

Section I - A Self-Portrait

This section is based on findings from a telephone survey conducted January 24 through February 19, 2008 among a nationally representative sample of 2,413 adults. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. (See methodology box on page 78 for more details).

Chapter One on middle class self-definition and Chapter Three on middle class finances were written by Richard Morin, senior editor; Chapter Two on the middle class squeeze was written by Paul Taylor, director of the Social and Demographic Trends project of the Pew Research Center; Chapter Four on middle class values was written by D’Vera Cohn, senior writer; Chapter Five on middle class jobs was written by Stephen Rose, a project consultant; and Chapter Six on middle class politics was written by April Clark, research associate. Morin and Clark led the team that created the survey questionnaire and analyzed its findings.

Chapter 1: The Middle Class Defines Itself

America is predominantly middle class—or most Americans say they are. When asked where they stand on the socioeconomic ladder, fully 53% of the public classifies itself as squarely in the middle class—a proportion that varies little by race, education, age and other key demographic characteristics. An additional 21% identify with the upper classes while slightly more (25%) say they are in the lower class,¹ according to the Pew survey.

On virtually every important measure of life, the middle class is truly in the middle, positioned between the upper and lower classes in terms of income, wealth, education, health, marital status and homeownership.

About half of all Americans who identify themselves as middle class are married (52%), significantly more than in the lower class (37%) but a somewhat smaller proportion than in the upper class (59%).

A quarter of the middle class is composed of college graduates, nearly double the proportion of college grads in the lower class (14%) and about half the proportion in the upper class (48%). About two-thirds (68%) own their own home, compared with about three-quarters of the upper class (76%) and fewer than half of those who identify with the lower class. Three-in-ten eat out at least several times a week; that's less often than members of the upper class (42%) but more frequently than those who describe themselves as being in the lower class (22%). Three-quarters of the middle class fear they aren't saving enough, a concern they share with 69% of the upper class and 82% of the lower.

Even in terms of their physical health, the middle class is firmly in the middle. While most Americans report they are in good health, 29% of those who say they are middle class describe their health status as “excellent,” compared with 18% of all those who place themselves in the lower class and 43% among those in the upper class.

Half of Americans Say They're Middle Class

All

Percentage of Americans who identify themselves as...	%
Upper class (NET)	21
<i>Upper</i>	2
<i>Upper-middle</i>	19
Middle class	53
Lower class (NET)	25
<i>Lower-middle</i>	19
<i>Lower</i>	6
Don't know/Refused	1
	100

Number of respondents 2413

Question wording: If you were asked to use one of these commonly used names for the social classes, which would you say you belong in? The upper class, upper-middle class, middle class, lower-middle class, or lower class?

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¹ For purposes of this report, the proportion of Americans who are upper class include those who identify themselves as upper-middle (19%) or upper class (2%); the proportion who are lower class includes those who say they are lower middle (19%) or lower class (6%). The remaining 1% of survey respondents declined to answer the question or did not know.

The Middle-Aged: Uncomfortable in the Middle

Identification with the middle class is broadly shared by roughly equal proportions of virtually every demographic group. For example, about half of whites (53%), blacks (50%) and Latinos (54%) say they're middle class. Similarly, men are about as likely as women to say they're middle class (51% vs. 55%).

Some notable differences do emerge. While it might seem as if middle-age and middle class should go hand-in-hand, the pattern is more nuanced: It is the youngest and the oldest Americans who are the most likely to identify themselves as middle class. A 54% majority of all adults under the age of 34 and 59% of respondents ages 65 or older say they're middle class, compared with 49% among those 45 to 64, a group that comprises about a third of all adults and is in the peak earning years of life.

Perhaps more telling, middle-aged Americans are just as likely as other age groups to identify with the lower class. And among those who identify with the middle class, adults in this age bracket are slightly more likely than younger or older Americans to say they have nothing left over after paying their monthly bills. This sense of economic uneasiness among the middle aged is echoed in other responses to this survey and will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

The Demography of Class

Marital status and the number of workers per household correlate to some degree with

self-identification of class. For example, married couples in which both are wage earners are about as likely to place themselves in the upper classes as are married couples with one wage earner. However, multi-earner

Who Identifies with Which Class?

	All adults	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class	DK/Ref
	%	%	%	%	%
Gender					
Male	48	21	51	26	2=100
Female	52	21	55	23	1=100
Race/Ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	70	23	53	23	1=100
Black, non-Hispanic	11	15	50	33	2=100
Hispanic	12	13	54	30	3=100
Age					
18-34	29	18	54	26	2=100
35-44	19	22	54	23	1=100
45-64	33	24	49	26	1=100
65+	16	19	59	21	1=100
Education					
College grad	27	37	49	12	2=100
Some college	24	17	58	24	1=100
HS grad or less	48	14	53	32	1=100
Neighborhood type					
Urban	36	23	49	27	1=100
Suburban	46	22	54	22	2=100
Rural	18	17	57	26	*=100
Generation					
First generation	11	13	56	28	3=100
Second generation	9	22	50	27	1=100
Third or later	79	22	53	24	1=100

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class. Hispanics are of any race.

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couples are much less likely to be in the lower classes than are one-earner couples (13% versus 25%). Consequently, two-earner couples are much more likely than one-earner couples to be in the middle class (61% versus 45%). By contrast, households that do not include married adults tend to have lower incomes and hence don't self-identify much with the upper class; just 17% of those who say that they are living with a partner and working full- or part-time do so, along with just 18% of those who are neither married nor cohabiting. About a third of both of these groups self-identify as being in the lower class.

There are also some geographic patterns to class identification, though they do not all conform to stereotypes. While many people equate suburbia with the middle class, nearly as many city dwellers (49%) as suburban residents (54%) identify themselves as members of the middle class. In rural America, nearly six-in-ten (57%) say they're firmly in the middle.

Also, immigrant status seems to have little effect on self-definition of middle class. About half of those Americans who are first generation (56%), second generation (50%) and third generation or later (53%) identify themselves as middle class—despite the fact that first-generation Americans (immigrants) have less income than those whose families have been in the country a generation or more.

While the middle class label may be broadly shared, other findings underscore longstanding inequalities between key demographic groups. For example, while similar proportions of blacks and whites say they're middle class, a third of African Americans identify themselves as lower class compared with only about a quarter of whites (23%) who do the same. At the same time, whites are significantly more likely than blacks to say they're members of the upper class (23% versus 15%). Similarly, nearly four-in-ten college graduates say they're in the upper class (37%), more than double the proportion of those whose educational attainment is a high school diploma or less. Despite these clear differences, it is nonetheless notable how many Americans of all backgrounds identify with the middle class, a finding that at once reflects economic realities as well as the enduring attraction of the middle class life to Americans.

Median Incomes Vary Widely Within Middle Class

	Median family income
Total	\$52,285
Gender	
Men	\$58,102
Men under 50	\$56,162
Men 50+	\$61,017
Women	\$47,334
Women under 50	\$54,670
Women 50+	\$41,614
Race/Ethnicity	
White, non-Hispanic	\$56,295
Black, non-Hispanic	\$46,849
Hispanic	\$39,363
Age	
18-29	\$38,493
30-49	\$65,529
50-64	\$61,542
65+	\$34,512
Work status	
Retired	\$38,455
Employed	\$60,121
Not working	\$38,919
Education	
College grad	\$75,198
Some college	\$57,083
HS grad or less	\$39,765
Neighborhood type	
Urban	\$52,205
Suburban	\$54,945
Rural	\$47,768
Region	
Northeast	\$49,860
Midwest	\$57,290
South	\$49,280
West	\$54,229

Note: Figures are grouped median estimates based only on respondents in each category who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Hispanics are of any race.

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Income Differences in the Middle Class

Middle class Americans share a class identity but live different lives. In important ways, the survey finds that members of the middle class are different not only from the upper or lower classes, but also from each other. Nowhere are these differences more apparent than in the vast range of incomes reported by key demographic groups within the middle class, suggesting that identification with the middle class is based on a complex mix of attitudes, behaviors and experiences, and not merely on income alone.

For example, the median family income for whites who say they are middle class is just over \$56,000—nearly \$10,000 more than for self-identified middle class blacks. Even bigger income disparities occur along generational lines: Adults between the ages of 30 and 49 who say they are in the middle class earn slightly more than \$65,000, nearly double the median family income of those older than 65 and about \$27,000 more than the median for those under the age of 30. Similarly large disparities exist between self-identified middle class college graduates (whose median family income exceeds \$75,000) and those with only a high school education or less (whose median income is just under \$40,000 a year). Among the middle class, reported median family incomes are highest in the Midwest (\$57,290) and West (\$54,229), and lowest in the Northeast (\$49,860) and South (\$49,280).

The survey also finds that men who identify as middle class have median family incomes more than \$10,000 higher than women who identify as middle class. A deeper look finds, however, that much of this difference is explained by the fact that people 65 or older with lower incomes are more likely to identify with the middle class, and this group is disproportionately composed of women. Among men and women under the age of 50, median family incomes are virtually identical (\$56,162 versus \$54,670), while older men report family incomes nearly \$20,000 higher than that of older women.

Living the Middle Class Life on \$20,000 a Year?

Overall, the median family income of Americans who say they are middle class is about \$52,000, and about half of respondents who identify as middle class earn between \$30,000 and \$100,000 annually. But about one-in-ten (9%) earn between \$20,000 and \$29,999 annually, and another 12% say they make under

Middle Class Incomes

Percentage in each income group that identify as middle class

	% in Middle class
	%
Less than \$19,999	41
\$20,000-\$29,999	49
\$30,000-\$39,999	50
\$40,000-\$49,999	59
\$50,000-\$74,999	68
\$75,000-\$99,999	63
\$100,000-\$149,999	47
\$150,000 or more	33
Number of respondents	2413

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Middle Class Incomes

Percentage of middle class with family incomes of...

	Middle class
	%
Less than \$19,999	12
\$20,000-\$29,999	9
\$30,000-\$39,999	9
\$40,000-\$49,999	11
\$50,000-\$74,999	18
\$75,000-\$99,999	14
\$100,000-\$149,999	8
\$150,000 or more	4
Don't know/Refused	<u>15</u>
	100

Number of respondents 1276

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.

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\$20,000 annually. At the top end of the income scale, 12% of all middle class identifiers earn more than \$100,000 a year. (The remaining 15% declined to answer the question.)

Analyzing these survey findings by income group dramatizes the breadth of identification with the middle class. About four-in-ten (41%) Americans with family incomes under \$20,000 a year say they're middle class, as do a third of those earning \$150,000 or more. Could it be that many lower and upper class Americans are inaccurately characterizing their socioeconomic class, either out of the desire to appear to be doing better than they are or because they are reluctant to acknowledge their advantaged status?

The answer appears to be no. Those who say they are middle class but have modest family incomes are disproportionately older Americans, retirees, college students, and younger adults—groups with relatively modest incomes but equally modest expenses. For example, about half of all students and retirees with family incomes under \$30,000 a year say they're members of the middle class. At the other end of the income scale, those who say they are middle class but have six-figure family incomes tend to be married, own their home, have larger families and live in the northeast or in areas where it costs more to live. According to our analysis of respondents by their zip code and by local cost-of-living scales, people earning \$100,000 a year are much more likely to describe themselves as upper class if they live in communities with a low cost of living than if they live in expensive communities.

The Price of Admission

What Americans say a family must earn to be middle class

	%
Less than \$40,000	11
\$40,000-\$59,999	24
\$60,000-\$79,999	27
\$80,000-\$99,999	14
\$100,000-\$149,999	16
\$150,000 or more	8
	100

Number of respondents 2005*

Question wording: Just your best guess: How much does a family of four need to have in total annual income to lead a middle-class lifestyle in your area?
Note: *Based on respondents who answered the question.

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What it Costs to be Middle Class

Collectively, the American public is spot-on with its estimate of what it costs to be middle class. Asked how much income a family of four in their community needs to lead a middle class life, respondents gave a median answer of about \$70,000 a year – very close to the national median income of \$68,698 for a household of four in 2006² (the most recent year for which such data are available).

But this “wisdom of the crowd” masks a wide range of individual estimates, with some respondents offering figures of \$20,000 or less and others offering estimates of \$200,000 or more. Overall, more than three-in-ten (35%) respondents say it takes less than \$60,000 to be middle class where they live, while slightly more (38%) estimate a family needs \$80,000 or more.

There is a clear correlation between respondents' incomes and their estimates of how much money it takes to be middle class. Americans with family incomes between \$100,000 and \$150,000 believe, on average, that families must earn \$80,000 a year to be middle class in their area. In contrast, those earning less than \$30,000 believe a

² This figure is for 2006 but is inflation-adjusted to January 2008 dollars. Income is also adjusted for household size and scaled to reflect a four-person household. See Appendix section “Adjusting for Household Size” for an explanation of the methodology.

family of four has to make about \$50,000 to be middle class. Part of the reason for these differences is that people with higher incomes tend to live in large cities or adjacent suburbs—areas where it costs more to live a middle class life.

An analysis that combined federal government cost-of-living data and survey results confirms this view. Survey respondents living in areas that rank in the top third of the country in terms of local cost of living estimate that a family income of about \$75,000 a year is needed to be middle class in their areas. That's about \$15,000 higher than the median estimate of the third of the country that lives in places where costs are the lowest.

Home Ownership and the Middle Class

Homeownership has been in the news a lot lately, for all the wrong reasons: Housing prices are falling and foreclosure rates are rising.

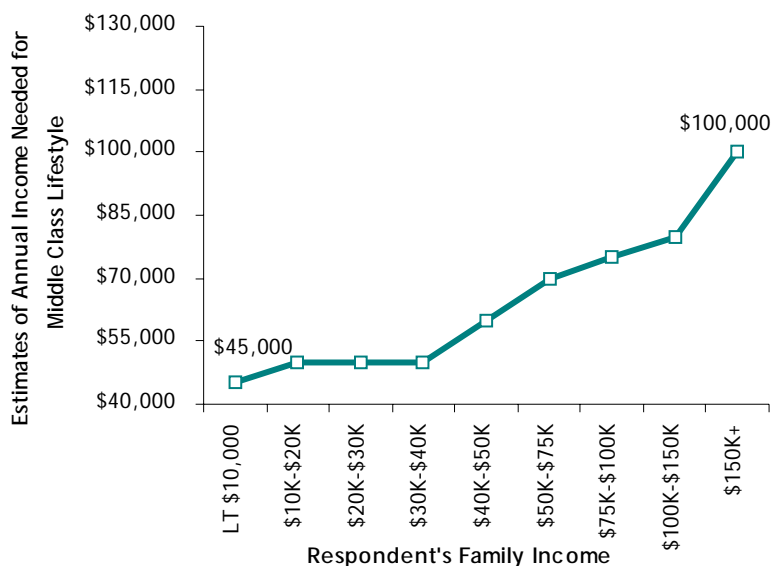
These are worrisome developments for middle class Americans, who regard their home as their most important asset and the anchor of their lifestyle.

Nearly seven-in-ten middle class Americans are homeowners. The median value of these homes, as reported by middle class survey respondents, is between \$100,000 and \$250,000. About one-in-five estimate that their homes are worth \$100,000 or less. At the upper end of the scale, only 5% of middle class respondents say their homes are worth \$500,000 or more.

Fewer than a third of middle class homeowners (30%) say they own their homes outright. A 40% plurality say they have paid off less than half of the money they owe on their home, while 27% say they have paid off half or more. Adults over the age of 50 are most likely to own a home free and clear.

As Incomes Rise, So Do Estimates of the Cost of a Middle Class Lifestyle

People with higher family incomes think it takes more for a family of four to be middle class in their neighborhood



Question wording: Just your best guess: How much does a family of four need to have in total annual income to lead a middle-class lifestyle in your area?

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Home Ownership, by Class

Class	Own home %
Upper class	76
Middle class	68
Lower class	46

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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Predictably, home ownership in the middle class is closely tied to family income and age, as well as to marital status and family size. More than eight-in-ten middle class Americans earning \$100,000 or more own their own home, compared with barely half of those who make less than \$50,000. Nearly nine-in-ten middle class married couples with minor children own their own homes, compared with about two-thirds of all single adults without children.

