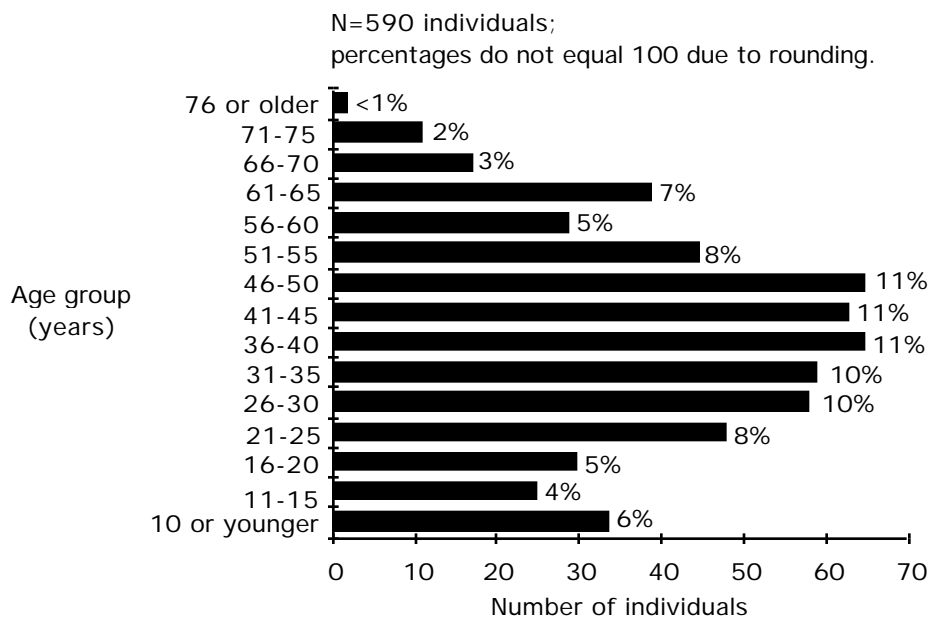


Figure 28: Visitor ages (public tour)

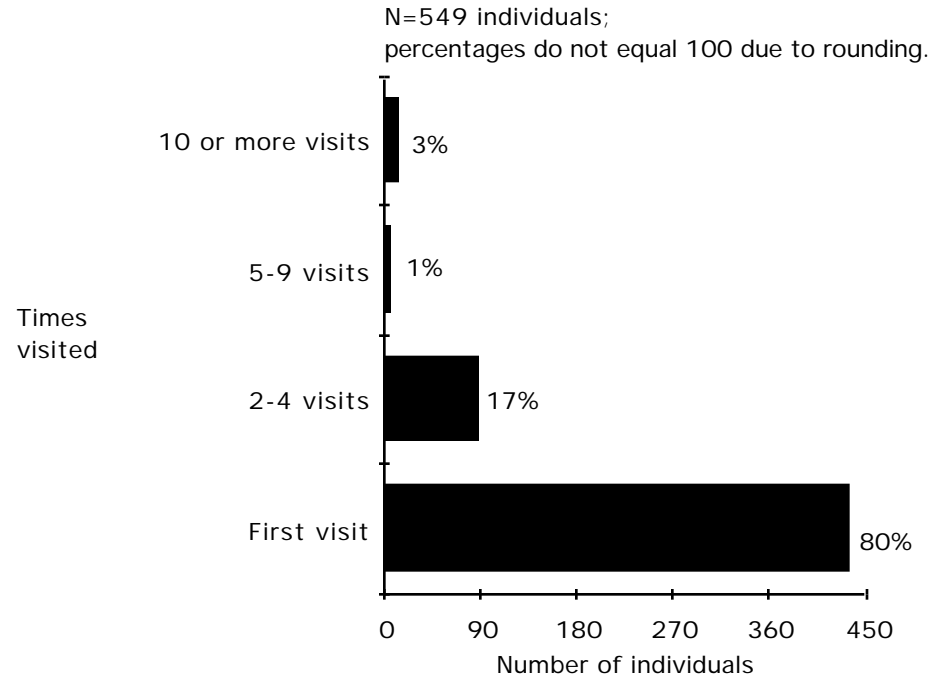
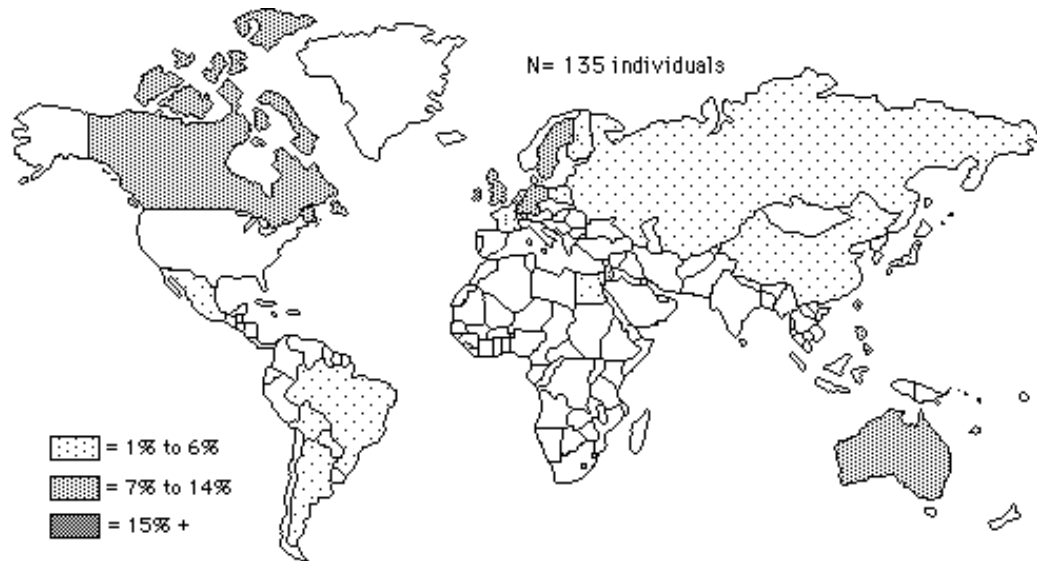


Figure 29: Number of visits made by visitor groups (public tour)



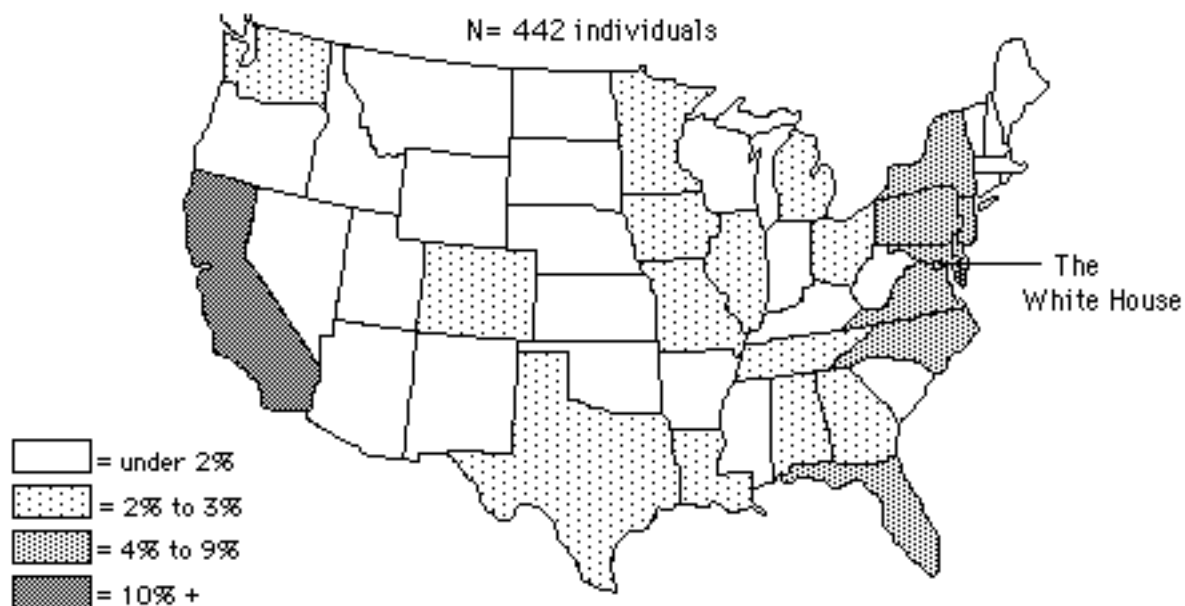
Map 5: Proportion of foreign visitors by country (public tour)

**Table 5: Proportion of visitors from foreign countries (public tour)**

N=135 individuals from foreign countries  
individual state percentages do not total to 100 due to rounding.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of individuals</b>	<b>Percent of foreign visitors</b>
Canada	16	12
United Kingdom	14	10
Germany	11	8
Sweden	11	8
Australia	10	7
Brazil	7	5
China	7	5
France	5	4
Taiwan	5	4
USSR	5	4
Argentina	4	3
Bolivia	4	3
Netherlands	4	3
Japan	3	2
Mexico	3	2
Poland	3	2
Belgium	2	1
Egypt	2	1
Finland	2	1
Israel	2	1
Ireland	2	1
Philippines	2	1
Switzerland	2	1
Trinidad	2	1
Other countries	7	5





Map 6: Proportion of visitors from each state (public tour)

**Table 6: Proportion of visitors from each state (public tour)**

N=442 individuals

State	Number of individuals	Percent of visitors
California	69	16
Virginia	37	8
New York	31	7
Pennsylvania	22	5
Maryland	21	5
New Jersey	21	5
Florida	18	4
North Carolina	16	4
Louisiana	15	3
Missouri	15	3
Washington	15	3
Illinois	13	3
Ohio	13	3
Texas	12	3
Michigan	11	2
Georgia	9	2
Minnesota	9	2
Tennessee	9	2
Colorado	8	2
Indiana	8	2
Alabama	7	2
Other states (16)	63	14

**B. Transportation type**

Most public tour visitors arrived for their White House tour by walking (48%), private vehicle (30%), and/or subway (30%). Figure 30 shows the proportion of visitors that used each type of available transport.

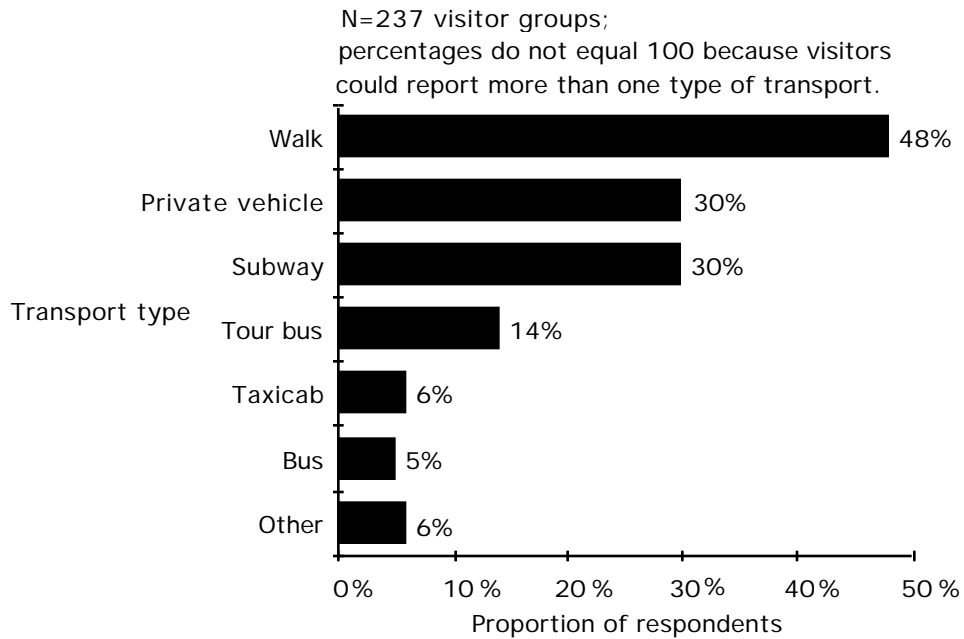


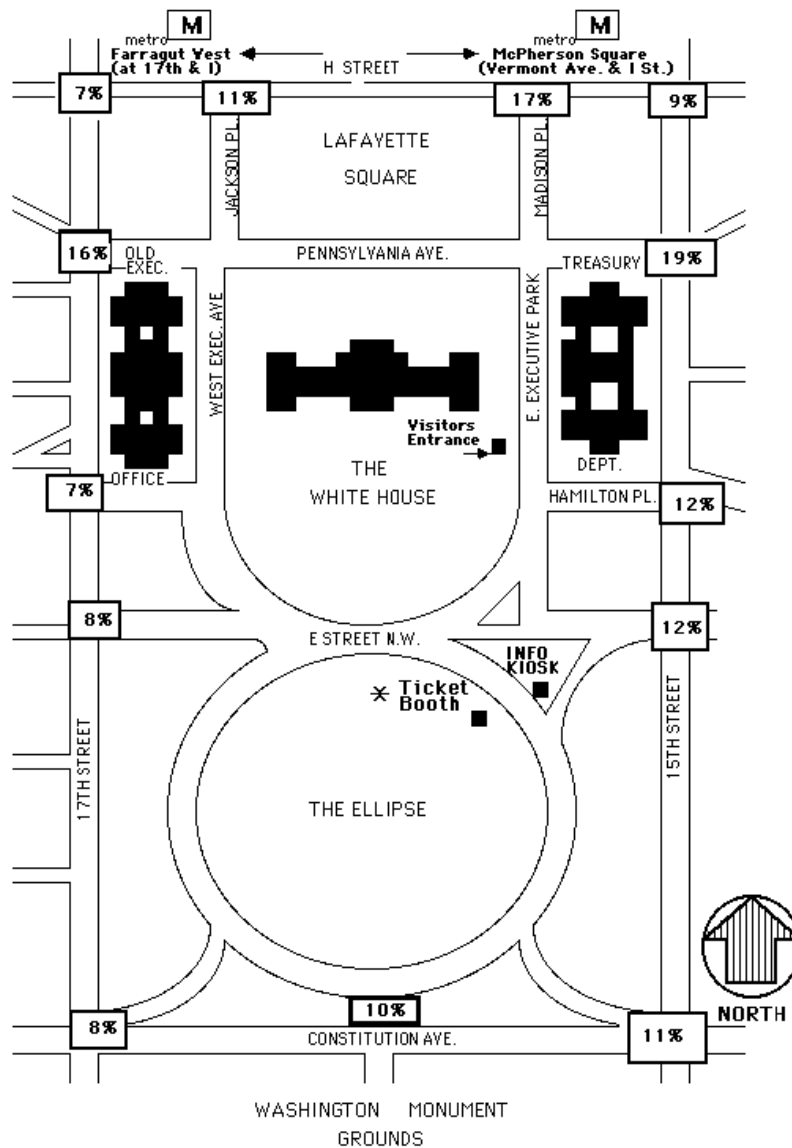
Figure 30: Proportion of visitor groups using each transport type (public tour)

### C. Routes traveled

Visitors indicated the routes they used to arrive at the ticket booth to obtain tickets for the public tour. Map 7 shows the proportion of public tour visitors using each "outer" intersection to enter the White House area. Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street (19%) and H Street and Madison Place (17%) had the highest use.

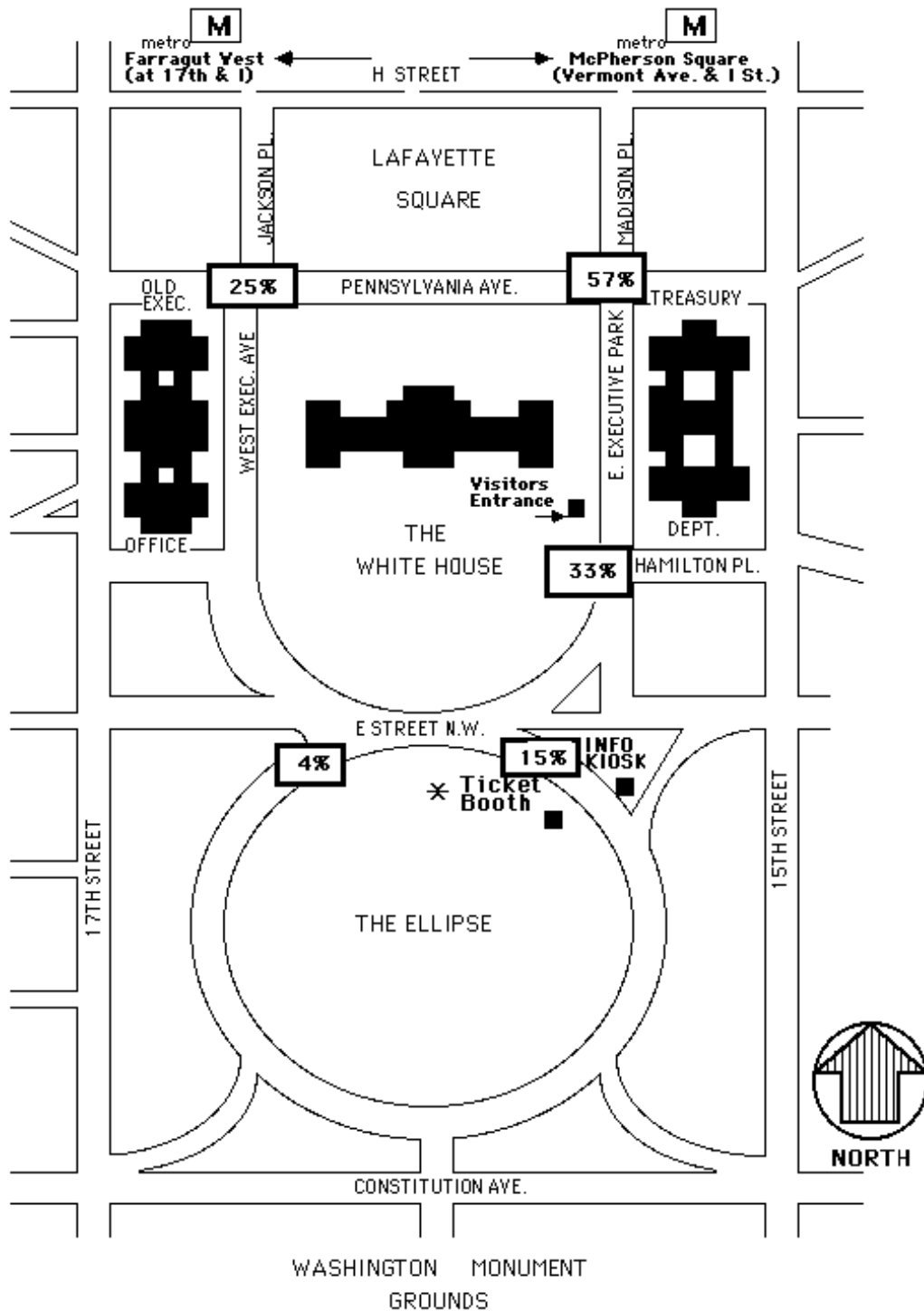
Map 8 shows the proportion of public tour visitors using each "inner" intersection in the immediate White House area. East Executive Park and Madison Place (57%) and East Executive Park and Hamilton Place (33%) were used most often.