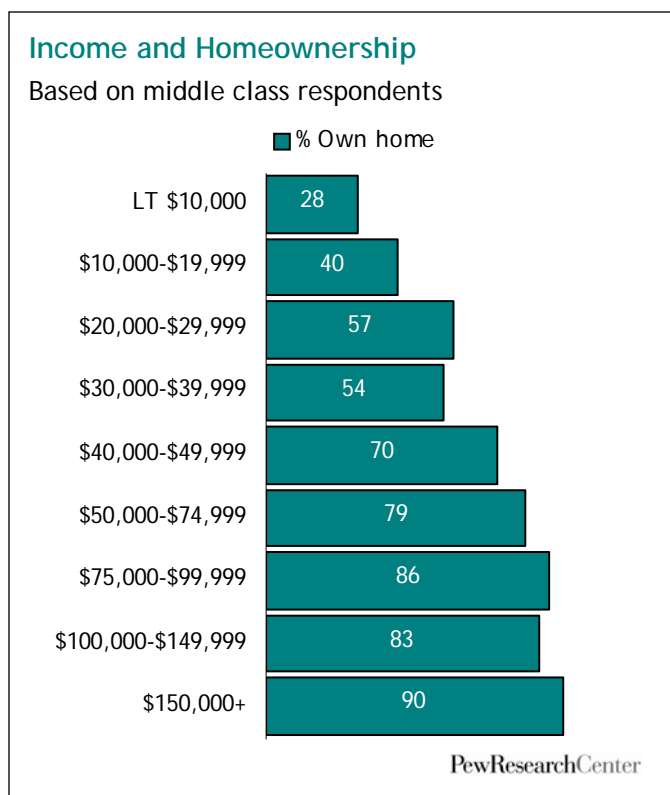
The survey finds that large numbers of middle class Americans who aren't very old or very affluent have bought a home. Nearly half of all adults between the ages of 25 and 29 say they are homeowners. By the time Americans turn 40, more than six-in-ten (63%) say they own a home. Home ownership peaks just before retirement; nearly nine-in-ten middle class adults ages 60 to 64 years are homeowners. At that point, home ownership begins to decline. In terms of income groups, more than four-in-ten (44%) middle class Americans with family incomes under \$30,000 a year own their own home. That figure, however, is somewhat misleading because nearly half (44%) of this group is 65 or older, and many older adults have paid off their home.

For the past several decades, median housing prices have risen much faster than median incomes. In 1970, the typical American house cost more than twice the typical American family's annual income. By 2005, that ratio had risen to nearly five-to-one. It's no surprise then, that in our survey, nearly two-thirds of middle class homeowners say that the value of their homes represents half or more of their total net worth.

What the Middle Class Owns

In addition to larger and more expensive homes, majorities or substantial minorities of middle class families own or use a wide range of goods and services, some of which until either didn't exist a decade ago, or until fairly recently may have been viewed as luxury items. Yet middle class Americans also tend to believe that most other families have even more of these items than they do.

According to the survey, about seven-in-ten middle class Americans own two or more cars (72%) and have cable or satellite television service (71%). Two thirds have high speed internet access to surf the Web. About four-in-ten watch television using a flat-screen TV (42%). About 15% send their children to private schools, and a similar proportion has paid help to assist them with household chores.



Not surprisingly, middle class Americans with the largest family incomes also have the most luxuries: about two-thirds of all families making \$100,000 or more owned at least four of the items or services included in the survey, nearly two and half times more than the proportion of families earning less than \$50,000 (68% versus 26%). But perhaps less predictable is how widely distributed these goods are across income groups within the middle class. For example, 12% of all middle class adults with incomes below \$50,000 have paid household help, compared with 10% of middle class adults who earn between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and 19% who earn more than \$100,000.

What I Have, What Most People Have

Based on middle-class respondents

	Most families have	My family has
	%	%
Cable or satellite service	91	71
Two or more cars	90	72
High-speed Internet	87	67
High-def or flat screen TV	63	42
Child in private school*	25	14
Paid household help	22	13
A vacation home	12	9

Note: *Based on respondents with minor age children.

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The “Possessions Perception Gap”

Middle class Americans are inclined to believe others have more of life’s goodies than they do. On three of seven non-essential or quasi-luxury goods and services tested in the survey, the middle class does get it right: Substantial majorities believe most Americans have cable or satellite television service, own at least two cars and have high-speed Internet access. And in fact, most people surveyed say they do have these things.

But a substantial “possessions perception gap” emerges on other items tested in the survey. Well under half (42%) of all Americans have a flat screen television, though a substantial majority of the middle class (63%) believe most people own one. A more modest discrepancy occurs when the middle class is asked if “most families” send their children to private school. A quarter of the middle class thinks most people send their child to private school; in fact, only 15% of those respondents who have minor children say they have a child in private school. Similarly, 22% of the middle class think most Americans have paid help around the home while 16% of the total sample report that they do.

Haves and Have-Nots

% that have

	All	Upper Class	Middle Class	Lower Class
	%	%	%	%
Cable or satellite service	70	80	71	62
Two or more cars	70	83	72	57
High-speed Internet	66	80	67	50
High-def or flat screen TV	42	59	42	28
Child in private school*	15	31	14	6
Paid household help	16	36	13	7
A vacation home	10	19	9	4

Note: *Based on respondents with minor age children.

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Chapter 2: The Middle Class Squeeze

Back in 1980, Ronald Reagan framed his campaign for president around a simple but powerful question to the American public: "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?"

His timing was exquisite. In 1979, a public opinion survey had found a rise in the number of Americans who said their lives were getting worse, and the word "malaise" had worked its way into the American political lexicon.

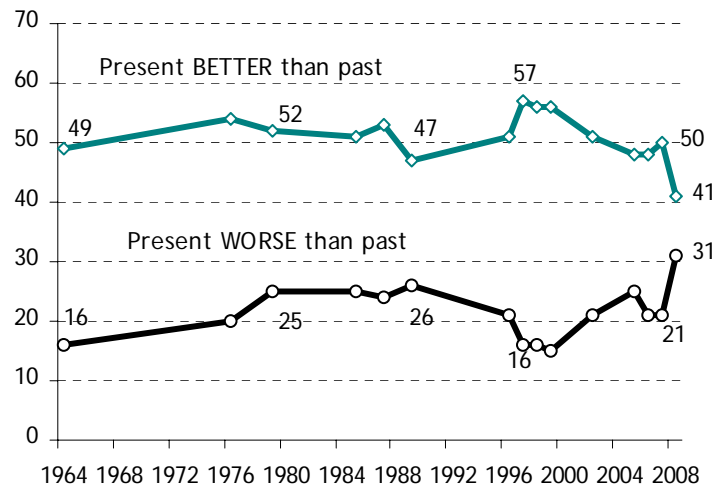
Memo to John McCain, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton: This new Pew Research Center survey finds that Americans are even more downbeat about their lives now than they were in 1979. In fact, the public's sense of personal stagnation is more prevalent today than at any time in the more than four decades that this ladder-of-life question has been asked by Pew and Gallup.

More than half of all Americans say they've either made no progress in life over the past five years (25%) or have actually fallen backward (31%). Just four in ten (41%) -- a record low -- rate their lives today as better than their lives five years ago.

Americans have always been great believers in the ethos of personal advancement, and throughout the history of this survey question, those who say they've moved forward in the past five years typically outnumber those who say they've fallen behind, by ratios ranging between nearly two-

Are You Better Off Now Than You Were Five Years Ago? The Trend Since 1964.

Percentage rating...



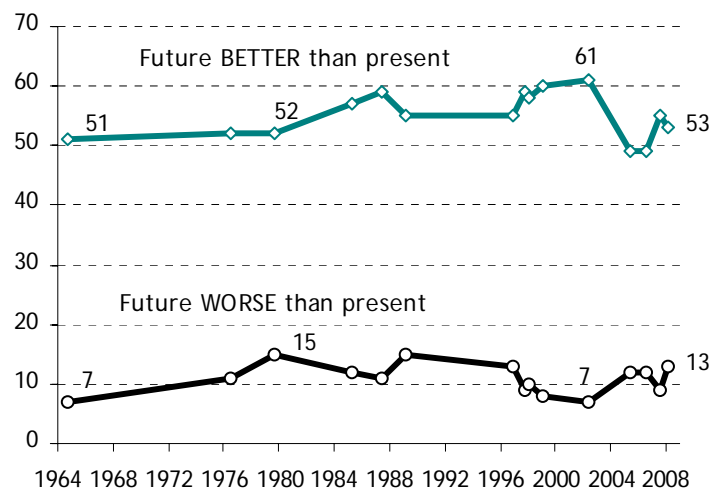
Note: Based on ratings of your life *today* compared with your life *five years ago*. "Same" responses not shown.

Source: Surveys from 1964 to 1985 by Gallup.

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What Does the Next Five Years Hold for You?

Percentage rating...



Note: Based on ratings of your life *today* compared with your life *five years from now*. "Same" responses not shown.

Source: Surveys from 1964 to 1985 by Gallup.

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to-one and three-to-one. At the peak of optimism in 1997, 57% of adults said they had moved forward in the previous five years and just 16% said they had fallen behind. That 41 percentage point difference has now sunk all the way down to just 10 percentage points.

The bright spot in this survey is that Americans' faith in their future remains largely undiminished. More than half (53%) expect their life will be better in five years, while just 13% think it will be worse.

These percentages are in sync with long-term trends, though the share of adults who think

their future will be better is down a bit from a recent peak of 61% in 2002. Also, in absolute terms, the average rating that adults give to their lives five years from now -- 7.6 on a scale of zero to ten -- is close to historical norms, though it has dropped sharply since 2007, when it was 8.2.

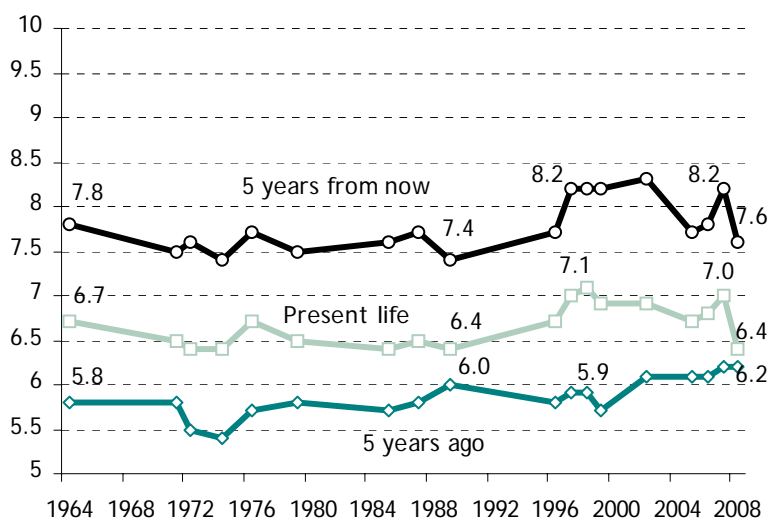
The ladder-of-life battery of questions employ what researchers call a "self-anchoring scale." Respondents are asked to give a numerical rating to their present quality of life, on a scale of zero to ten. Then, using the same scale, they are asked to rate what their life had been like five years earlier, and what they expect it to be like five years from now.

Americans in 2008 give their present life an average rating of 6.4 on the zero-to-ten scale. This is tied for the lowest mark on record for this question, and its falls well below the peak rating of 7.1 in 1998.

Quality of Life, 1964-2008:

The Public Rates Their Present, Past and Future

Mean ratings on 0 to 10 scale



Source: Surveys from 1964 to 1985 by Gallup.

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Progress in Life, by Class

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
Mean rating (present)	6.4	7.3	6.7	5.2
	%	%	%	%
Present vs. Past				
Present better	41	51	42	30
Same	25	26	26	23
Present worse	31	22	28	44
Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100
Present vs. Future				
Future better	53	55	52	54
Same	23	30	24	16
Future worse	13	9	12	18
Don't know/Refused	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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Today's respondents give their life five years ago an average rating of 6.2. This 0.2 point difference between today's current rating and today's five-years-ago rating is the smallest measure of progress ever recorded on this question. Looking ahead, today's respondents give the life they expect to be leading five years from now an average rating of 7.6. That is a bit below the historic norm, and the 1.2 point difference between the present and the future is about average.

Difference Between the Classes

Not surprisingly, the life ratings that people give themselves are closely correlated with the socioeconomic class they place themselves in. About half (49%) of those who say they are in the upper or upper middle class give their present life a high rating (8, 9 or 10 on the ten-point scale). Only a third (34%) of those who say they are middle class do the same, as do just 13% of those who say they are lower middle or lower class.

Those in the upper class are also more likely than those in the middle or lower classes to say their lives are better now than they were five years ago – 51% of the upper class say this, versus 42% of the middle class and 30% of the lower class. But when it comes to expectations for progress in the next five years, these differences disappear. Virtually identical shares of the upper (55%), middle (52%) and lower (54%) classes expect their lives will be better in five years.

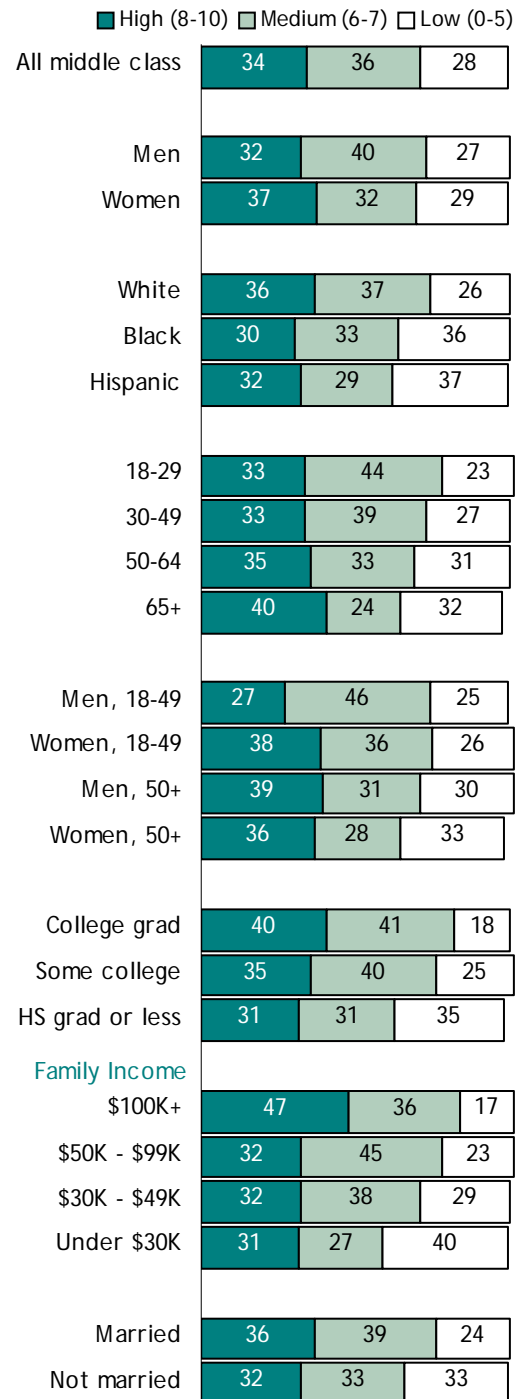
However, twice as many in the lower class (18%) as in the upper class (9%) think their lives will be worse, a view held by 12% of those in the middle. The remainder in all three classes think their lives will be the same, or they declined to answer.

Differences within the Middle Class

Looking only at those who describe themselves as middle class – 53% of the public – one finds some demographic differences in the way people rate their

How the Middle Class Sees Their Lives

How do you rate your present quality of life?



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Don't know responses are not shown.