N=237 visitor groups;  
percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could use more than one intersection.



Map 7: Proportion of visitor groups using outer intersections (public tour)

N=237 visitor groups;  
percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could use more than one intersection.



Map 8: Proportion of visitor groups using inner intersections  
(public tour)

#### D. Information sources

Prior to their public tour, many visitor groups consulted travel guides and tour books for advice (35%), as well as friends and relatives (30%). Figure 31 shows the proportion of visitors that consulted each identified source. Eight percent consulted Congressional offices or the National Park Service.

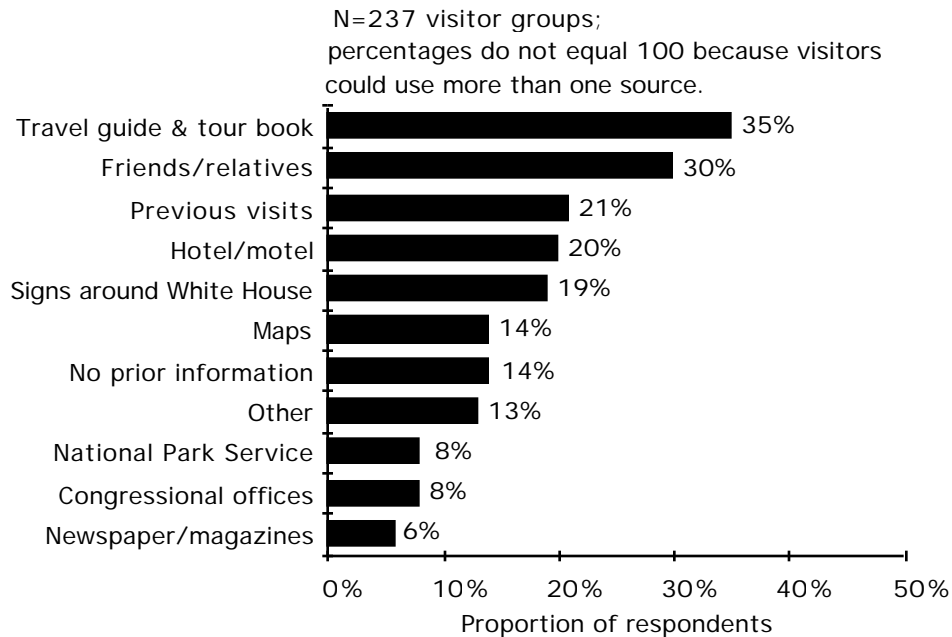


Figure 31: Proportion of visitor groups using each information source (public tour)

**E. Duration of wait for tour to start**

Public tour visitors commonly waited one hour or less before their tours began (see Figure 32). The average wait was twenty-one minutes. Some groups did not wait at all, while one group waited two hours and 30 minutes.

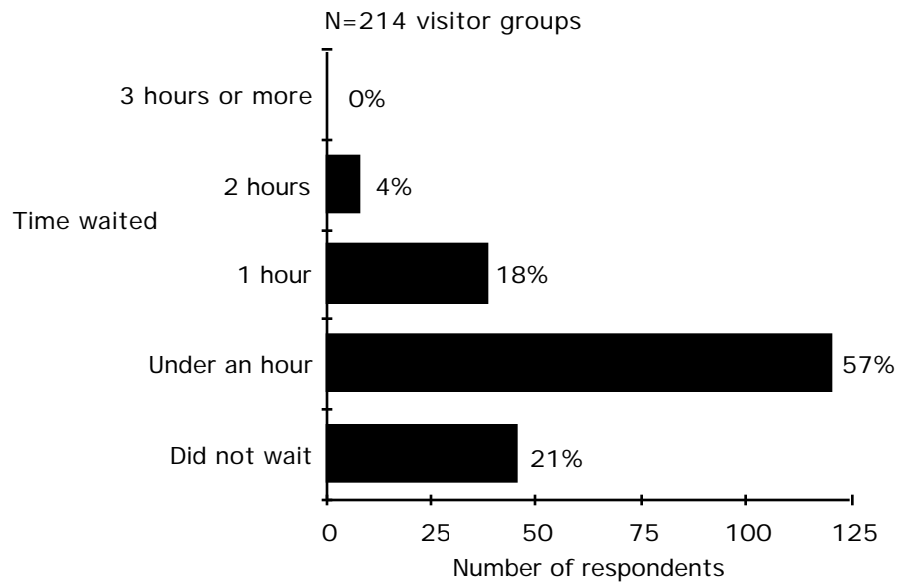
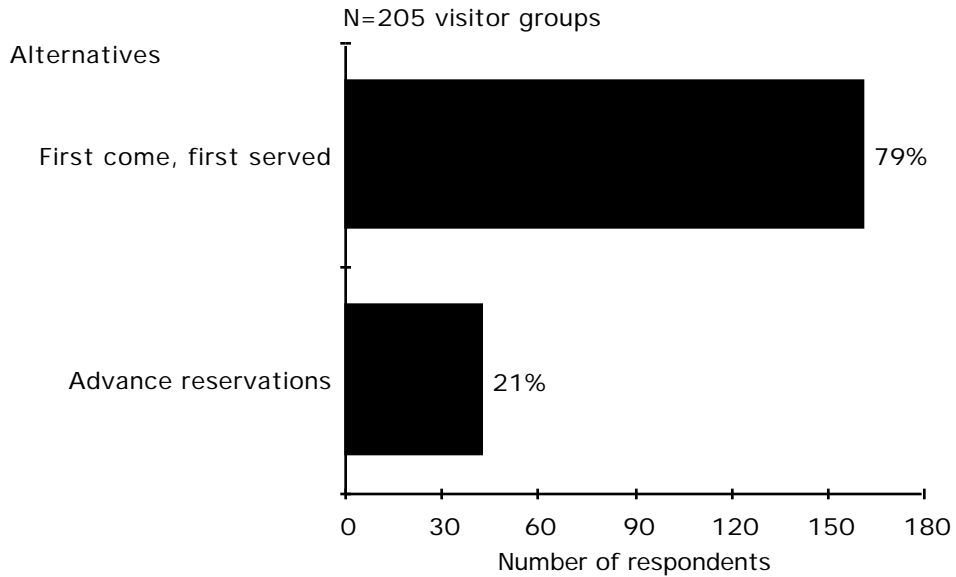


Figure 32: Duration of wait for public tour to start

### F. Preferred ticket system

Public tour visitors were asked to choose between two ticketing arrangements for visiting the White House in the future. Figure 33 shows that 79% were in favor of maintaining the current way of distributing tickets on a first-come, first-served basis. An advance reservation basis was preferred by 21%.



**Figure 33: Visitor preferred ticket system (public tour)**

### G. Use of services and facilities

Public tour visitors used a variety of the available services and facilities (see Figures 34 and 35). The most commonly used information and interpretive services were the White House room guides (69%), the map/brochure (57%), the exhibits inside the White House (56%), and ranger assistance (40%), as seen in Figure 34.

Facilities used most often were souvenir sales (18%), followed by the restrooms (11%), the bus/tram tour (6%), and the snack bar (3%), as seen in Figure 35.