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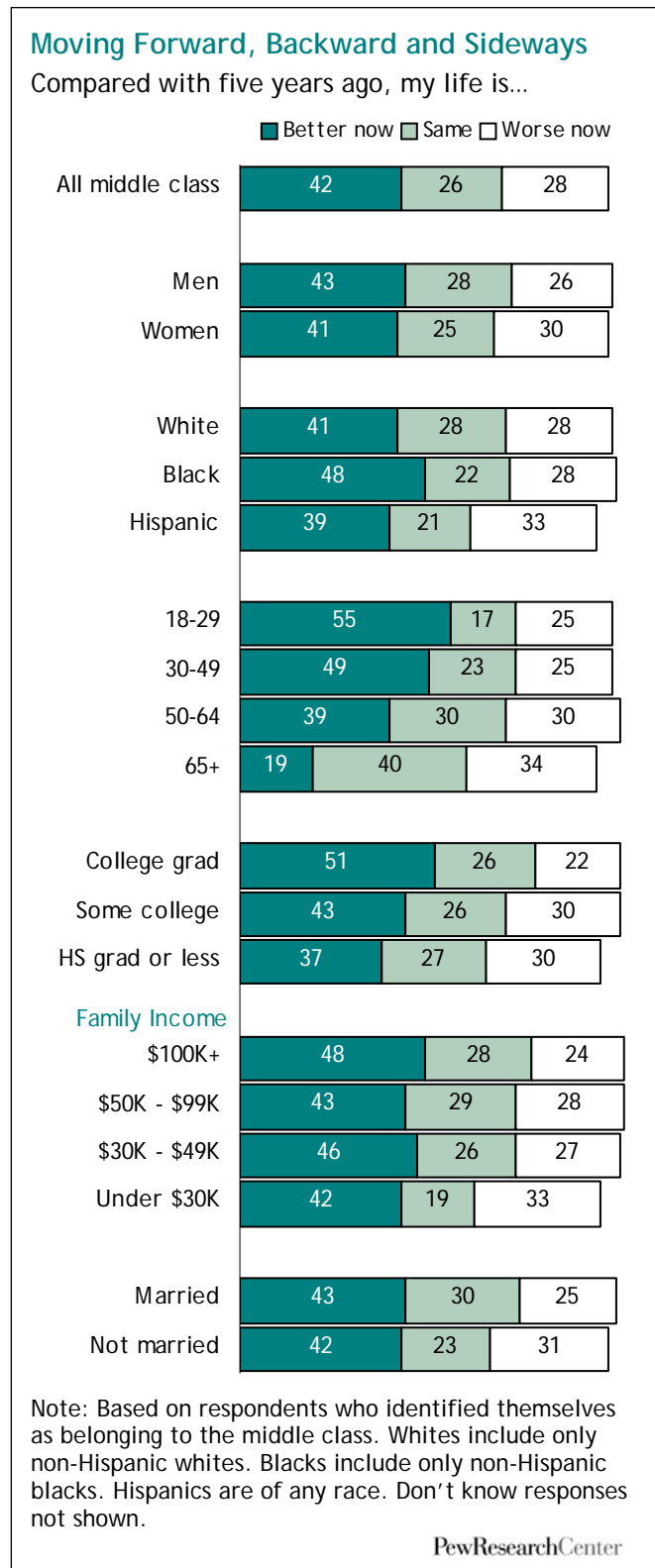
quality of life, though these differences are relatively modest.

For example, those in the middle class who are ages 65 and above are more inclined than younger adults to give their lives one of the high ratings (40% do so). However, those in the 65 and over age group are also the most inclined to give their quality of life one of the lower ratings (32% rate their lives from 0 through 5), likely reflecting in part the health problems that come with old age.

Within the middle class, there is virtually no difference in life ratings between those who are married and those who are unmarried -- with 36% and 32%, respectively, giving their lives one of the high ratings. On the educational front, those who have college or graduate degrees rate their lives somewhat better than do those with less educational attainment. Those with incomes above \$100,000 give their lives higher marks than those with lower incomes. Fully 41% of the rural middle class gives their lives a top rating, compared with a just a third of the urban and suburban middle class. Finally, there is a difference on the gender front, especially between men and women under age 50. Some 38% of women in that age group give their lives one of the high ratings, compared with 27% of men.

Turning to the comparisons between life now and life five years ago, those in the middle class who are 18 to 49 years old are more inclined than those over 50 years old to see personal progress in this time frame. And older adults (ages 65 and above) are more likely than any other age group to say things are not as good now.

Another demographic difference on this measure of personal progress is related to race. More middle class blacks (48%) than whites (41%) or Hispanics (39%)



say their lives have improved over the past five years.³ Nevertheless, even with this more widespread sense of personal progress, middle class blacks still lag behind middle class whites in the ratings they give their current lives. These racial differences hold not just for middle class blacks and whites, but also for all blacks and whites. As for all Hispanics, they rate their present quality of life higher than blacks rate theirs, but lower than whites rate theirs.

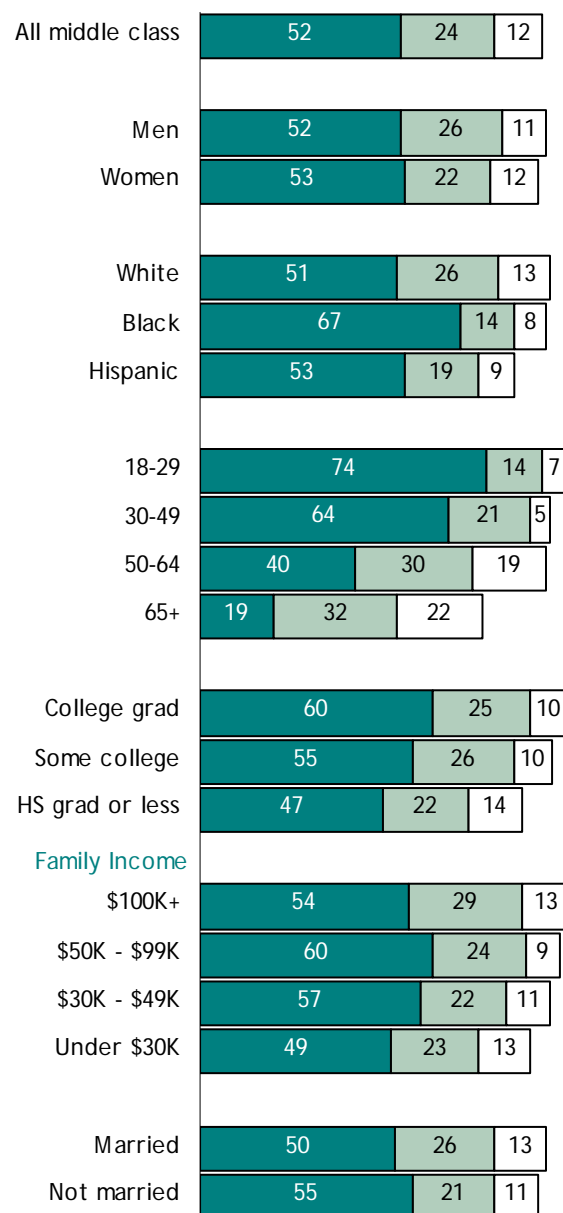
When asked to envision their lives five years from now, middle class blacks once again stand out for their relative optimism. Two-thirds (67%) expect their lives to be better than they are now; by contrast, only about half of the white and Hispanic middle class feels this way. The other big optimists are the young. Almost three-quarters (74%) of 18-to-29 year olds who define themselves as middle class expect their lives to be better in five years. As people get older, this optimism steadily declines. Just four-in-ten members of the middle class who are ages 50-64 group think their lives will improve in five years, and fewer than one-in-five (19%) people ages 65 and above feel this way.

Within the self-defined middle class, differences in gender, marital status and region have little or no effect on the level of optimism about the progress in one's life over the next five years. However, those with at least some college education are more optimistic than those with a high school diploma or less.

How the Middle Class Sees The Future

My life in five years will be...

■ Better than now ■ Same as now □ Worse than now



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Don't know responses not shown.

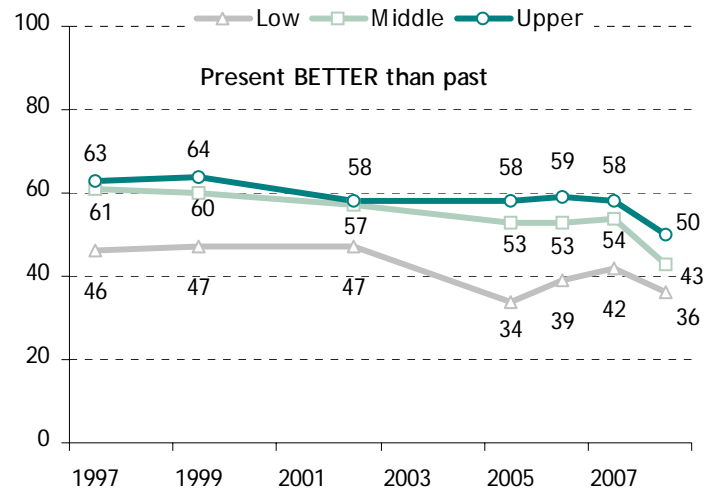
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³ Given the small sample size in this survey of blacks and Hispanics who self-identify as middle class, this finding falls short of statistical significance.

Who's Turned the Most Sour about their Personal Progress?

Americans in virtually every income level and demographic group have felt a sharp drop since the halcyon days of the late 1990s in their sense of personal progress. However, trend comparisons of responses from 1997 through 2008 show that those in the middle and upper income ranges register somewhat steeper declines than do those in the lower income group in their assessment of personal advancement today versus five years ago. During this same period, the ratings of the present have fallen in roughly equal proportions among the lower, middle and upper groups.

Comparing the Present to the Past, by Income Group
Percentage rating...



Note: For all surveys, low, middle, and upper groups were based on family income and sorted into ranges consistent with the self-identified social class shares in the 2008 survey. So, for example, the 45% of respondents in the middle income group in 2008 earned a family income between \$30,000 and \$100,000. In earlier years the income categories were adjusted to reflect cost of living changes.

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Doing Better than My Parents

Despite the stagnation that so many in the middle class feel about their lives in the past five years, their outlook is far more upbeat when they make judgments that encompass a longer time period.

Fully two-thirds of those in the middle class say their standard of living is better than the one their parents had when they were at the same stage of their lives. Moreover, just one-in ten say their standard of living is worse than their parents' was at the same stage of life.

The idea that each generation should outdo its parents' generation has always been one of the keystones of the American dream. In this Pew survey, even a plurality of those who say they are lower or lower-middle class see themselves as having made this journey. Nearly half (49%) of these respondents say they are doing better than their parents did at the same age, while 30% say they are doing worse. And, at the other end of the class rankings, fully 80% of those who describe themselves as upper or upper middle class say they're doing better than their parents, including 57% who say they are doing *much* better.

Looking at the full population, these assessments about inter-generational mobility have been extremely stable over the past 14 years, despite the ups and downs of the economy during this period.

What about the Kids?

There *has* been some change, however, in a different measure of generational mobility – one that asks people to compare their own lives with the lives they expect their children to lead at the age they themselves are now.

Intergenerational Mobility: Looking Backward

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
My standard of living compared to my parents is...	%	%	%	%
Much better	38	57	38	22
Somewhat better	27	23	29	27
About the same	19	13	21	19
Somewhat worse	9	5	7	17
Much worse	5	1	3	13
Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Question wording: Compared to your parents, when they were the age you are now, do you think your own standard of living now is much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse or much worse than theirs was?

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Intergenerational Mobility: Looking Forward

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
My children's standard of living compared to mine will be...	%	%	%	%
Much better	26	27	27	23
Somewhat better	23	25	24	22
About the same	20	25	20	14
Somewhat worse	14	12	14	16
Much worse	7	5	5	15
No children (VOL.)	5	4	5	4
Don't know/Refused	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Question wording: When your children are at the age you are now, do you think their standard of living will be much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than yours is now?

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The optimists outnumber the pessimists on this question, but not by nearly as lopsided a margin as they do on the question that asks people to rate their lives against their parents' lives. About half of the public (49%) say they expect their children to do better than them in life, while two-in-ten (21%) expect their children to do worse. The rest expect no difference or decline to answer. As recently as 2002, the public had been far more inclined to see their children besting them in life – 61% felt this way, compared with just 10% who felt their children would do worse.

There are very few class differences on this question. Nearly identical shares of the self-defined upper, middle and lower class say they expect their children to best them in life. However, there is a difference by class in those who take a very dim view of their children's prospects. Fully 15% of the self-defined lower class say they expect their children to do *much* worse than them in life, a view shared by just 5% of those in the middle and upper class.

The Middle Class Assesses the Middle Class

There are several ways to look at how the middle class feels about the middle class standard of living. One is to ask them about their own lives. As we have shown in the preceding section, this line of inquiry yields a mixed verdict. Most people feel stagnant about their lives in the short term, but ahead of the game when they compare themselves with their parents.

But there is another perspective to consider. What happens when the middle class is asked to assess not their own lives, but the lives of the middle class?

Here, the responses turn broadly negative – to some degree, perhaps, reflecting the "I'm-okay-but-everyone-else-isn't" syndrome that has been familiar to social scientists since the dawn of public opinion survey research.

Fully 78% of those who describe themselves as middle class say it is more difficult now than five years ago for middle class people to maintain their standard of living. This view is so widely-held within the middle class that there are very few differences by demographic characteristic. However, middle class whites (81%) are a bit more inclined than middle class blacks (70%) or Hispanics (72%) to say that middle class life has grown more difficult. Also, 84% of those who are ages 50 to 64 say life for the middle class has gotten more difficult – a slightly higher share than among younger or older adults who feel that way.

People who self-describe as upper and lower class also agree that life for the middle class has grown more difficult in the past five years. Nearly nine in ten (89%) of those who say they are lower or lower middle class say this, as do 72% of those who say they are upper or upper middle class.

Among the public as a whole, the view that it has become more difficult for middle class people to maintain their standard of living is much more prevalent now than it was two decades ago. Today 79% of all adults say this, compared with the 65%

The Middle Class Blues

Compared with five years ago, is it more or less difficult for middle class people to maintain their standard of living?

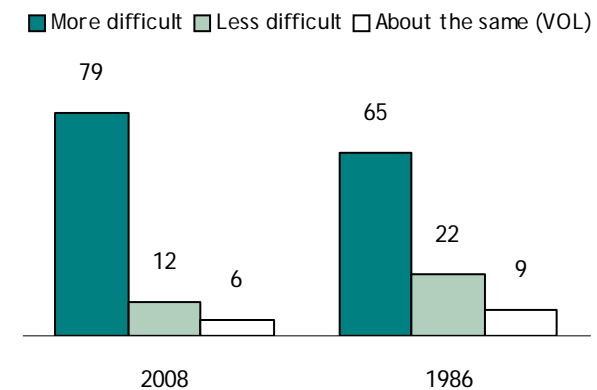
	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
More difficult	79	72	78	89
Less difficult	12	15	13	7
About the same (VOL.)	6	11	6	1
Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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The Middle Class Blues, 1986 and 2008

Compared with five years ago, is it more or less difficult for middle class people to maintain their standard of living?



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

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who said the same thing in a 1986 survey by NBC and the Wall Street Journal.

The Pew survey also finds that most Americans believe that in the past 10 years it has become harder to get ahead in life, and easier to fall behind. About six-in-ten respondents (59%) say it is harder to get ahead today than it was 10 years ago; just 15% say it is easier to get ahead now. Also, nearly seven-in-ten (69%) say it is easier to fall behind now than it was 10 years ago, while just 11% say it is harder to fall behind.

The biggest class differences on questions about mobility deal with perceptions that it is harder now than 10 years ago to get ahead in life. Seven-in-ten of the self-described lower class feels this way, compared with 59% of the middle class and just 50% of the upper class. By contrast, on the question of whether it is easier to fall behind now than it was 10 years ago, there are virtually no differences by class; 71% of the lower class, 68% of the middle class and 68% of the upper class all agree.

The Public is in a Sour Mood on Many Fronts

As this survey was in the field, much of the economic news agenda was devoted to reports about rising oil prices, falling housing prices, a turbulent mortgage market, and growing fears of a recession. Not surprisingly, the public's assessments about the state of the nation in general, and about the state of the national economy in particular, are quite downbeat.

Easier to Fall Behind, Harder to Get Ahead

Compared with ten years ago, is it easier or harder today for people to...