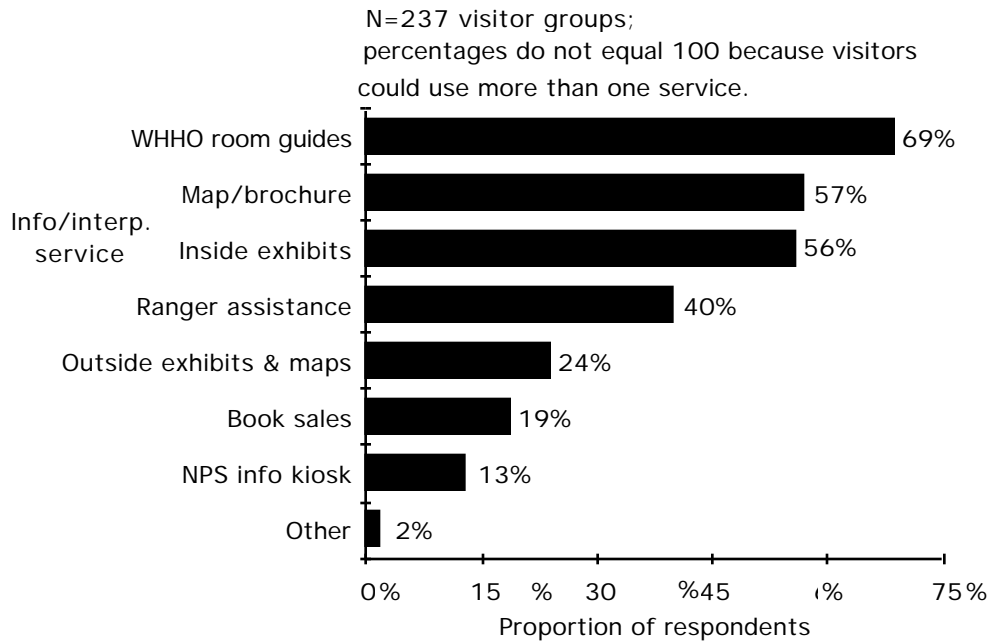


Figure 34: Proportion of visitor groups using each service (public tour)



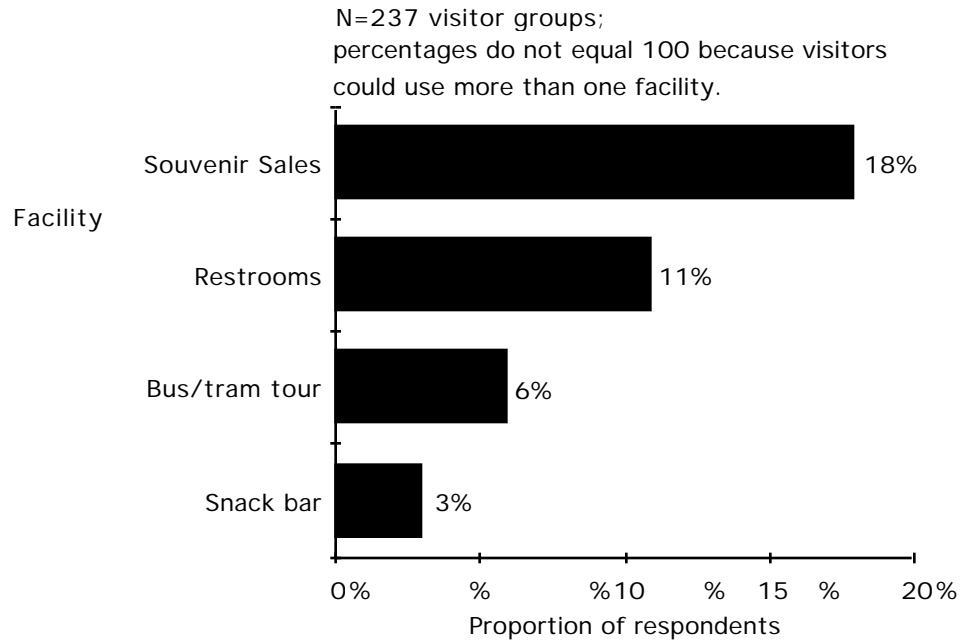


Figure 35: Proportion of visitor groups using each facility (public tour)

## H. Evaluation of services and facilities

Public tour visitors rated the quality of each service and facility they used. Figures 36-47 show that visitors rated several services and facilities from "good" to "very good": ranger assistance (73%), map/brochure (72%) and the exhibits inside the White House (72%). The services and facilities with the lowest quality, from "poor" to "very poor," were the souvenir sales (22%) and the map/brochure (20%).

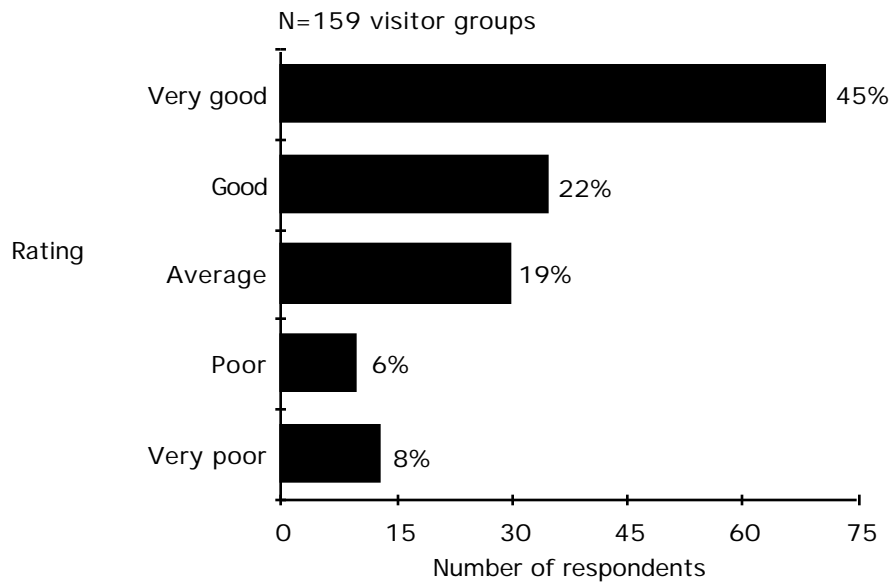


Figure 36: Quality of White House room guides (public tour)

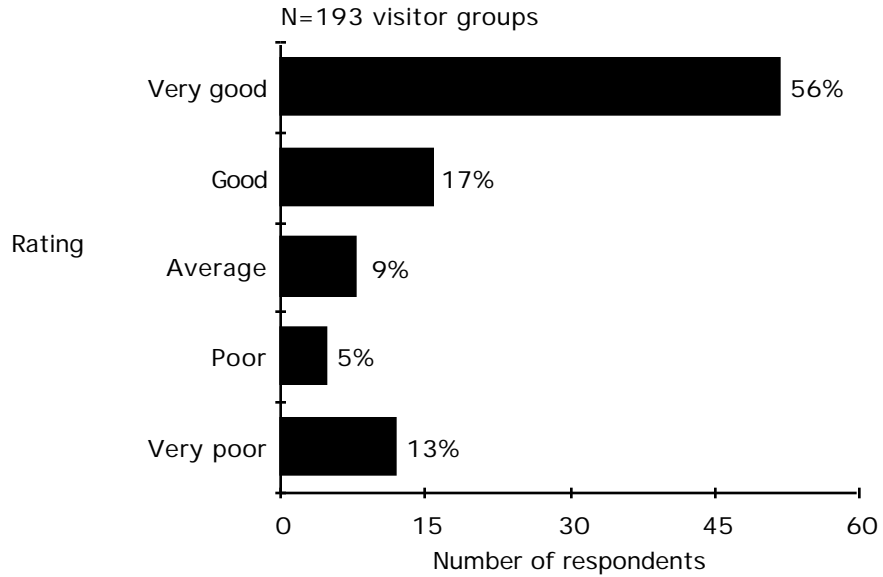


Figure 37: Quality of ranger assistance (public tour)

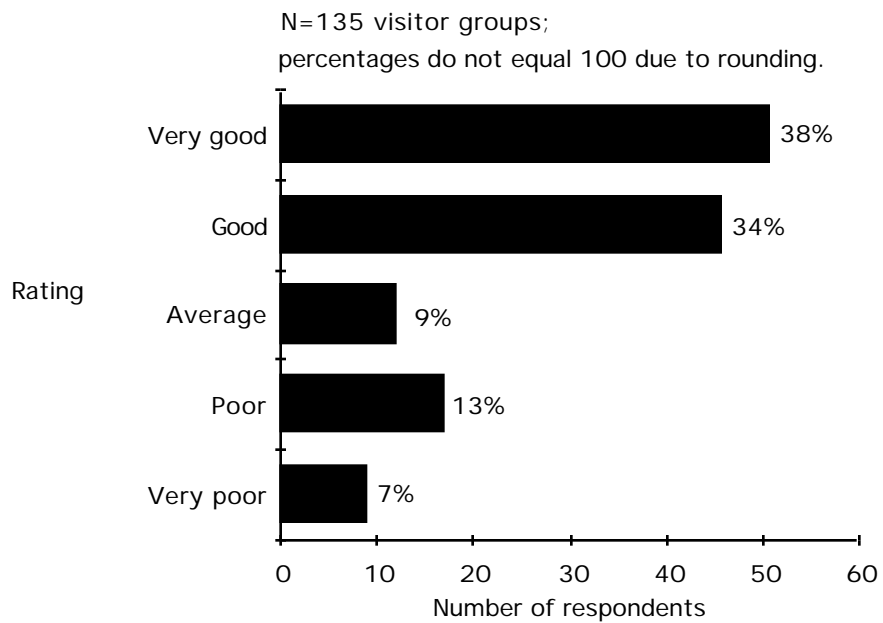


Figure 38: Quality of map/brochure (public tour)