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Get ahead				
Easier to get <i>ahead</i> today	15	15	16	11
Harder to get <i>ahead</i> today	59	50	59	70
Same as 10 years ago	24	33	23	17
Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
Fall behind				
Easier to fall <i>behind</i> today	69	68	68	71
Harder to fall <i>behind</i> today	11	7	10	16
Same as 10 years ago	18	23	19	11
Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

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Public in a Sour Mood about Nation, Economy

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Satisfied with the way things are going in the country?				
Satisfied	30	38	32	17
Dissatisfied	62	58	60	72
Don't know/Refused	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100	100
Describe state of the nation's economy				
Excellent	2	3	2	1
Good	21	29	23	12
Not so good	50	47	53	45
Poor	26	21	21	40
Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

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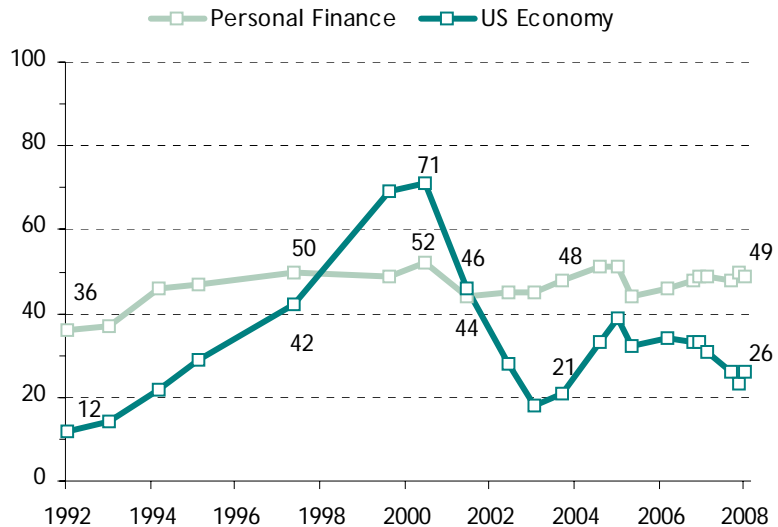
Just three-in-ten Americans say they satisfied with the way things are going in the country, compared with 62% who are dissatisfied. Fully 72% of those in the lower-class say they are dissatisfied, compared with 60% in the middle class and 58% in the upper-class.

More than three-quarters of the public describes the economy as not so good (50%) or poor (26%). Here, too, there are some differences by class. Some 32% of the upper-class describes the economy as excellent or good, compared with 25% of the middle class and just 13% of the lower class.

What effect might these very negative assessments about the economy have on people's assessments of their own personal financial situation? If history is a guide, not much. As the chart to the right illustrates, the public's judgments about the national economy fluctuate widely in response to changing economic conditions, while their judgments about their own personal financial situation tend to be more stable.

Ratings for U.S. Economy and Own Financial Situation, 1992-2008

% of respondents saying "excellent or good"



Question wording: How would you rate economic conditions in this country today as excellent, good, only fair, or poor? AND How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape or poor shape financially?
 Source: Surveys on the US economy from 1992 to 2003 by Gallup; from 2004 to present by The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Personal finance data from 1992 and 1993 by U.S. News & World Report; from 1994 to present by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

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Chapter 3: Middle Class Finances

The financial circumstances of the middle class range from comfortable and secure to stressed and uncertain. While most in the middle class report they have money to spend after the bills are paid, six-in-ten say that they faced at least some financial pressures in the past year—and about two-thirds expect to have problems in the year ahead.

The survey also found that the traditional relationship of home ownership and higher income remains particularly strong in the middle class. Still, many middle class homeowners also report feeling the strain: 21% say that they are living from paycheck to paycheck. That share is not appreciably different from other middle class Americans.

Overall, the survey finds that three-quarters of all middle class Americans say they either live comfortably (39%) or say they meet expenses with “a little left over” (37%). But for nearly a quarter of all middle class Americans, the

monthly race to pay their bills ends, at best, in a dead heat, including 3% who say they don’t meet expenses.

Hispanics and those with family incomes of less than \$30,000 a year have the most trouble when it comes time to pay the bills: nearly four-in-ten of each group say they just meet their expenses or fall short. Notably, when

Who’s Comfortably Middle Class, and Who’s Not?					
Which phrase best describes your financial situation?					
	Live Comfortably	Meet expenses, some left	Just meet expenses	Don’t meet expenses	DK/Ref
	%	%	%	%	%
All middle class	39	37	20	3	1=100
Gender					
Male	43	35	18	3	1=100
Female	36	38	21	4	1=100
Race/Ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	42	38	17	2	1=100
Black, non-Hispanic	43	32	17	7	1=100
Hispanic	24	39	30	7	*=100
Age					
18-29	45	33	16	6	*=100
30-49	34	43	20	2	1=100
50-64	38	34	24	3	1=100
65+	46	33	18	3	0=100
Education					
College grad	45	40	14	1	*=100
Some college	41	40	18	1	*=100
HS grad or less	36	33	24	6	1=100
Family income					
\$100,000+	53	33	13	1	*=100
\$50K-\$99K	42	44	13	*	1=100
\$30K-\$49K	37	39	21	3	*=100
LT \$30,000	28	33	30	9	*=100
Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.					
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asked to characterize their financial condition, similar proportions of middle class blacks (43%) and whites (42) describe their financial condition as “comfortable.” The least financially pressured: the youngest and oldest. Nearly half of all middle class Americans ages 65 or over say they live comfortably (46%), and a third say they have a little extra left over each month. Similarly, a 45% plurality of those younger than 30 say they live comfortably while a third report having extra cash after their expenses are paid. Among those 30 to 64 years old about a third say they live comfortably.

There’s Trouble Right Here in the Middle Class

To measure the extent to which the middle class is facing financial difficulties, survey respondents were asked if they had experienced each of five financial problems in the past year, ranging in severity from having to trim expenses to losing their job. An analysis of their responses suggests that, to some degree, financial strain is broadly felt throughout much of the middle class.

Predictably, the middle class faced fewer financial problems in the past year than the lower class but significantly more than those in the upper class. For example, about half of the middle class (53%) say they had to cut back on household spending in the past year, compared with 75% of those in the lower classes and just 36% of those who identify with the upper class. Also, one-in-ten middle class Americans say they lost their job in the past year, similar to the proportion of the upper class who say they were laid off or fired, but less than half the proportion of the lower class who say they lost their job (25%).

Middle class Americans also are less than half as likely as those in the lower class but nearly twice as likely as the upper class to have trouble paying housing expenses or to experience difficulties getting or paying for medical care.

Troubled Times...

Percentage who have experienced the following problems in the past year

	All	Upper	Middle	Lower
	%	%	%	%
Had to cut back on your household spending because money was tight	55	36	53	75
You or someone else in your household had to start working or take an extra job	24	10	21	42
Had trouble getting or paying for medical care	23	11	18	43
Had problems paying your rent or mortgage	16	5	12	33
Been laid off or lost your job	14	9	10	25
<i>Percentage who experienced problems in the past year:</i>				
None of these things	37	56	40	15
One	27	28	29	22
Two or three	27	14	25	42
Four or more	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>21</u>
	100	100	100	100

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class and also answered the five questions composing the index.

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Overall, six-in-ten middle class adults say they faced at least one of the five problems in the past year, and nearly a third (31%) report they had experienced two or more. Forty percent experienced none of the five problems, compared with just over half (56%) of all upper class Americans but only 15% of those who self-identified as lower class.

Looking Ahead

Many in the middle class anticipate more economic problems in the year ahead. About half say it's likely that in the coming year they will have trouble saving money, while a similar proportion predict they will be forced to cut back on spending. A quarter predict they'll have trouble paying their bills. Two-in-ten say they probably will face all three problems.

There is a predictable class division on most of these concerns. For example, 51% of the middle class say that in the coming year they will have trouble saving for the future, compared with 38% of the upper class and 67% of the lower class. A slightly different question produces a complementary result: Three-quarters of the middle class say they currently aren't saving as much money as they should—a finding confirmed by federal data which shows that the personal savings in this country has declined sharply in the past several decades.⁴

The survey also found that those who faced the most problems in the past year were the most likely to predict they'll have difficulties in the next 12 months. More than eight-in-ten middle class Americans who experienced at least three financial problems in the past year say they expected to face multiple financial challenges in the year ahead.

...And More Trouble is Coming

Percentage who say it is likely they will experience the following in the coming year:

	All	Upper	Middle	Lower
	%	%	%	%
Have trouble paying your bills	31	14	25	60
Have trouble saving for the future	52	38	51	67
Have to cut back on household spending	54	37	50	77

Percentage that says it is likely they will experience problems in the coming year:

	%	%	%	%
None of the problems	31	47	33	12
One	23	27	24	14
Two	22	16	23	27
All three	24	10	20	47

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class and also answered the three questions composing the index.

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⁴ Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Economic Letter, 2005-30, November 10, 2005.

Who's Hurting?

The older, better educated and more affluent members of the middle class experienced relatively few financial problems in the past year. At the same time, minorities as well as those who are less financially well-off experienced comparatively more difficulties.

Fully half of all those with incomes of \$100,000 or more experienced none of the five problems tested in the survey, compared with a third of whose family incomes are below \$50,000. By contrast, a four-in-ten plurality of those in the middle class who earned the least experienced two or more problems.

Similarly, the better educated faced fewer problems than those with comparatively less schooling, in part because education and income are positively linked. Among college graduates, nearly half (46%) experienced none of the problems financial problems tested in the survey the previous year, compared with 23% of those who did not finish high school.

The differences by age apparent elsewhere in the survey are even more striking here. Middle class Americans who are ages 65 or older experienced remarkably few financial difficulties, large or small, in the past year: Fully two-thirds say they did not have to deal with any of the five problems tested in the survey. And seven-in-ten say they didn't have to trim expenses in the past 12 months, compared with less than half of all Americans.

Who's Hurting?

Based on middle class respondents

Number of problems experienced:

	None	One	Two or More
Gender	%	%	%
Male	42	27	31
<i>Under 50</i>	31	31	38
<i>50 or older</i>	58	20	22
Female	38	31	31
<i>Under 50</i>	30	31	39
<i>50 or older</i>	47	32	21
Race/Ethnicity			
White, non-Hispanic	42	31	27
Black, non-Hispanic	35	25	40
Hispanic	25	27	48
Age			
18-29	30	28	42
30-49	31	33	36
50-64	41	30	29
65+	66	21	13
Retirement status			
Retired	60	26	14
Not retired	33	30	37
Education			
College grad+	46	30	24
Some college	38	29	33
High school grad	42	28	30
LT HS	23	30	47
Income			
Lt \$50,000	34	25	41
50-100,000	39	34	27
100,000+	50	25	25

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class and also answered the five questions composing the index.

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Home Ownership and Wealth

To help gauge the financial situation of America's middle class homeowners, our survey asked respondents if they owned a home, how much of their home loans they had paid off, and what proportion of their total net worth was represented by the equity they had in their home. Almost one-in-five (19%) assesses their homes as being worth under \$100,000. A plurality (46%) of middle class homeowners say that their homes are worth \$100,000 to \$250,000; 24 percent put this value as between \$250,000 to \$500,000; while 5 percent report their homes are worth \$500,000 or more.

In terms of paying off their mortgages, 30 percent say they have paid them off in full. An additional 15 percent have paid off more than half their mortgages and 12 percent have paid off about one-half. That leaves 40 percent of the middle class homeowners with more than half of their mortgages still to be paid.

Nearly two-thirds of all middle class homeowners say their home represents at least half of their total assets, which includes business assets, savings, investments, and retirement accounts. More than a third (36%) say their home amounts to "about fifty percent" of their total holdings. An additional 29% estimate that the home equity is more than half of the total wealth while 27 percent say it is less than half.

Using these questions, we made a rough estimate of homeowners' total wealth holdings. Our median value of middle class home-owner wealth is \$187,500 (which is very close to the 2004 Survey of Consumer Finances median net worth of homeowners of \$185,000).

Using the median wealth estimate as a dividing line, we split all homeowners into a high-wealth group and a low-wealth group. The high-wealth homeowner group includes 30% of the middle class, and the low-wealth homeowner group includes about 29% of the middle class. The remainder of the middle class, 41%, consists of non-homeowners and of homeowners who declined to answer questions about the value of their homes.⁵

Middle Class and Home Ownership

	Middle class
Values of One's Home	%
Less than \$100,000	19
\$100,000-\$249,999	46
\$250,000-\$499,999	24
\$500,000 or more	5
Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>
	100
Share of Mortgage Paid	
All	30
More than half	15
About half	12
Less than half	40
Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>
	100
Number of respondents	891

Note: Based on respondents who own a home and identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.

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⁵ About 10 percent of homeowners were included in the non-homeowner group because they declined to answer one of the three follow-up questions given to homeowners.

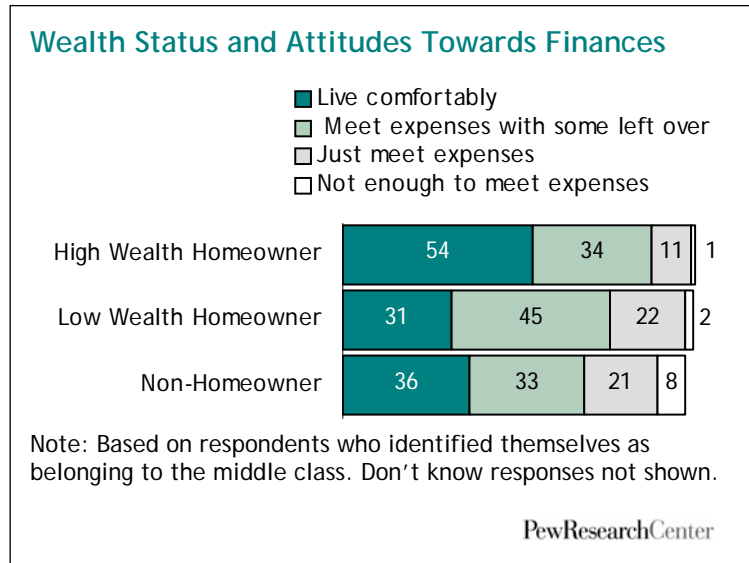
These groups align reasonably closely with individuals' assessment of their own financial situation within the middle class. Among the high wealth group, more than half describe themselves as "living comfortably"; by contrast, only three-in-ten of the low wealth group say that about themselves.

Middle class non-homeowners are a more mixed group. Some 36 percent say that they live comfortably. This group is disproportionately young—41 percent are under 30 years old, compared with just 3 percent of the high-wealth group.

Twenty-nine percent of this group has trouble meeting expenses, while 24% of low wealth homeowners and 12% of high wealth homeowners feel similarly stressed.

When comparing themselves to their parents at a similar age, both middle class home-owning groups are more likely than non-owners to say they live better than their parents did: 73 percent for the high wealth group, 69 percent for the low wealth group, and 61 percent for those who do not own their homes.

But more than half of the high-wealth group is more than 50 years of age, and many are past their peak earning years. Consequently, they are more likely than the other two groups to not expect their quality of life to rise in the next five years. Further, they are less likely to say that their quality of life is higher than five years earlier.



Chapter 4: Middle Class Priorities and Values

Marriage. Career. Children. Religion. Free time. Wealth. Good works. That's a list of some of the big things that people value in their lives. But which does the middle class value most?

In a nation often portrayed as idealizing money and hard work, the answer given as "very important" most often among a list of seven items is free time -- or as the Pew survey question puts it, "having enough time to do the things you want."

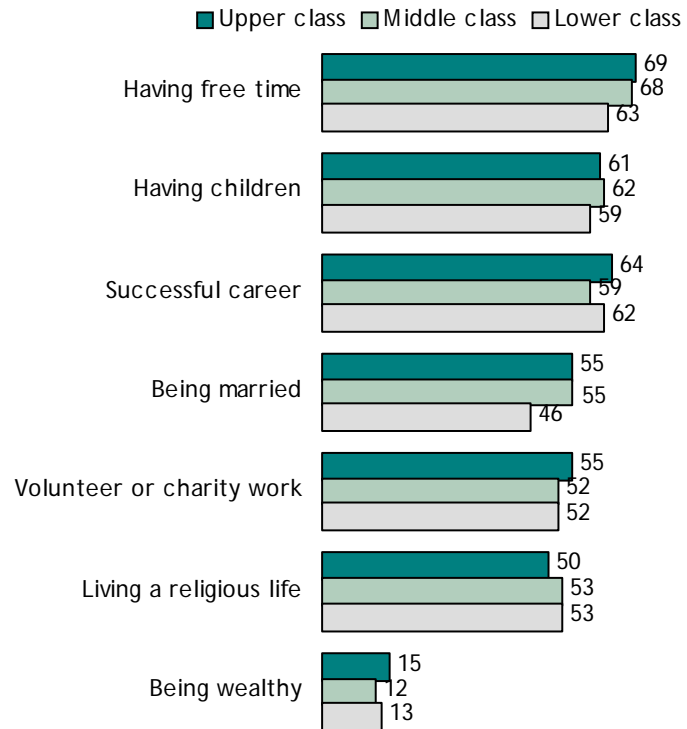
Some two-thirds (68%) of the self-identified middle class say that free time is very important to them. That's more than say the same about anything else on the list, including having children (62%), having a successful career (59%), being married (55%), living a religious life (53%), and donating to charity or doing volunteer work (52%). And having free time is many times more important than being wealthy, which was rated as very important by only 12% of the middle class.

When it comes to these life priorities, there is almost no class difference in the responses. Slightly higher shares of the middle class and upper class, compared with the lower class, say that being married is very important to them. The upper class is slightly more likely than the middle and lower classes to say that being wealthy is very important. Other than that, the three classes respond to the questions about priorities in similar ways.

The finding about the widespread importance of free time raises intriguing questions. Is this a reaction to the stress of modern life? Is leisure-time shrinking for middle class Americans? And who values free time the most – those who already have it, or those who wish they did?

Life Priorities Vary Little by Class

% of respondents saying "very important"

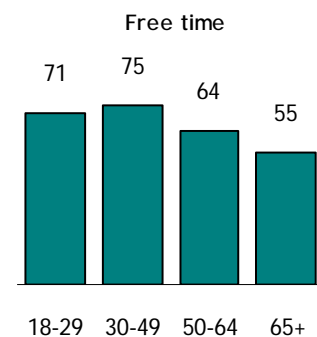


Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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The Importance of Free Time by Age

% of middle class respondents
saying "very important"



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.

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The last question is easiest to answer. Free time holds the most widespread appeal for those who are in demographic groups that would seem to have the least of it. Among the middle class, a greater share people who are employed (72%) than those who are not employed (66%) or are retired (57%) say that free time is very important to them. Similarly, 75% of adults who are in the busy middle years of life (ages 30 to 49) say that free time is very important to them, compared with just 55% of those who are ages 65 and older.

Using a broader measure of personal priorities, middle class mothers with children younger than 18 are slightly more likely to say that free time is somewhat or very important to them (98% do) than are fathers of minor children (91%). But what stands out more is that free time is so important to middle class Americans that there are few stark distinctions. Among all major demographic categories—by race or ethnicity, marital status and age—at least 90% say that free time is somewhat or very important.

The image of the American in a hurry has been a theme of literature and essays since the founding of the republic. It also has been a finding of social science surveys. In a 2004 General Social Survey, for example, 31% of Americans said they always feel rushed. That was significantly higher than the 25% who felt that way in 1982. The share of people who sometimes feel rushed stayed about the same (it was 54% in 2004). But the proportion that never feels rushed declined, from 22% in 1982 to 15% in 2004.

As for who feels most rushed, a 2005 Pew survey found that women are slightly more likely than men to say they are rushed. The gap is widest between working mothers of children younger than 18 (41%) and working fathers of children younger than 18 (26%).

However, this increased perception of being rushed comes as some recent findings from social science research indicate that Americans may have more free time now than they did several decades ago. Weekly leisure for men grew by at least six hours between 1965 and 2003, and for women by at least four hours, according to recent research by economists Mark Aguiar and Erik Hurst, who analyzed data from standardized time-use diaries kept over many decades by different people. Their work also found that the most educated Americans (those with college degrees) had the smallest gains in leisure time.

Not all researchers agree that leisure time has increased in recent decades; some cite other data indicating that Americans' work hours have expanded, reducing their free time. Even some of those who contend that free time has increased say that leisure time has become more fragmented or interrupted, and therefore less pleasant. For example, they point to a rise in multi-tasking and conclude that doing more than one activity at a time produces a more rushed leisure experience.

In short, there is no settled view from the academic community about whether Americans have more free time now than in the past. But no matter what the trends may show, a large majority of Americans today see free time as a major priority in their lives.

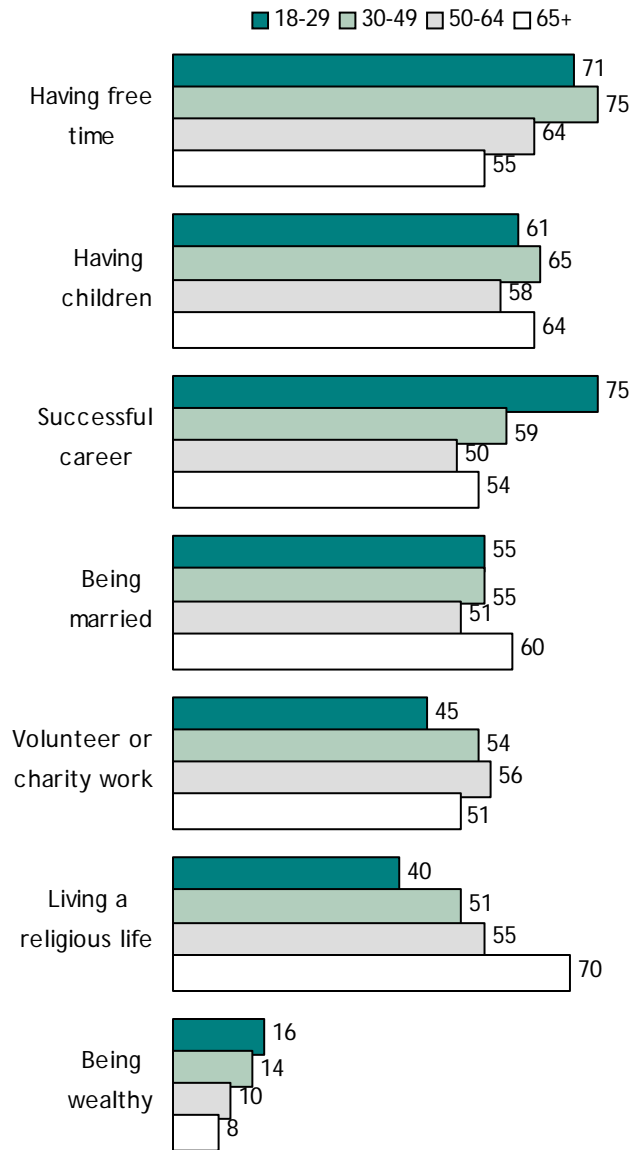
Middle Class Subgroups

Within the self-identified middle class, the importance given to these various life priorities differs depending on one's age, and, to some extent, gender and race and ethnicity.

Age. Young adults ages 18 to 29 say their top three priorities are career (75%), free time (71%) and having children (61%). Those in young middle age, 30 to 49, put free time first (75%), following by having children (65%) and a successful career (59%). Middle class Americans ages 50 to 64, who are edging closer to retirement, place free time first (64%), followed by children (58%) and charity (56%). The oldest middle class Americans, ages 65 and older, give their top priority to living a religious life: 70% say that is very important to them. Children are their second top priority (64%), followed by being married (60%).

Middle Class Priorities, by Age

% of middle class respondents saying "very important"



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.

Gender. Women put a higher premium on being religious (59%) and doing charitable work (56%) than do men (46% for religion and 47% for charity). Men, by contrast, place a higher value on having a successful career (63% very important) and being married (60%) than do women (56% and 50%, respectively).

Race and ethnicity. Whites give their highest share of “very important” responses to having free time (67%) and having children (63%), followed by marriage (55%), career (54%), charity (50%) and living a religious life (49%). For blacks, the top choices are living a religious life (73%), having a successful career (69%), having free time (69%), having children (61%), charity work (58%) and being married (50%).

Hispanics are most likely to say that career is very important (79%), as well as free time (78%), followed by having children (62%), living a religious life (61%), charity (59%) and being married (57%).

Also, middle class whites give lower importance to being wealthy than do minorities: Just 8% cite it as very important, compared with 28% of blacks and 21% of Hispanics. Some of these differences could reflect the fact that, among both middle class respondents and all respondents, whites tend to be older and wealthier than blacks or Hispanics.

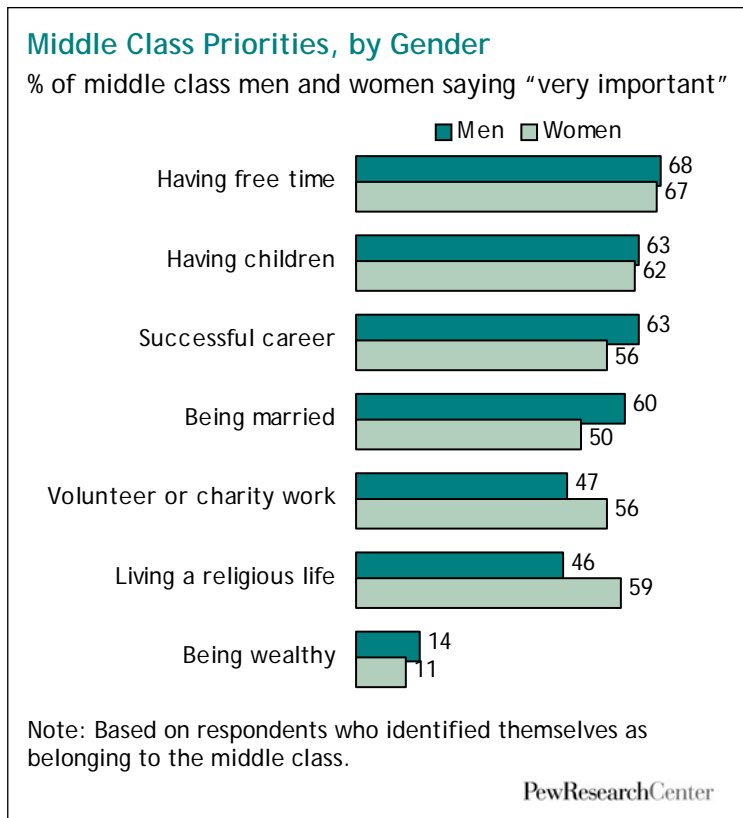
Middle Class Views of Free Time

More than two-thirds of middle class Americans (68%) say that having free time to do whatever they want to do is very important to them, and 27% say it is somewhat important. But this unstructured leisure is more highly valued by some groups than by others.

Nearly three-quarters of middle class adults younger than 50 (73%) call free time very important to them personally. By comparison, 60% of people ages 50 and older say that free time is very important.

Free time is very important to 71% of employed men and 73% of employed women, but only 54% of retired men and 59% of retired women.

Free time is very important to a higher share of people living in the Northeast and West (71% in each) than in the South (62%). Middle class Americans living in cities rate free time as very important in higher numbers (72%) than those living in rural areas (61%).



Most groups value free time highly. There is little difference between men and women overall, or between people of different incomes and education levels, with the share of middle class Americans saying free time is very important.

Middle Class Views of Career Success

Having a successful career is among the top priorities of middle class Americans, with 59% calling it very important and 35% somewhat important. But the proportion that values a successful career varies by gender, racial and ethnic group and other demographic categories.

Career success is deemed a very important personal priority by a higher share of men (63%) than women (56%). Career success also is ranked very important by a higher share of blacks (69%) and Hispanics (79%) than of whites (54%).

Among the groups most likely to say that career success is very important are young people, those with lower family incomes, and high school graduates.

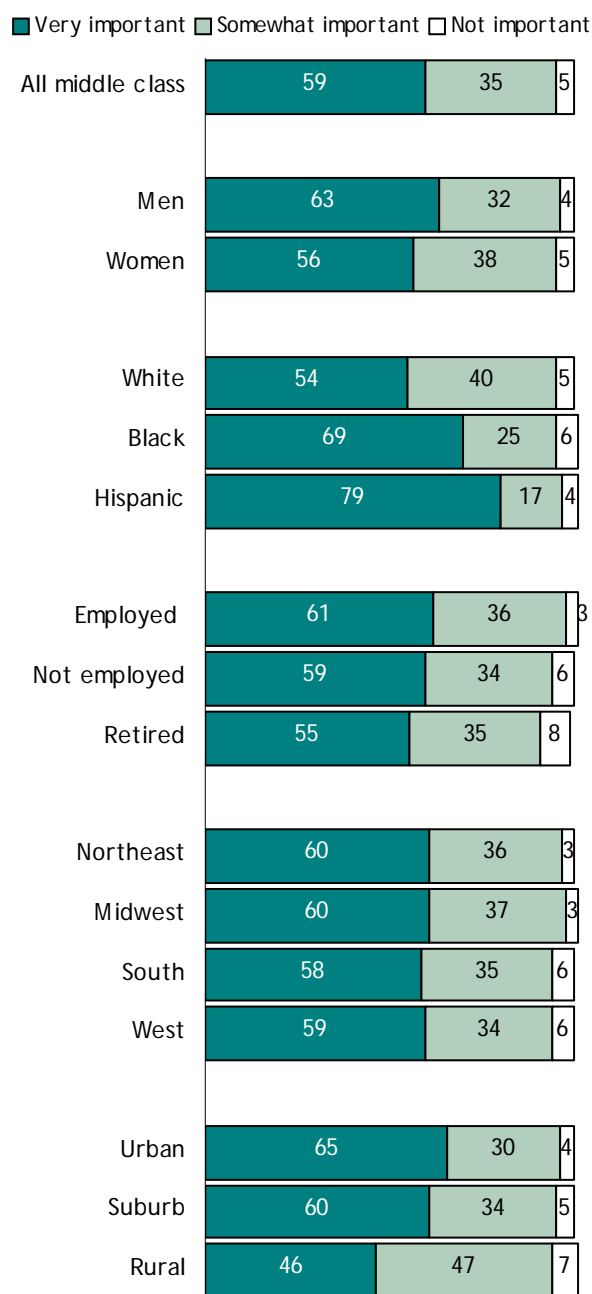
Married people in the middle class (53%) are less likely to say career success is very important to them than people who are not married (66%), perhaps because married people are likely to be older and to have higher incomes.

Middle Class Views of Having Children

More than six-in-ten middle class Americans say that having children is very important to them personally and an additional 23% say it is somewhat important.

Overall, men and women are equally likely to say that having children is very important. So are people of different ages, racial and ethnic

How Important is Having a Successful Career to the Middle Class?



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Not too important and not at all important responses combined. Don't know responses not shown.

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groups, and education levels.

What does make a difference, however, is income. People with higher family incomes – particularly those earning over \$50,000 a year – are more likely to say that having children is very important to them than are those with lower incomes.

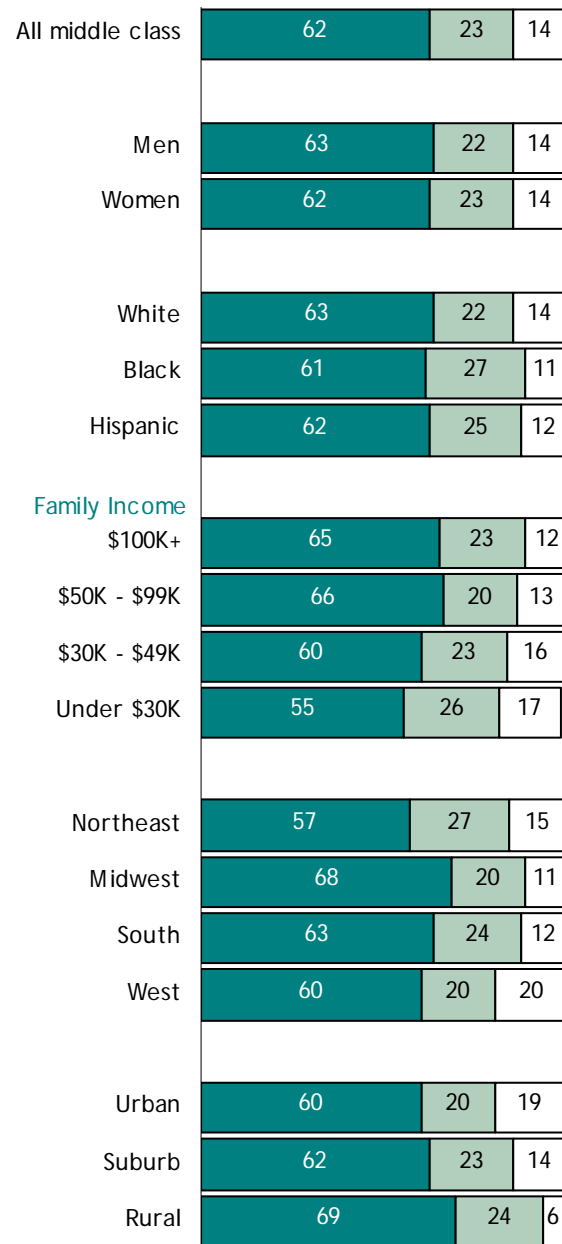
Religious people – those who attend services at least weekly – are more likely to say children are very important to them than are less religious people. Of those who attend services at least weekly, 72% say that having children is very important to them. Among those who worship monthly, 62% say so and of those who seldom go to services, 54% say so.