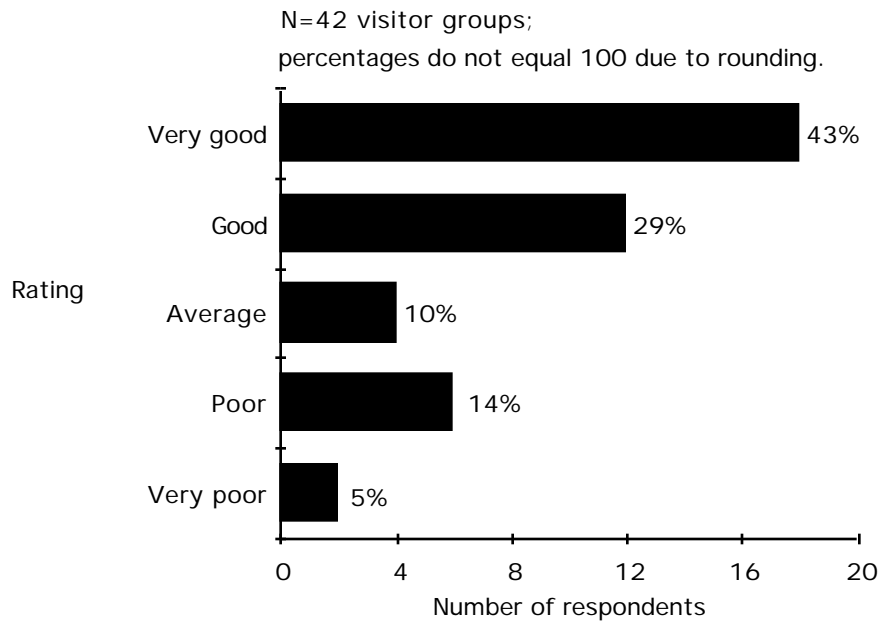


Figure 39: Quality of book sales (public tour)

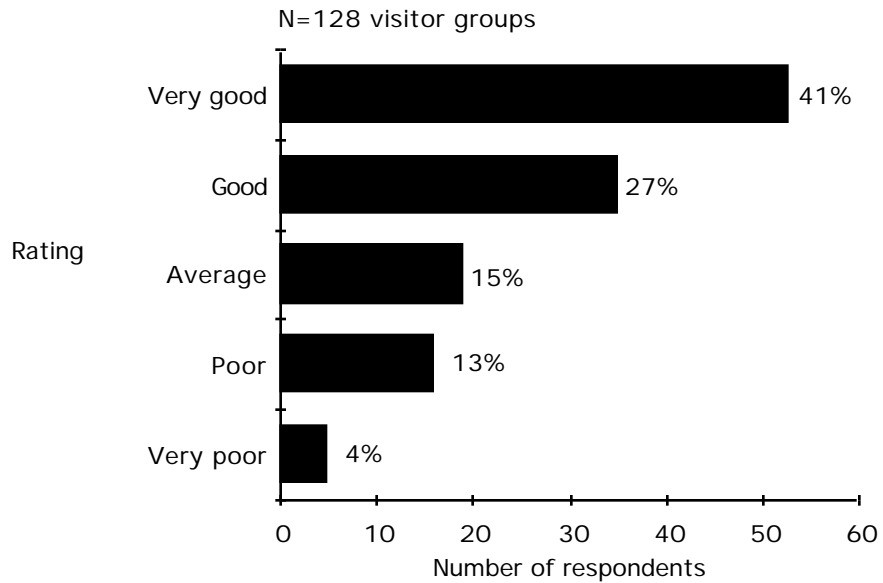


Figure 40: Quality of exhibits inside the White House (public tour)

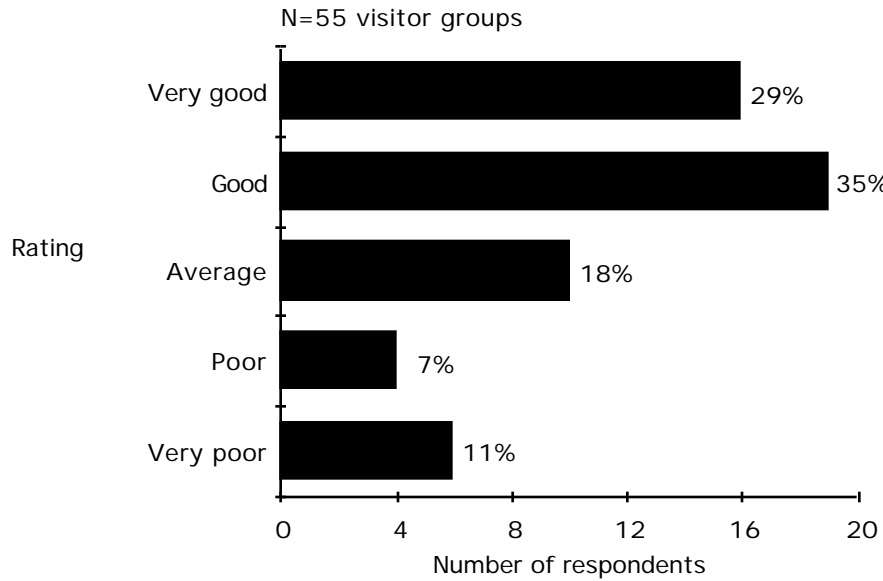


Figure 41: Quality of exhibits and maps outside the White House (public tour)

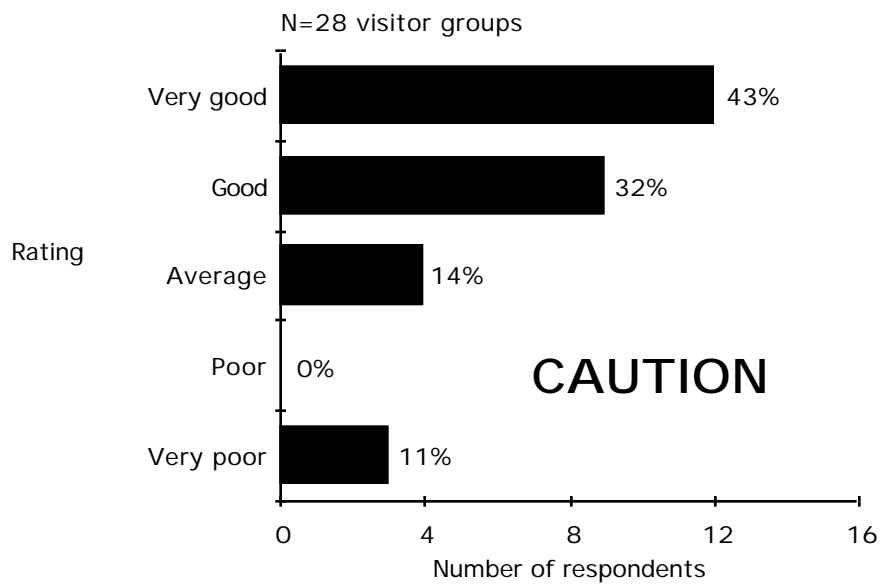


Figure 42: Quality of the NPS information kiosk (public tour)

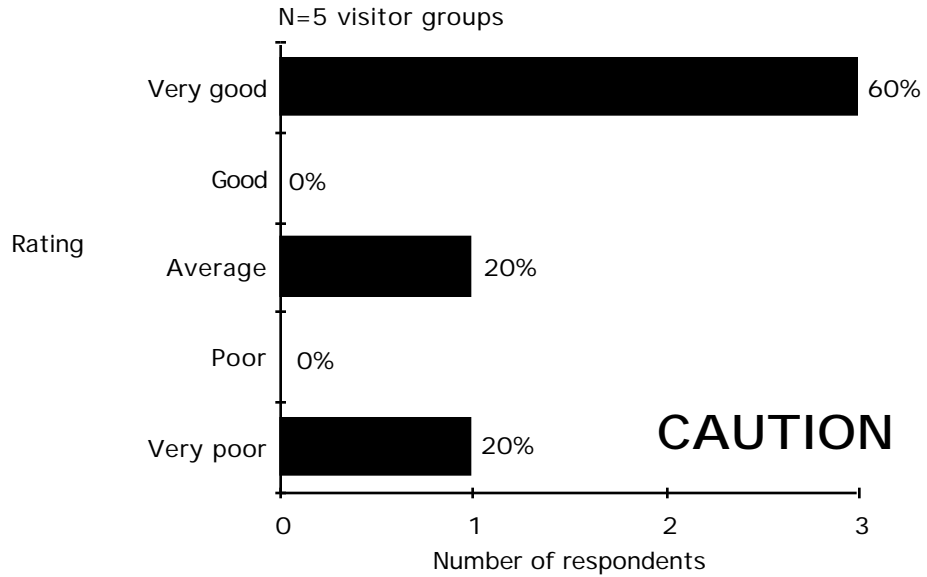


Figure 43: Quality of "other" info/interp services (public tour)