As might be expected, parents of children under 18 are more likely than other groups to value having children —78% say it is very important to them, compared with 41% of those without children and 67% of those with grown children.

Among middle class Americans who are not parents, men are more likely than women to put a high priority on having children. About seven-in-ten men without children (72%) say having children is very or somewhat important to them, compared with six-in-ten women (60%) without children.

How Important is Having Children to the Middle Class?

■ Very important ■ Somewhat important □ Not important



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Not too important and not at all important responses combined. Don't know responses not shown.

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Middle Class Views of Marriage

Just over half of middle class Americans--55%-- say that being married is very important to them, and 27% say it is somewhat important. Married people put a higher priority on being married than do those who are single, divorced or widowed. Among married middle class adults, 70% say that marriage is very important to them, a sentiment shared by only 39% of those who are not married.

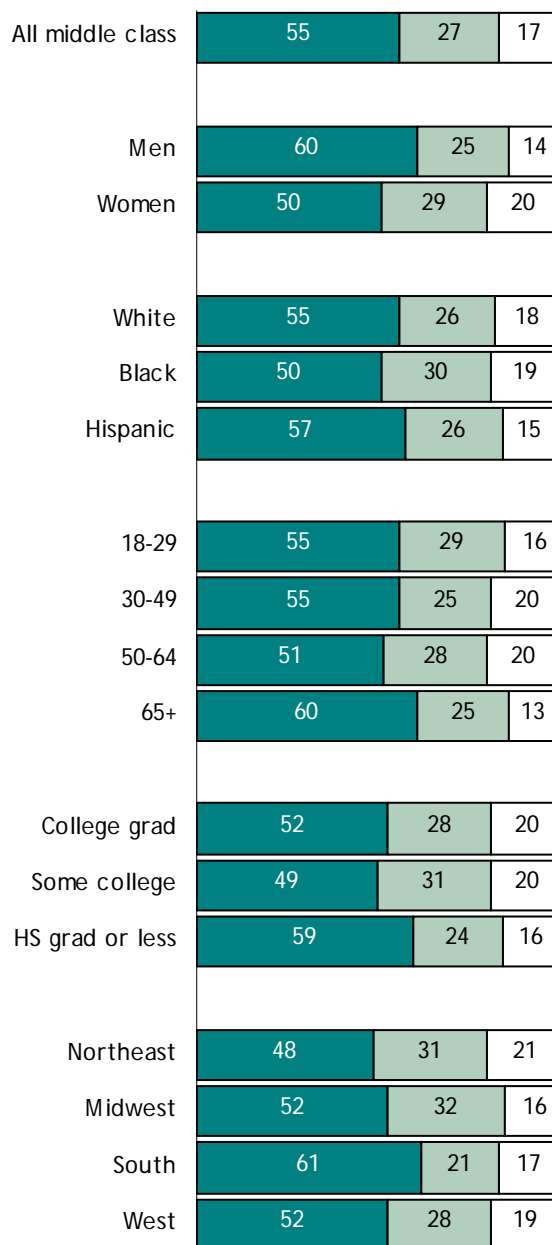
One consistent theme from the survey responses is that men say that marriage is more important to them than women do. Overall, 60% of middle class men and 50% of middle class women say that marriage is very important to them. Among men ages 50 and older, 64% say that being married is very important to them, compared with 48% of women in that age group. These attitudes may in part reflect the reality that a higher share of older men is married than of older women. But there also are differences between all middle class married men and married women: A higher share of married men (74%) than married women (65%) say that marriage is very important to them.

People with less education are more likely than college graduates to say that marriage is very important. About six-in-ten people (59%) with high school education or less say so, compared with just over half (52%) of college graduates. Also, frequent church goers are more likely than others to value marriage.

Comparing attitudes of different classes, there is a marked difference between the lower class Americans and those in the middle and upper classes. Fewer than half of lower class Americans (46%) say that being married is very important to them. More than half of middle

How Important is Marriage to the Middle Class?

■ Very important ■ Somewhat important □ Not important



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Not too important and not at all important responses combined. Don't know responses not shown.

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class and upper class Americans (55% for each group) consider marriage very important.

Middle Class Views of Religion

Living a religious life is very important to 53% of middle class Americans, and somewhat important to 28%. Women are more likely to say so than men, older people are more likely to say so than younger ones, and minorities are more likely to say so than whites. Religion is more important to people with lower incomes and education levels, and to residents of the Midwest and South, compared with other regions. There is little difference between immigrants and the children or grandchildren of immigrants in the likelihood of their saying religion is very important.

Less than half of men (46%) say that religion is very important to them, compared with nearly six-in-ten (58%) women. Among people ages 65 and older, 70% say that living a religious life is a very important priority, compared with 40% of people ages 18 to 29.

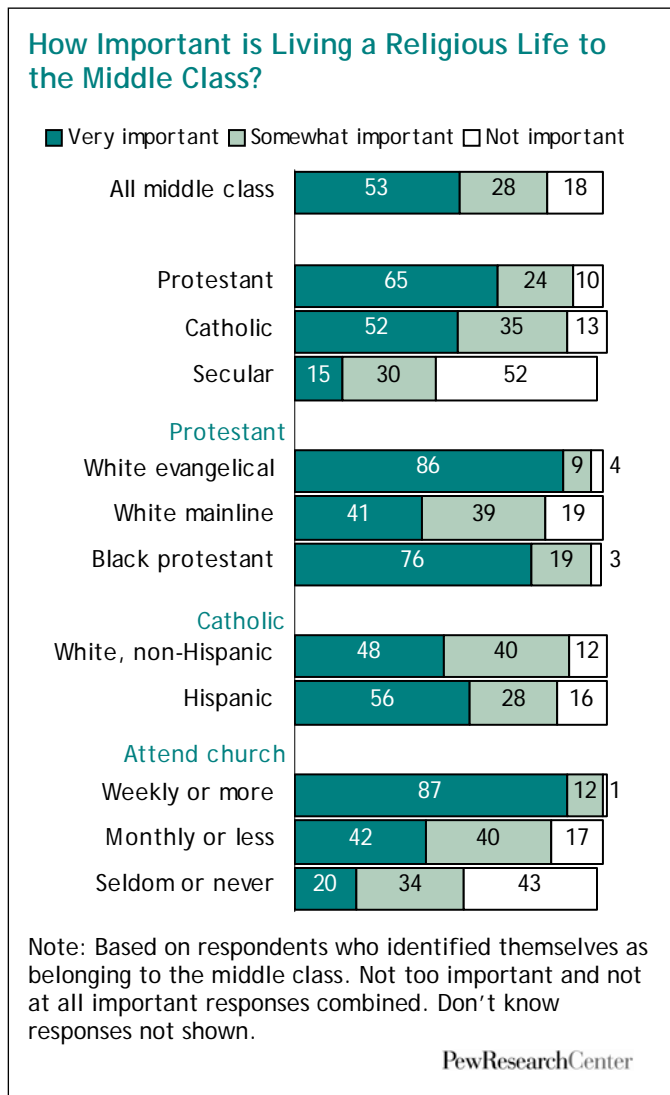
Nearly three-quarters of middle class Americans who are black say that religion is very important to them (73%), compared with 61% of Hispanics and 49% of whites.

Comparing religious groups, living a religious life is somewhat important to more middle class Protestants than to middle class Catholics. White evangelical Protestants and black Protestants are markedly more likely to say so than white mainline Protestants.

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Very important	53	55	55	46
Somewhat important	27	28	27	26
Not too important	12	11	11	16
Not at all important	7	6	6	9
Don't know	1	*	1	3
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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Middle Class Views of Charity and Volunteer Work

Doing volunteer work or donating to charity is deemed very important by 52% of middle class Americans and is somewhat important to 41%. Women are more likely to say so than men, 56% to 47%. A higher share of college graduates (58%), compared with people who have a high school education or less (49%) say that charity is very important.

Married people are more likely to say so than people who are not married, and people who frequently attend religious services are more likely to say so than those who attend seldom or never.

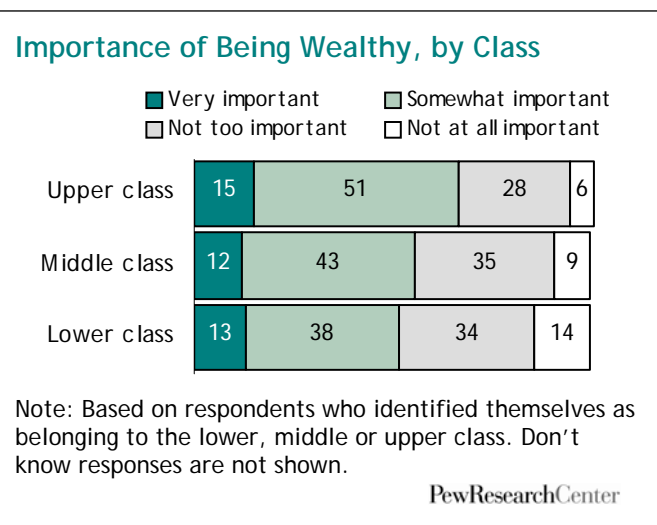
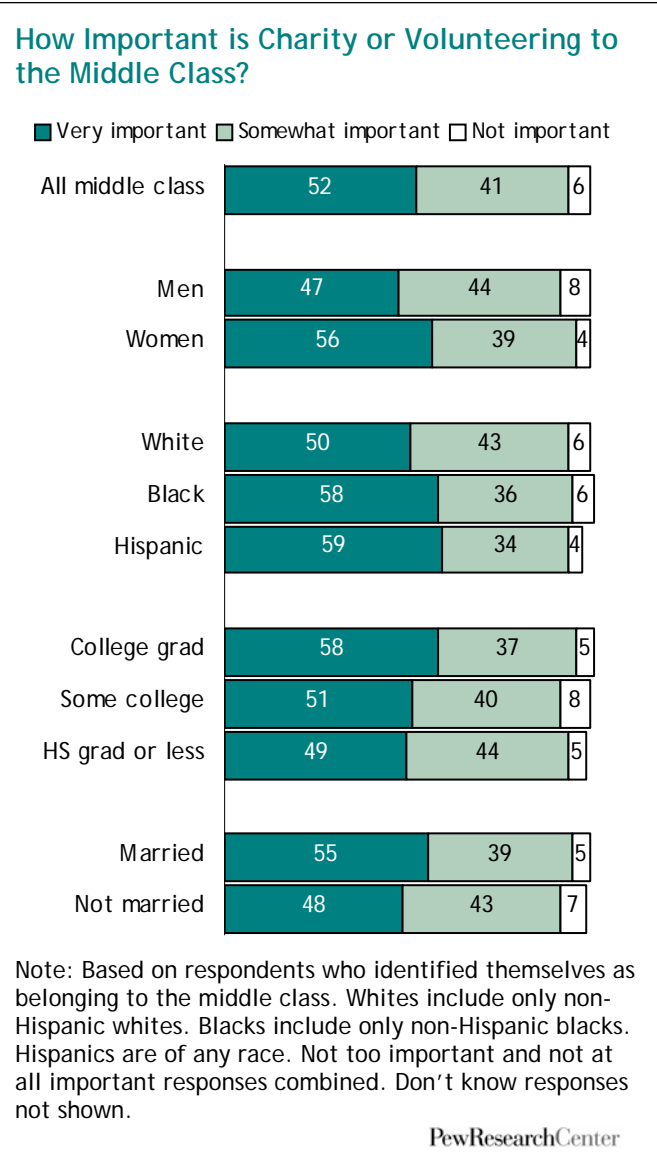
Immigrants are markedly more likely to attach a “very important” label to charity (63%) than are children of immigrants (42%) or later descendants (51%).

Middle Class Views of Wealth

Being wealthy is very important to only 12% of the middle class, somewhat important to 43% and not too important or not important at all to 44%.

Wealth is not a priority for a majority of any subgroup within the middle class, but there are several in which more than 20% say it is very important. These include blacks (28%), Hispanics (21%) and first-generation immigrants (26%). More people with less than a high school education (28%) or family incomes of less than \$30,000 (22%) say that being wealthy is very important.

Being wealthy is somewhat or very important to a higher share of upper class Americans than to the middle and lower classes. The middle and



lower classes are more likely to say it is not important.

Broader Social Questions: Views of the Rich

The survey also asked several questions that explore the way Americans think about the nature of wealth, fate and individual effort.

Middle class Americans are split on whether rich people achieve their wealth through hard work and ambition (42%), or because of connections and family ties (47%).

There is little difference on this question between men and women or young and old. But among racial and ethnic groups, a higher share of blacks (60%) says that

connections or family are the keys to wealth, compared with whites (47%) or Hispanics (36%) who hold that view.

Although there is little difference on this question by different income groups within the middle class, people who say their financial situation enables them to live comfortably are more likely to say rich people get rich through hard work than do those who are living closer to the edge.

On this question, most of America's upper class (56%) believes that rich people achieve their money through hard work. Most of the lower class (53%) believes that connections are the key.

Rich-Poor Gap

By 68% to 29%, middle class Americans believe that the rich are getting richer and

Does Wealth Come from Hard Work or Good Connections?

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
Main reason rich are rich...	%	%	%	%
Hard work, ambition, or education	42	56	42	32
OR				
Knowing the right people or born into it	46	33	47	53
Neither/Both equally (VOL.)	8	9	7	9
Other (VOL.)	8	9	7	9
DK/Ref	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Question wording: Which of these statements comes closer to your own view - even if neither is exactly right. Most rich people today are wealthy mainly because of their own hard work, ambition, or education OR Most rich people today are wealthy mainly because they know the right people or were born into wealthy families.

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Success and Wealth in Life, by Class

	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Rich Get Richer, Poor Get Poorer				
Completely agree	33	18	32	48
Mostly agree	36	38	36	32
Completely disagree	8	14	7	4
Mostly disagree	20	28	22	13
DK/Ref	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100
Success Determined by Outside Forces				
Completely agree	7	5	6	10
Mostly agree	29	24	29	34
Completely disagree	17	22	16	14
Mostly disagree	44	47	46	37
DK/Ref	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

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the poor are getting poorer. Women are more likely than men to agree with this, 72% to 63%. There are few differences by income, but a higher share of middle class Americans with less than a high school education believe this (81%) than do those who have more educational attainment.

As with the previous question, the opinion of the middle class sits between those of the upper and lower classes. Among lower class Americans, 80% believe the rich get richer. A smaller majority of upper class Americans (56%) believe this.

Overall, most Americans (69%) believe that it is true that “the rich just get richer.” This is similar to levels recorded on this question in surveys taken since 1994, although lower than those in the earlier 1990s.

Personal Empowerment

Despite their uncertainty about how the rich get rich, most middle class Americans believe that people in general control their own destiny: Only 35% agree with the notion that success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside their control. More than six-in-ten (62%) disagree.

Men are more likely to disagree with this idea than women, 66% to 58%. In general, more affluent groups and people with higher levels of education are more likely to reject the idea that success is out of their control. Two-thirds of whites disagree (66%), a higher share than for blacks (55%) or Hispanics (47%).

On this question, the middle class falls between the two other classes in its beliefs. A higher share of the upper class (69%) disagrees that outside forces control people’s lives, but among the lower class, about half (51%) disagree.

Overall, this survey shows that most Americans (61%) disagree that success is determined by forces outside a person’s control. This is down slightly from five years ago, when 67% said felt that way.

Other Values

Most middle class Americans (72%) disagree that “women should return to their traditional roles in society.” That is the same share as for Americans overall, and is similar to levels over the past decade.

Among major demographic groups, Hispanics (41%) and people with less than a high school education (51%) are among those most likely to agree.

There is little difference among the classes on this question, with strong majorities in the upper class (76%) and lower class (70%) disagreeing that women should return to traditional roles.

Should Women Return to their Traditional Roles in Society?				
	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Completely agree	7	5	8	7
Mostly agree	16	15	16	17
Completely disagree	44	50	43	41
Mostly disagree	28	26	29	29
DK/Ref	5	4	4	6
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588
Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.				
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On the question of whether gay men and lesbians should be allowed to marry legally, a slight majority—51%--of the middle class is opposed. Overall, 49% of Americans oppose gay marriage, a slightly smaller share than in most recent surveys.

Men oppose gay marriage at higher levels than women do, and blacks are more opposed than whites. Hispanics are split, with nearly one-in-five (18%) either not answering the question or saying they do not have an opinion.

There is little difference among the classes on this question, although there is more support for gay marriage among the upper class (45%) than the middle class (38%) or lower class (39%).

Allowing Gay Marriage, by Class				
	All	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Favor	40	45	38	39
Oppose	49	47	51	46
DK/Ref	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588
Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.				
PewResearchCenter				

Chapter 5: Middle Class Jobs

America's middle class likes its jobs: Nearly nine-in-ten say they are completely or mostly satisfied with the job they have. At the same time, however, about a quarter of those who are middle class and employed worry that they could either lose their job or face cuts in wages or health benefits in the coming year.

Job Worries

Survey respondents who have jobs were asked how likely it is that any one of a number of negative events in the coming year might cause them to lose their job. Some 12% of middle class workers said it was at least somewhat likely that their company would relocate; 10% said the same about their job being outsourced; and 14% said the same about being laid off. Combining these responses into a “job loss” worries indicator, 25% of middle class workers said they thought at least one of these negative events might happen to them.

Two other survey questions focused on cuts in pay or benefits. Some 20% of middle class workers said it was at least somewhat likely that their health benefits would be either reduced or eliminated in the coming year, while 12% thought that they might have to face a cut in pay. Combining these two responses into a “cutback” worries indicator, 26% of workers thought that at least one of the events might happen to them.

Looking at the two sets of worries together, just 9% of middle class workers worry about both of these issues. However, 25% think that at least one of these five negative events could occur to them in the next 12 months.

In terms of class identification, lower class workers are far more likely to worry about job loss (35%) than either middle class (25%) or upper class workers (just 12%). Concerns about wage and benefit cutbacks are more pervasive throughout the class structure—32% among lower class workers, 26% among those in the middle class, and 22% among those in the upper class.

Within the middle class, the level of employment worries varies along some demographic dimensions, but not all. Men are slightly more likely than women to have job worries. Among workers of different races and

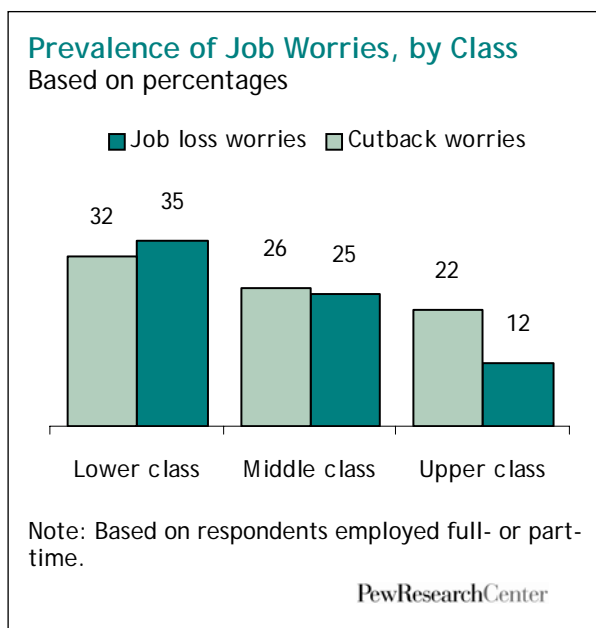
Job Worries and the Middle Class		
Based on employed middle class respondents		
	Job loss worries	Cutback worries
	%	%
All middle class workers	25	26
Age		
18-29	22	20
30-49	27	28
50-64	23	33
Race/Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	20	26
Black, non-Hispanic	30	24
Hispanic	45	28
Education		
College grad	18	25
Some college	26	27
High school or less	28	27
Occupation		
Managers & professionals	21	28
Good non-professional jobs	19	20
Less skilled jobs	34	30
Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class and working full- or part-time. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race.		
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ethnicities, there is a large difference in job loss concerns but virtually no difference in concerns about cutbacks. For example, 45% of middle class Hispanic workers think that it is at least somewhat likely that they could lose their job in the next year. Among other middle class workers, 30% of blacks and 20% of whites share that concern.

In terms of age, older workers are more likely than younger ones to worry about cutbacks. Fears about job loss are more evenly spread throughout the age ranges, with middle-aged workers having slightly more concerns than do workers who are older and younger.

Highly educated workers are less likely than those with less education to have job worries. While just 18% of college graduates think that it is at least somewhat likely that they could lose their job, the comparable figures are 28% among workers with at most a high school diploma and 26% among those with some college education. On the question of possible cutbacks in benefits or pay, the share of middle class workers who worry that this could happen to them is spread fairly evenly among middle class workers with varying levels of educational attainment.

Fears about employment problems in the next year are related to other measures of current economic status. For example, of middle class workers who describe their financial situation as not having enough to meet basic expenses, 51% worry about losing their job and 68% also worry about pay cuts or reduced health benefits. By contrast, just 18% of workers who describe their financial situation as “comfortable” worry about job loss and only 20% of those who are upbeat about their finances worry about some type of cut back.



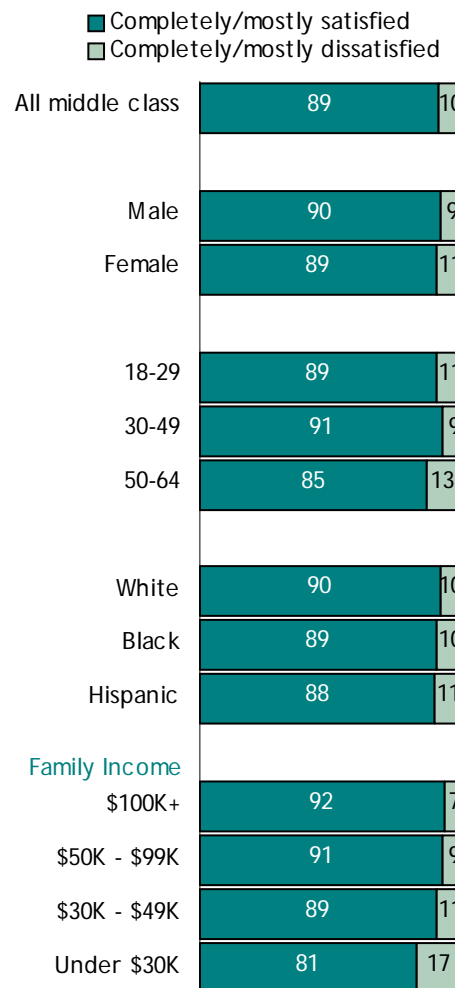
Job Satisfaction

The vast majority of middle class workers (89% overall) are either completely or mostly satisfied with their job. These high levels of job satisfaction registered by virtually all types of workers belie the famous exhortation in the country song: “Take this job and shove it.” They also demonstrate that worries about employment in the future don’t translate directly into dissatisfaction with the current job. Among workers who are worried about job loss or cutbacks of benefits or wages, eight-in-ten report high job satisfaction.

Variations in job satisfaction by demographic groups within the middle class are quite small. There is no real difference between male and female workers and few differences based on age. In terms of income, 81% of workers in families with incomes below \$30,000 are satisfied with their jobs, as are 92% of those in families with incomes above \$100,000. Finally, 89% of blacks express job satisfaction, while the figure is 90% for whites and 88% for Hispanics.

Middle class workers are not unique in their high levels of job satisfaction: 91% of upper class workers are either completely or mostly satisfied with their jobs, as are 78% of lower class workers.

Job Satisfaction



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class and working full- or part-time. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Don't know responses not shown.

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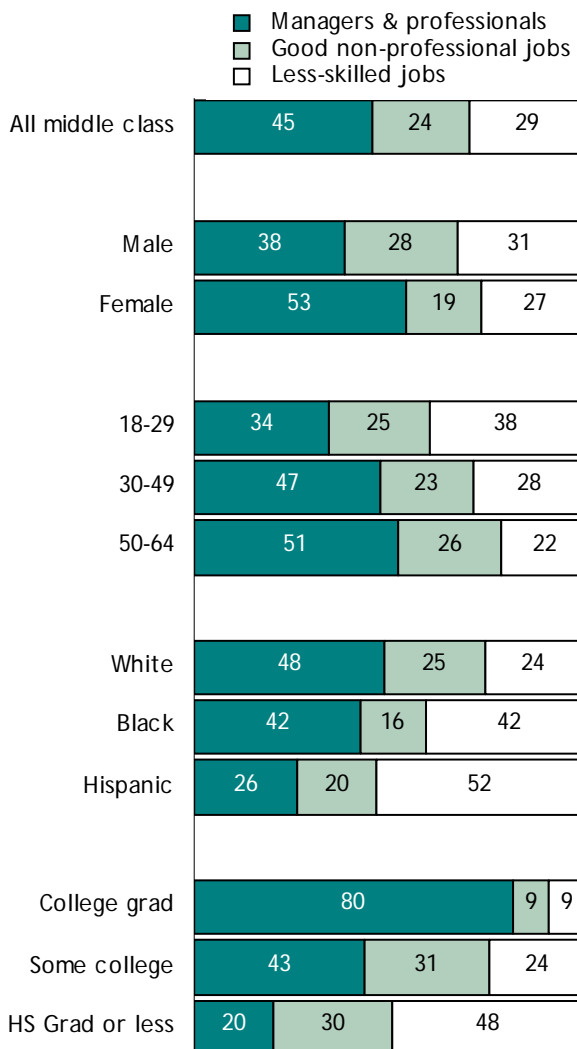
Occupations and the Middle Class

Based on their answers to a battery of questions about their occupation, respondents to this survey were grouped into three broad occupational tiers: managers and professionals, non-professional good jobs (such as supervisors, craft workers, technicians, police officers, firefighters, and clericals), and less-skilled jobs (such as factory operatives, sales clerks, wait staff, personal service workers, and laborers).

In this survey, 45% of middle class workers are managers and professionals, 24% are in good jobs and 29% are in less-skilled jobs.⁶ Within the middle class, there are many demographic differences with respect to job type. For example, as people of working age grow older, they tend to move to better jobs. Among those just starting their careers (18 to 29 years old), 34% are managers and professionals and 38% are in less-skilled jobs. By the time that middle class workers are at or near the end of their careers (50 to 64 years old), 51% are managers and professionals and only 22% are in less-skilled jobs.

In terms of race and ethnicity, only 26% of middle class Hispanics are in managerial and professional occupations, while the comparable figures for middle class whites and blacks in these fields are 48% and 42% respectively. At the bottom end of the job market, there is also a stark difference -- 24% of whites, 42% of blacks and 52% of Hispanics who are middle class are in low-skilled jobs.

Middle Class Occupations



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class and working full- or part-time. Whites include only non-Hispanic whites. Blacks include only non-Hispanic blacks. Hispanics are of any race. Something else and don't know responses not shown.

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⁶ In this survey, 45% of all workers say that they are either a manager or professional. By contrast, only about 32% fall into these occupations in social surveys from the Census Bureau. This "title inflation" is strongly related to income; respondents who have high annual family incomes are more inclined than others to describe certain jobs as being managerial or professional. Further, women are more likely than men to describe their job as being managerial or professional even though both genders have the same share of managerial and professional jobs in Census Bureau surveys.

Likewise, there are big differences in occupations by levels of education.

Among those with a four-year degree in the middle class, 80% have managerial or professional jobs. By contrast, among those with at most a high school diploma, just 20% have a managerial-professional job, while 30% have a good job, and 48% have a less-skilled job.

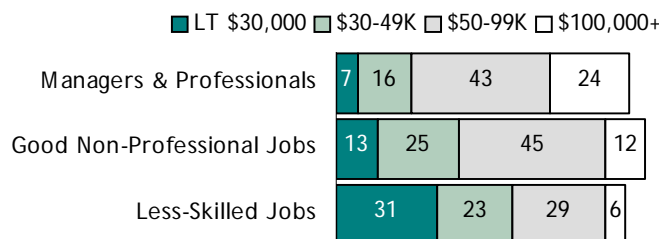
Middle class workers who are in these different occupational tiers also tend to have different levels of income. Among

low-skilled workers in the middle class, more than half (54%) are in households with incomes below \$50,000. Among those with good jobs who place themselves in the middle class, just 38% are in these lower income households, and among managers and professional who place themselves in the middle class, just 23% are in low income households. At the other end of the income scale, 24% of middle class managers and professionals have incomes over \$100,000. By contrast, just 12% of those in good jobs and 6% of those with less-skilled jobs have incomes over \$100,000.

In terms of job satisfaction, however, there is little variation across middle class workers in these different occupations. Some 91% of managers and professionals are satisfied with their jobs; the comparable figure for those with good non-professional jobs is 93%, and for those with less-skilled jobs is 83%.

Job worries, on the other hand, do vary by type of job held. While only one-in-five middle workers in the top two occupational tiers worry about losing their job, more than one-in-three of less-skilled workers worry about job loss in the next 12 months. Worries about cutbacks are much more evenly distributed across the three job categories, with those in good nonprofessional jobs having the fewest worries.

Income, by Middle Class Occupations



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class and working full- or part-time. Don't know responses not shown.

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Prevalence of Job Worries

Based on employed middle class respondents

Occupation	Job loss worries	Cutback worries
	%	%
Managers & professionals	21	28
Good non-professional jobs	19	20
Less skilled jobs	34	30

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class and working full- or part-time.

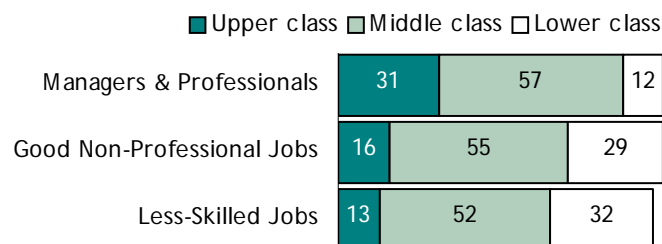
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Finally, self-reported class varies in some of these tiers, but not all. There is no significant difference between the class identification of those in good jobs and those in less-skilled jobs. Managers and professionals, on the other hand, are much more likely to identify with the upper class (31%) and less likely to consider themselves in the lower class (12%).

Retirees

While this chapter focuses on workers, it is notable that retirees identify with the three social classes in nearly the same shares as non-retirees. This suggests a continuity of class identification over one's lifetime. Among retirees, there are some class differences based on gender. Retired men are more likely (28%) than retired women (21%) to represent themselves as being in the lower class. Retired women are more likely than retired men to say they are in the middle class (59% to 49%). Small shares of retirees of both genders say they are upper class.

Occupation, by Social Class



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class and working full- or part-time. Don't know responses not shown.

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Chapter 6: The Politics of the Middle Class

The American middle class aligns with Democrats over Republicans and conservatives over liberals – meaning its political and ideological profile closely matches that of the full adult population. In these realms, the self-defined middle class respondents are truly in the middle -- situated between a self-defined upper class that is more Republican and conservative than they are, and a self-identified lower class that is more Democratic and liberal.

On the partisan front, almost half (47%) of all middle class adults say they identify with or lean Democratic, just over a third (35%) favor the Republican Party and 18% say they don't lean toward either party. Among the full adult population the equivalent figures are Democrat 49%; Republican 33% and independent/no lean 18%.

On the ideological front, about a third (37%) of middle class adults say they are conservative, another third (37%) say they are moderate and just 18% say they are liberal. Here again, the responses of the full population are quite similar – with 35% calling themselves conservative, 35% moderate and 21% liberal.

But even as the middle class looks a lot like the full population in its partisan and ideological preferences, it also shows sharp contrasts with the upper and lower classes. For example, just 21% of the lower class identifies with or leans toward the GOP; whereas 35% of the middle class and 44% of the upper class do. And when it comes to ideology, just 27% of the lower class say they are conservative, compared with 37% of the middle class and 41% of the upper class.

	All adults	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Republican	24	35	25	13
Democrat	34	32	33	40
Independent	31	28	31	34
Republican/Lean Rep.	33	44	35	21
Democrat/Lean Dem.	49	46	47	58
Independent/No lean	18	10	18	21
Conservative	35	41	37	27
Moderate	35	33	37	35
Liberal	21	23	18	24
Conservative Rep.	16	25	16	7
Mod./Lib. Rep.	8	9	8	5
Independent	31	28	31	35
Cons./Mod. Dem.	20	18	22	22
Liberal Dem.	11	13	10	14
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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Within the self-identified middle class, the largest share of Democratic support comes from females, blacks, Hispanics, city-dwellers, Northerners, the young and the college-educated.

Among middle class women, for example, a majority (51%) expresses a preference for the Democratic Party, compared with just 33% who say they favor the GOP and 16% who are non-leaning independents.