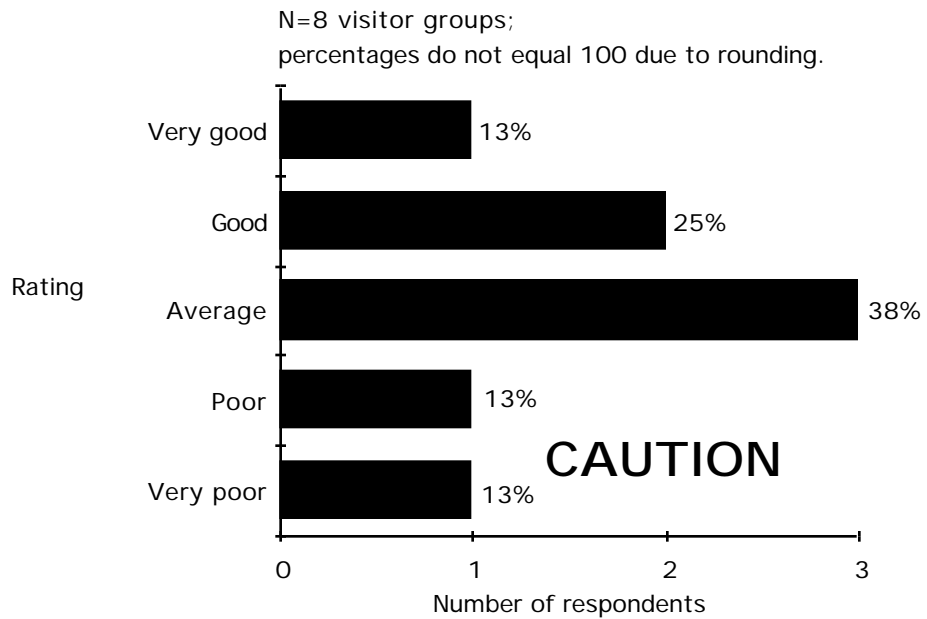


Figure 44: Quality of snack bar (public tour)

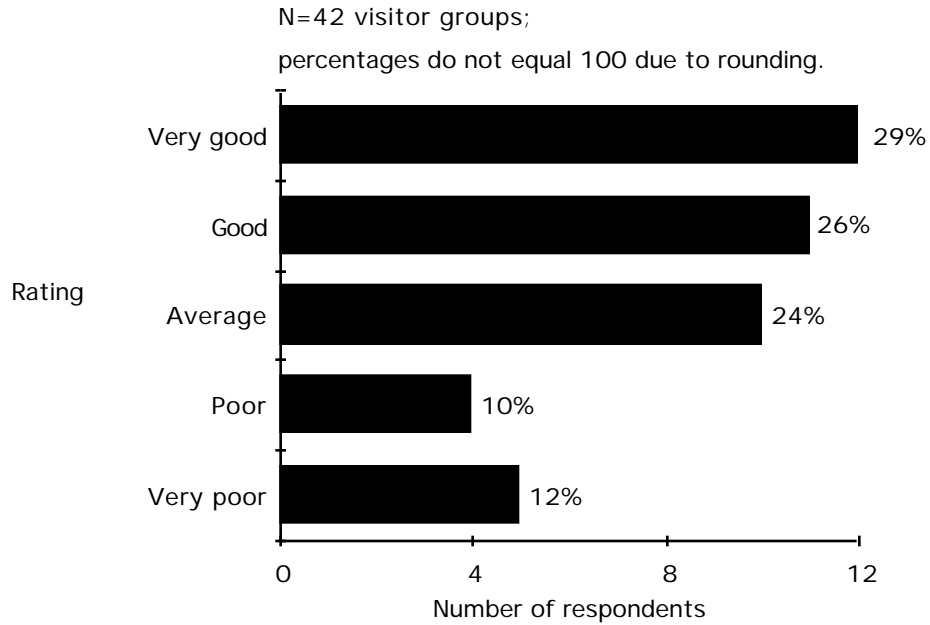


Figure 45: Quality of souvenir sales (public tour)

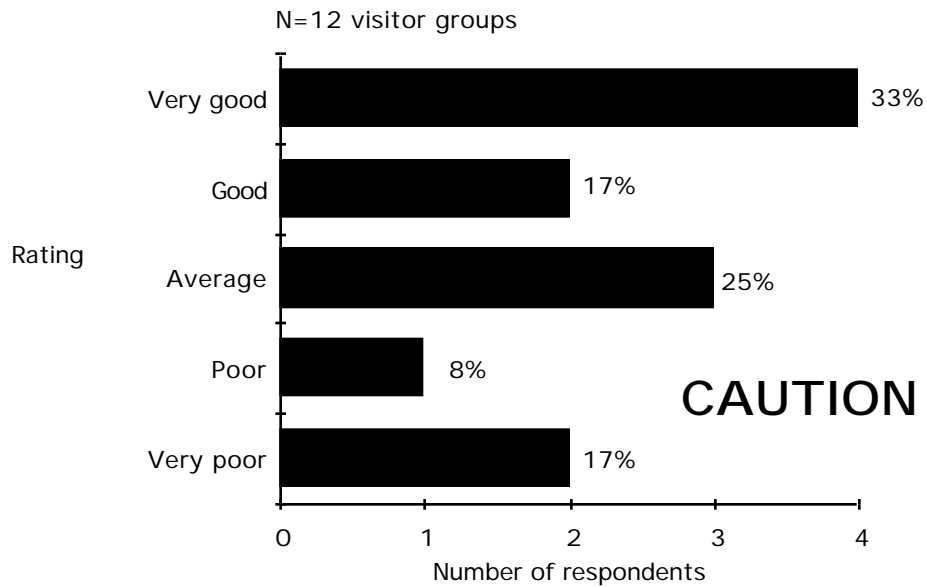


Figure 46: Quality of bus tour or tram (public tour)

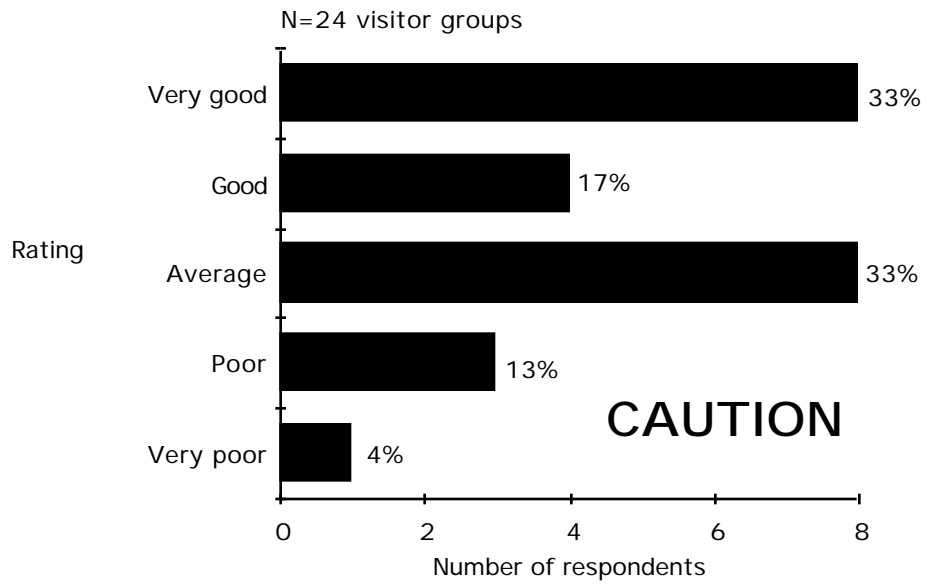


Figure 47: Quality of restrooms (public tour)



### I. Subjects of interest for future tours

Public tour visitors mentioned many different topics for future White House tours (see Table 7). The most popular subjects included history, official events, architecture, and an average day for the president.

**Table 7: Future tour subjects of interest**

N=246 subjects; many visitors mentioned more than one subject.

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>No. of times mentioned</u>
History	78
Official events	53
More personal information about presidents and their families	26
Architecture	23
How the rooms are used by their occupants	12
Furniture	11
White House management/staff	7
Gardens/outside grounds	6
Portrait information	4
White House expenses	3
How to meet president and First Lady	2
Pets	2
Previous presidents/occupants	2
Secret Service/security	2
Other comments (< 2 each)	15

**J. Potential use of a White House Visitor Center**

Seventy percent of the public tour respondents felt they would likely use a nearby White House Visitor Center, if it were available; 16% felt they would be unlikely to do so (see Figure 48).

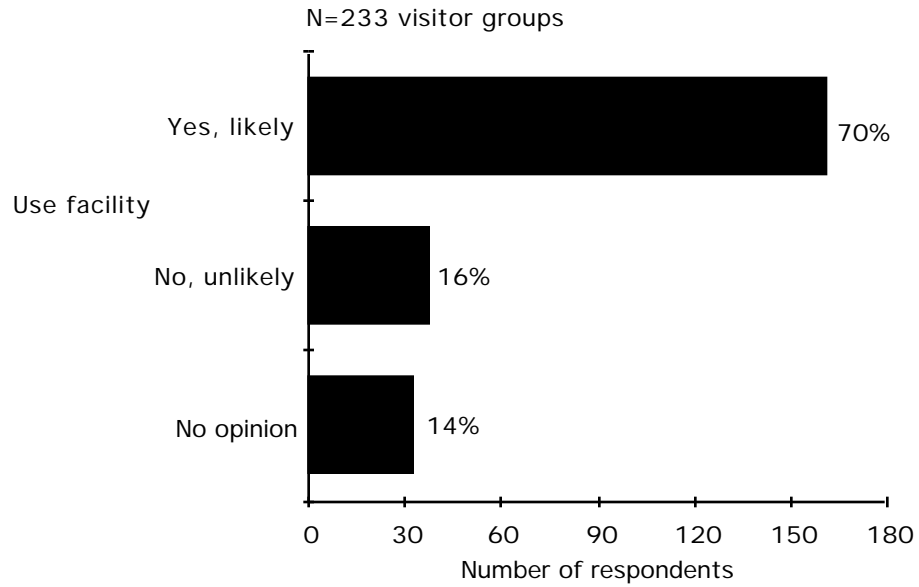


Figure 48: Potential use of a White House Visitor Center (public tour)

### K. Downtown sites visited

Public tour respondents either planned to visit or had visited many downtown Washington, D.C. sites (see Figure 49). Most either visited or planned to visit the Lincoln Memorial (85%). The Smithsonian Institution (84%) and the Washington Monument (80%) were the next most popular sites. Forty-three percent of visitors specified "other" sites, including Ford's Theater, the FBI Building, the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, Union Station, the National Archives, the Kennedy Center, and the Old Post Office.

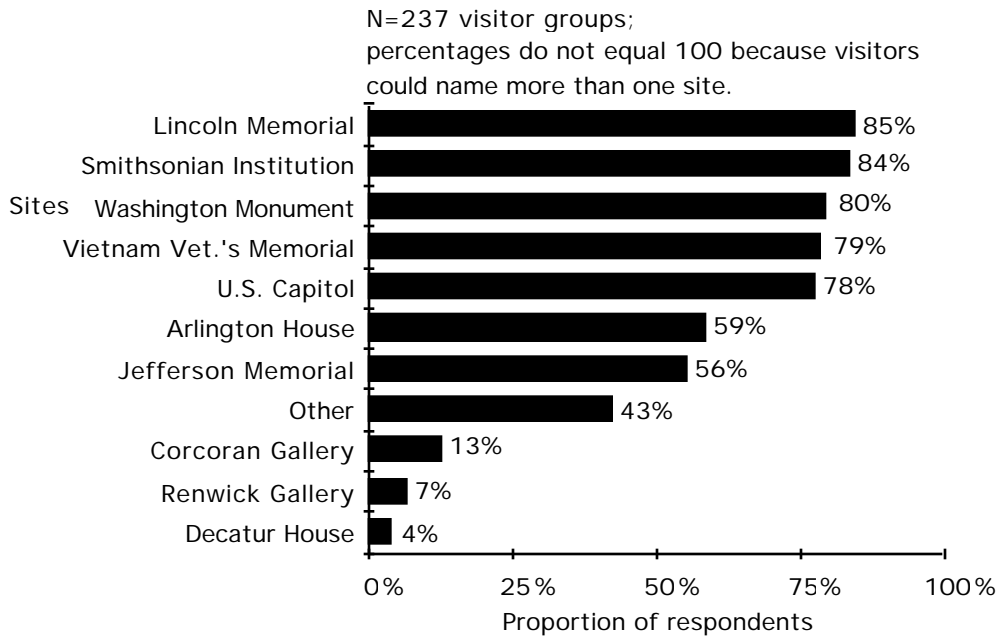


Figure 49: Downtown sites visited (public tour)

**L. Comment summary (public tour)**

Visitors were asked if there was anything else they wanted to tell us about their White House Tour. A summary of these comments appears below and in the separate appendix, which also contains their unedited comments. Their comments mention a variety of subjects.

**Visitor comment summary (public tour)**

N=194 comments; many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>Secret Service</b>	
Tour guides friendly/informative	5
Room guides need more information	4
<b>Other Personnel</b>	
White House staff helpful/friendly	2
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
Enjoyed tour	50
Offer more information	12
Other comments	2
<b>Personal</b>	
Didn't need tickets to get in	20
White House tour too short/rushed	18
Open up more rooms of White House to tour	13
Tour group size should be smaller	9
Open up White House grounds to tours	8
Would prefer a guided tour	8
Time between receiving ticket and actual tour too long	2
White House tour a disappointment	5
Other comments	1
<b>FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Appreciated flower arrangements inside White House	4
Other comments	2



**POLICIES**

Metal detector needs to be less noisy	2
Other comments	3

**CONCESSIONS**

Sell postcards/photos of individual rooms	2
---	---

**GENERAL IMPRESSIONS**

Interesting photographs	4
Set up donation/charity box	2
Want to meet the President	2
Other comments	14

### MENU FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Park personnel who wish to see other tables, graphs, and maps in order to learn more about their visitors may request such information from the Visitor Services Project. Two kinds of analyses are available:

- 1) Two-way comparisons. These compare two characteristics at a time. For example, to learn about which information sources a particular age group consulted, request a comparison of information sources by age group; to learn about how the use of information sources varied among group types, request a comparison of information sources by group type.
- 2) Three-way comparisons. These compare a two-way comparison to a third characteristic. For example, to learn about whether a proposed visitor center would be used by different visitor group types and sizes, request a comparison of potential visitor center use by group type by group size; to learn about whether a visitor center would be used by different age groups by group size, request a comparison of potential visitor center use by age group by group size.

Consult the complete list of the characteristics for White House visitors, then write those desired in the appropriate blanks on the order form. Blank order forms follow the example below.

### SAMPLE

**Questionnaires**



**Analysis Order Form  
Visitor Services Project  
Report 44 (The White House Tours)**

Date of request: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Person requesting analysis: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (commercial): \_\_\_\_\_

The following list specifies all of the variables available for comparison from the visitor survey conducted in your park. Consult this list to identify the characteristics of interest when requesting additional two-way and three-way comparisons.

- Group size
- Group type
- Age
- State residence
- Number of visits
- Preferred ticket system (public tour only)
- Routes traveled
- Information sources
- Potential visitor center use
- Services & facilities used
- Service/facility quality
- Downtown sites visited
- Transportation type
- Duration of wait for tour to start
- Ticket arrangements (Cong. tour only)
- Ticket sources (Cong. tour only)

Please submit all requested cross-tabulations for a particular tour on a separate order form.

Indicate here whether this order form is for: \_\_\_\_\_ Congressional tour, OR  
\_\_\_\_\_ public tour

Two-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list):

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Three-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list):

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:  
Cooperative Park Studies Unit  
College of Forestry, Wildlife, and Range Sciences  
University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83843**

## Publications of the Visitor Services Project

A number of publications have been prepared as part of the Visitor Services Project. Reports 1-4 are available at cost from the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit upon request. All other reports are available from the respective parks in which the studies were conducted.

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park, 1983.
2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method, 1984.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, 1984.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park, 1984.
5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1985.
6. Crater Lake National Park, 1986.
7. Gettysburg National Military Park, 1987.
8. Independence National Historical Park, 1987.
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park, 1987.
10. Colonial National Historical Park, 1988.
11. Grand Teton National Park, 1988.
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, 1988.
13. Mesa Verde National Park, 1988.
14. Shenandoah National Park, 1988.
15. Yellowstone National Park, 1988.
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study, 1988.
17. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, 1989.
18. Denali National Park and Preserve, 1989.
19. Bryce Canyon National Park, 1989.
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument, 1989.
21. Everglades National Park, 1989.
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument, 1990.
23. The White House Tours, President's Park, 1990.
24. Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 1990.
25. Yellowstone National Park, 1990.
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, 1990.
27. Muir Woods National Monument, 1990.
28. Canyonlands National Park, 1990.
29. White Sands National Monument, 1990.
30. National Monuments, 1991.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park, 1991.
32. Gateway National Recreation Area, 1991.
33. Petersburg National Battlefield, 1991.
34. Death Valley National Monument, 1991.
35. Glacier National Park, 1991.
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument, 1991.
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, 1991.
38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, 1991.
39. Joshua Tree National Monument, 1991.
40. The White House Tours, President's Park, 1991.
41. Natchez Trace Parkway, 1992.
42. Stehekin-North Cascades National Park/ Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, 1992.
43. City of Rocks National Reserve, 1992.
44. The White House Tours, President's Park, 1992.

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For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, Moscow, Idaho 83843 or call (208) 885-7129.

**National Park Service**  
**Visitor Services Project**  
**The White House Tours**

**Fall 1991**

**Appendix**

**In cooperation with:**

**Howard University**  
**Washington, D. C.**

**National Park Service**

**Visitor Services Project**

**The White House Tours**

**Fall 1991**

**Appendix**

Gary E. Machlis

Dwight L. Madison

Ivor Livingston

August 1992

This volume contains summaries of comments made by participating Congressional tour and public tour visitors. The summaries are followed by visitor's unedited comments.

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Dr. Machlis is Sociology Project Leader and Dwight Madison is the VSP Eastern Coordinator, both with the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, National Park Service, University of Idaho. Dr. Livingston is a Professor of Sociology at Howard University, Washington, D.C. We thank Julie Broussard, William Loman and Robyn Rolison of Howard University, Washington, D.C. for their assistance with this study. We also thank Jim McDaniel, Terri Green and the staffs of President's Park and the White House for their assistance.

## The White House Tours

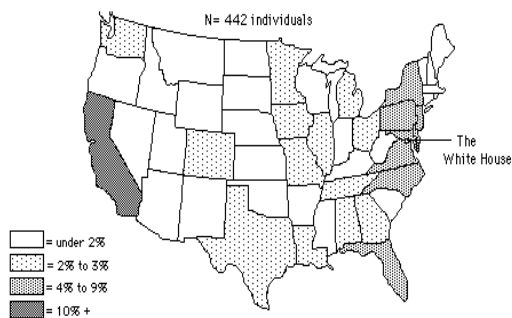
Fall 1991

### Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a study of visitors who took the White House tours during November 19-23, 1991. Five hundred twenty-five questionnaires were distributed and 464 returned, an 88% response rate.

- This report profiles White House tour visitors. A separate appendix has their comments about the tours. Comment summaries are included in both the report and the appendix.

- Fifty-one percent of Congressional tour visitors and 49% of public tour visitors were in family groups. Visitors were predominantly adults aged 36-50. Approximately three-quarters of all visitors were on their first tour of the White House.



Visitors by state (public tour)

- Foreign visitors who took the White House public tour comprised 6% of all visitation. American visitors who took the White House public tour came from all over the country. Sixteen percent came from California.

- Congressional tour visitors averaged a 16 minute wait for their tours to begin. Public tour visitors averaged a 21 minute wait for their tours to begin.
- Sixty-nine percent of public tour visitor groups used the White House room guides.
- The services and facilities that received the highest quality rating from visitors included the map/brochure, ranger assistance, and the White House room guides. Public restrooms were rated as the lowest quality facility.
- Seventy to seventy-two percent of the visitors would likely use a White House Visitor Center on their next visit, if one were available. Tour topics suggested by visitors included history, official events, information about the First Families and architecture.
- In addition to the White House tours, respondents visited many sites in Washington, D.C. Approximately 85% of the White House visitors visited the Smithsonian Institution. The Lincoln Memorial, U.S. Capitol, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and Washington Monument were also visited by more than three-quarters of the respondents.
- Visitors provided many general comments about the White House tours.

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For further information, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, Moscow, Idaho 83843 (208) 885-7129.

## Visitor comment summary (Congressional tour)

N=252 comments; many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>Secret Service</b>	
Guides friendly/knowledgeable	47
Guides should lead tours	2
Other comments	4
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
White House brochure should be handed out to visitors	4
Other comments	8
<b>Personal</b>	
Enjoyed tour	68
White House tour too short/rushed	28
Tour group too large	21
Tour should offer more rooms	15
Want tour of grounds	9
Other comments	3
<b>FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Appreciated flower arrangements inside White House	4
Better maintenance needed inside of White House	2
Other comments	1
<b>CONCESSIONS</b>	
Need to have souvenir and book sales available after tour	9
Need to sell a variety of souvenirs	3
Other comments	1
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	
Would like to have met the president	4
Good job	4
Traffic was difficult	3
Did not have to wait long for tour	2
Other comments	10

## Visitor comment summary (public tour)

N=194 comments; many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>Secret Service</b>	
Tour guides friendly/informative	5
Room guides need more information	4
<b>Other Personnel</b>	
White House staff helpful/friendly	2
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
Enjoyed tour	50
Offer more information	12
Other comments	2
<b>Personal</b>	
Didn't need tickets to get in	20
White House tour too short/rushed	18
Open up more rooms of White House to tour	13
Tour group size should be smaller	9
Open up White House grounds to tours	8
Would prefer a guided tour	8
Time between receiving ticket and actual tour too long	2
White House tour a disappointment	5
Other comments	1
<b>FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Appreciated flower arrangements inside White House	4
Other comments	2
<b>POLICIES</b>	
Metal detector needs to be less noisy	2
Other comments	3

## **CONCESSIONS**

Sell postcards/photos of individual rooms	2
---	---

## **GENERAL IMPRESSIONS**

Interesting photographs	4
Set up donation/charity box	2
Want to meet the President	2
Other comments	14



**VISITOR COMMENTS**

**CONGRESSIONAL TOUR**

**VISITOR COMMENTS**

**PUBLIC TOUR**

## Printing Instructions for White House Report (DRAFT)

### White House Report

I need 4 bound copies

Inside Title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Report Summary page should be xeroxed on gray linen paper (single page).

Table of contents page should be xeroxed on white paper (both pages).

Pages 1-55 should be duplexed on white paper.

Analysis order forms should be xeroxed on white paper (single page each)

Page 56 (Questionnaire title page) should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Questionnaire section duplex on white paper

## Printing Instructions for White House Report & Appendix

### White House Report

I need 100 copies: 99 bound copies and 1 copy unbound.

All copies should have a Gray linen (#70 stock) front & back cover  
With a clear piece of plastic on the front of each cover.

Inside Title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Report Summary page should be xeroxed on gray linen paper (single page).

Table of contents page should be xeroxed on white paper (both pages).

Pages 1-55 should be duplexed on white paper.

Analysis order forms should be xeroxed on white paper (single page each)

Page 56 (Questionnaire title page) should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Questionnaire section duplex on white paper

### White House Appendix Section

I need 25 copies: 24 bound copies and 1 copy unbound.

All copies should have a Gray linen(#70 stock) front & back cover.  
With a clear piece of plastic on the front of each cover.

Inside Title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Page 1 Visitor comment summary, (Congressional tour) xerox on gray linen paper (single page).

Pages 2-3. Visitor comment summary, (Public tour) duplex on gray linen paper .

Visitor comment pages duplex on white paper.

Xerox on white paper (single page) Congressional and public tour section dividers.

## Printing Instructions for Spring White House Report & Appendix

### Fall White House Report Volume I

I need 100 bound copies.

All copies should have a gray linen front (#70 stock) & back cover with a clear plastic cover over the front.

Inside Title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Report Summary page should be xeroxed on gray linen paper (single page).

Table of contents page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Pages 1-54 should be duplexed on white paper.

Analysis order forms should be xeroxed on white paper (single page each)

Page 56 (Questionnaire title page) should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Questionnaire section duplex on white paper

Publications of the VSP should be printed on inside of back cover (gray linen)

### Fall White House Appendix Section

I need 25 bound copies.

All copies should have a gray linen front (#70 stock) & back cover with a clear plastic cover over the front.

Inside Title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

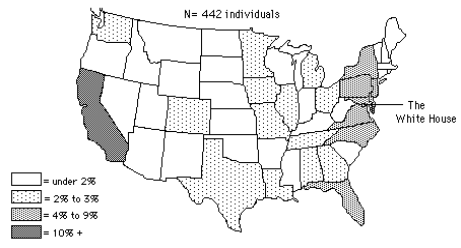
Pages 1-4 (Visitor comment summary) duplex on gray linen paper

Visitor Comments Congressional tour title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Visitor comments Congressional tour pages duplex on white paper.

Visitor Comments Public tour title page should be xeroxed on white paper (single page).

Visitor comments Public tour pages duplex on white paper.



April 2, 1991

Dear Nancy,

It was good to hear from you. I have enclosed a copy of the recommendation I sent Appalachian State University so you can have it for your files.

Like most people of your gender you only contact me when you need something. Good thing for you I'm such a nice guy. I tried to accentuate the positive things in your life so you will notice there is no mention of Matt. I hope there is a special education school close by Appalachian State University so Matt can improve his educational skills too while you are in graduate school.

Give my regards to Matt and if you two are passing through Moscow Idaho on your way back to North Carolina stop by and buy me a coke.

Mean while if I can be of further assistance to you or Matt do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dwight