Some 70% of blacks (70% align with the Democratic Party, compared with 57% of Hispanics and 43% of whites.

The partisan patterns for these subgroups within the middle class are very similar to the patterns for these same subgroups within the full population.

A Partisan Profile of the Middle Class (Including Leaners)

	All middle class	Rep/Lean Rep	Dem/Lean Dem	Ind/No Lean	N
	%	%	%	%	
All	100	35	47	18=100	1276
Gender					
Male	47	37	43	20=100	595
Female	53	33	51	16=100	681
Race/Ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	70	41	43	16=100	831
Black, non-Hispanic	10	14	70	16=100	184
Hispanic	13	20	57	23=100	185
Age					
18-29	21	32	47	21=100	228
30-49	37	34	49	17=100	438
50-64	22	32	52	16=100	319
65+	18	44	38	18=100	257
Education					
College grad	25	35	53	12=100	396
Some college	26	40	41	19=100	341
HS grad or less	48	32	47	21=100	533
Income					
\$100,000+	12	39	47	14=100	158
\$50K-\$99K	32	37	51	12=100	391
\$30K-\$49K	20	34	45	21=100	270
LT \$30,000	20	31	51	18=100	254
Neighborhood					
Urban	33	28	53	19=100	490
Suburban	48	35	47	18=100	566
Rural	19	46	37	17=100	218
Region					
Northeast	17	28	52	20=100	192
Midwest	24	38	49	13=100	271
South	37	39	43	18=100	501
West	22	30	48	22=100	312

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Hispanics are of any race.

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Which Party Favors Which Class?

The Pew poll finds that most Americans agree with the old saw that Republicans are the party that favors the rich and the Democrats are the party that favors the less-well off. Nearly six-in-ten adults (59%) say the GOP favors the rich, while about two-thirds say the Democrats favor either the middle class (38%) or the poor (27%).

The upper and middle classes have roughly the same views as the general public on this question. The lower class is the most inclined to see the GOP as the party of the rich – 65% say it is, while just 13% say it favors the middle class and just 3% say it favors the poor.

Views are more mixed with respect to class favoritism by the Democratic

Party. A plurality of adults believe that the Democratic Party favors the middle class (38%), while 27% say the party favors the poor and 16% say it favors the rich. These party favoritism opinions are widely shared across class lines, with the modest exception that those in the upper class are significantly more likely to say the Democratic Party favors the poor.

Not surprisingly, Democrats and Republicans differ over which party they believe shows favoritism to the rich, middle class or the poor – and these partisan differences are apparent within the middle class, just as they are among the population as a whole.

For example, a plurality (44%) of middle class Republicans say the GOP favors the middle class, while 35% say it favors the rich and just 4% say it favors the poor. The remainder says they aren't sure which class is favored by the party or declined to answer.

By contrast, middle class Democrats are more than twice as likely as middle class Republicans or independents to say the GOP favors the rich. Some 83% say so, compared with 35% of Republicans and 39% of independents.

Which Class Does Each Party Favor?

	All Adults	Upper class	Middle class	Lower class
	%	%	%	%
Republican Party				
Favors the rich	59	54	58	65
Favors the middle class	21	30	21	13
Favors the poor	3	3	3	3
Favors none/all equally	4	6	4	3
DK/Ref	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>16</u>
	100	100	100	100
Democratic Party				
Favors the rich	16	14	16	19
Favors the middle class	38	40	39	36
Favors the poor	27	32	26	24
Favors none/all equally	5	5	4	3
DK/Ref	<u>14</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>18</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	2413	522	1276	588

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the lower, middle, or upper class.

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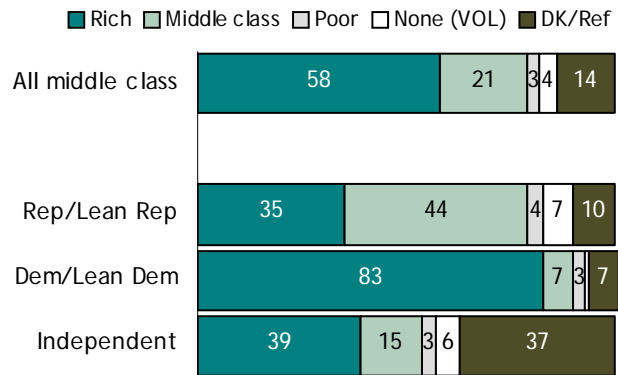
Among middle class Democrats, six-in-ten say that the Democratic Party favors the middle class, while about a fifth (22%) say it favors the poor and 9% say the rich.

By contrast, opinions among middle class Republicans and independents are more mixed. A plurality of Republicans (37%) say the Democrats favor the poor, while 26% say they favor the rich and just 20% say they favor the middle class. Independents are about equally likely to say the Democratic Party favors the rich (15%), middle class (20%) and the poor (17%), but the plurality (40%) of independents didn't know or declined to answer.

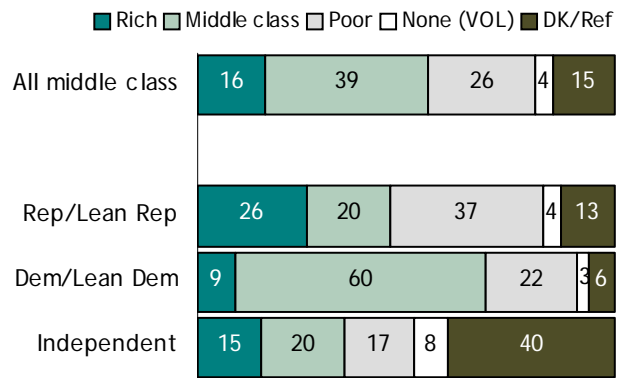
Which Class Does Each Party Favor, by Party ID

Based on middle class respondents

In general, do you think the **Republican Party** favors the rich, favors the middle class or favors the poor?



In general, do you think the **Democratic Party** favors the rich, favors the middle class or favors the poor?



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.

Weighing the Role of Government

Within the middle class, there are similar partisan differences on a pair of questions about the core responsibilities of government.

While a majority of the middle class supports the idea that the government should be responsible for taking care of people who can't take care of themselves (56%) and for guaranteeing health care to every citizen (71%), middle class Democrats are significantly more likely than both Republicans and independents to say they "completely" or "mostly" agree that these responsibilities should rest with the government.

Among the middle class, some 67% of Democrats agree that the government should be responsible for people who can't take care of themselves. By contrast, just over half of independents (56%) and 41% of Republicans agree.

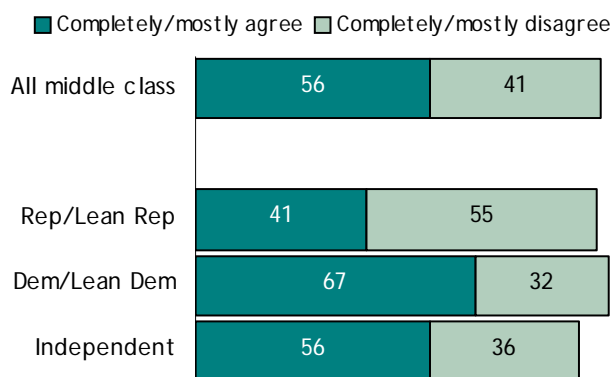
Middle class Democrats also place a higher value than both independents and Republicans on the importance of government guaranteed health care. Some 86% agree that this is a role for government, compared with 72% of independents and 51% of Republicans.

Government Responsibilities, Through a Partisan Lens

Based on middle class respondents

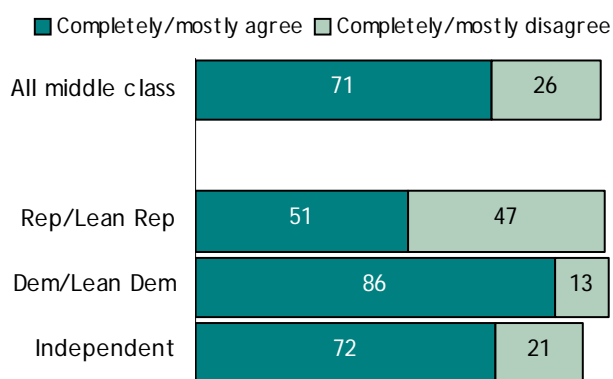
Care for the Needy

Is it the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves?



Health Care

Should the government guarantee health care to every citizen?



Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class. Don't know responses not shown.

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Who the Middle Class Blames for Its Plight

When asked whether maintaining a middle class standard of living is more or less difficult today compared with five years ago, nearly eight-in-ten (78%) middle class respondents say it is more difficult. There are some partisan differences: Democrats (85%) are more inclined than Republicans (73%) or independents (67%) to deliver this negative assessment.

When the respondents who say it has become more difficult to maintain a middle class living standard were asked who or what is most to blame for these difficulties,

there was no clear direction to the finger-pointing. About a quarter blamed the government (26%), while 15% blamed the price of oil, 11% blamed the people themselves, 8% blamed foreign competition, 5% blamed private corporations and the remainder said something else or declined to answer.

There are some notable partisan differences in these responses. Democrats (35%) are more than twice as likely as Republicans (16%) to assign blame to the government. They are also more likely to finger private corporations (8% of Democrats do so, compared with 2% of Republicans). And Republicans (17%) are more likely than Democrats (8%) to blame the people themselves. Meantime, partisans of both parties are about equally likely (15% of Democrats; 16% of Republicans) to blame the price of oil.

Is Life More Difficult for the Middle Class? And Who is to Blame?

	All middle class	Rep/Lean Rep	Dem/Lean Dem	Ind/No Lean
	%	%	%	%
More difficult (NET)	78	73	85	67
The government	26	16	35	22
The price of oil	15	16	15	12
People themselves	11	17	8	8
Foreign competition	8	9	8	7
Private corporations	5	2	8	3
Combination of these things	3	1	3	4
Economy/Cost of living	1	*	2	*
President George Bush	1	0	1	0
Something else	2	5	1	2
DK/Refused	6	7	4	9
Less difficult (NET)	13	16	9	19
About the same	6	8	3	8
DK/Refused	3	3	3	6
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	1276	435	633	208

Note: Based on respondents who identified themselves as belonging to the middle class.

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On a related issue – globalization - the Pew survey also finds that within the middle class there is a good deal of common ground across partisan lines. A plurality of middle class respondents (37%) say they believe the globalization of the world economy is mostly bad for the U.S. economy, while 24% say it is mostly good and 29% say it doesn't make much difference. The response patterns are very similar across party lines.

The views of the full adult population on this question are identical to those of the middle class. However, there are differences among the classes. The upper class takes a more favorable view of globalization – some 31% say it is mostly good. And the lower class takes the least favorable view – just 19% say it is mostly good.

Middle Class Democrats, Republicans, and Independents Agree About Globalization

	All middle class	Rep/Lean Rep	Dem/Lean Dem	Ind/No Lean
	%	%	%	%
Good	24	23	26	22
Bad	37	40	36	34
Doesn't make a difference	29	28	30	27
Haven't heard of (VOL)	2	2	1	2
DK/Refused	8	7	7	15
	100	100	100	100
Number of respondents	1276	435	633	208

Question wording: Based on what you know or may have heard, do you think the globalization of the world economy is mostly good for the United States, mostly bad for the United States, or doesn't it make much difference?

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PEW SOCIAL TRENDS
 FINAL TOPLINE
 JANUARY 24 - FEBRUARY 19, 2008
 N=2,413⁷ (UPPER=522; MIDDLE=1276; LOWER=588)⁸

SOME DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS WERE ASKED EARLIER IN THE INTERVIEW FOR SCREENING PURPOSES;
 THESE QUESTIONS ARE DISPLAYED IN THE BACK OF THIS TOPLINE.

Q.1 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country, today?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
30	Satisfied	38	32	17
62	Dissatisfied	58	60	72
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
February 2008	30	62	8=100
Early February 2008	24	70	6=100
Late December 2007	27	66	7=100
October 2007 ⁹	28	66	6=100
February 2007	30	61	9=100
Mid-January 2007	32	61	7=100
Early January 2007	30	63	7=100
December 2006	28	65	7=100
Mid-November 2006	28	64	8=100
Early October 2006	30	63	7=100
July 2006	30	65	5=100
June 2006	33	60	7=100
May 2006	29	65	6=100
March 2006	32	63	5=100
January 2006	34	61	5=100
Late November 2005	34	59	7=100
Early October 2005	29	65	6=100
July 2005	35	58	7=100
Late May 2005	39	57	4=100
February 2005	38	56	6=100
January 2005	40	54	6=100
December 2004	39	54	7=100
Mid-October 2004	36	58	6=100
July 2004	38	55	7=100
May 2004	33	61	6=100

⁷ The sample design included an oversample of blacks, Hispanics as well as a dual frame sample of respondents reached via landline (1,659) or cell (754) phone. The data are weighted to produce results from a representative sample of the population.

⁸ The upper, middle, and lower groups are based on the responses to the self-defined social class item (Q5).

⁹ All trends reference surveys from the Pew Research Center unless otherwise noted.

Q.1 CONTINUED...	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
Late February 2004	39	55	6=100
Early January 2004	45	48	7=100
December 2003	44	47	9=100
October 2003	38	56	6=100
August 2003	40	53	7=100
April 2003 ¹⁰	50	41	9=100
January 2003	44	50	6=100
November 2002	41	48	11=100
September 2002	41	55	4=100
Late August 2002	47	44	9=100
May 2002	44	44	12=100
March 2002	50	40	10=100
Late September 2001	57	34	9=100
Early September 2001	41	53	6=100
June 2001	43	52	5=100
March 2001	47	45	8=100
February 2001	46	43	11=100
January 2001	55	41	4=100
October 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7=100
September 2000	51	41	8=100
June 2000	47	45	8=100
April 2000	48	43	9=100
August 1999	56	39	5=100
January 1999	53	41	6=100
November 1998	46	44	10=100
Early September 1998	54	42	4=100
Late August 1998	55	41	4=100
Early August 1998	50	44	6=100
February 1998	59	37	4=100
January 1998	46	50	4=100
September 1997	45	49	6=100
August 1997	49	46	5=100
January 1997	38	58	4=100
July 1996	29	67	4=100
March 1996	28	70	2=100
October 1995	23	73	4=100
June 1995	25	73	2=100
April 1995	23	74	3=100
July 1994	24	73	3=100
March 1994	24	71	5=100
October 1993	22	73	5=100
September 1993	20	75	5=100
May 1993	22	71	7=100
January 1993	39	50	11=100
January 1992	28	68	4=100
November 1991	34	61	5=100
Late February 1991 (Gallup)	66	31	3=100

¹⁰ Asked April 8, 2003 only; N=395

Q.1 CONTINUED...	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
August 1990	47	48	5=100
May 1990	41	54	5=100
January 1989	45	50	5=100
September 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5=100
May 1988	41	54	5=100
January 1988	39	55	6=100

Q.2 Imagine a ladder with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. Suppose the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you; and the bottom, the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time? You can name any number between 0 and 10.

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
32	High (8-10)	49	34	13
34	Medium (6-7)	36	36	27
32	Low (0-5)	14	28	58
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100
6.4	<i>Mean Rating</i>	7.3	6.7	5.2

	<u>High (8-10)</u>	<u>Medium (6-7)</u>	<u>Low (0-5)</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Refused</u>	<u>Mean Rating</u>
On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand <u>at the present time?</u>	32	34	32	2=100	6.4
2007 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	46	29	24	1=100	7.0
2006	41	30	26	3=100	6.8
2005 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i> ¹¹	40	29	30	1=100	6.7
2002 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	43	32	24	1=100	6.9
1999	43	31	25	1=100	6.9
1998	48	31	21	*=100	7.1
1997	47	31	22	*=100	7.0
1996	37	33	29	1=100	6.7
1989	31	35	34	*=100	6.4
1987	33	36	30	1=100	6.5
1985 <i>Gallup</i>	31	36	33	*=100	6.4
1979 <i>Gallup</i>	34	31	33	2=100	6.5
1976 <i>Gallup</i>	38	30	32	*=100	6.7
1974 <i>Gallup</i>	36	28	36	*=100	6.4
1972 <i>Gallup</i>	34	28	38	*=100	6.4
1971 <i>Gallup</i>	34	30	34	2=100	6.5
1964 <i>Gallup</i>	36	33	30	1=100	6.7

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The trends from 2007, 2005 and 2002 are from Pew Global Attitudes surveys. The question was worded "Here is a ladder representing the 'ladder of life.' Let's suppose the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you; and the bottom, the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?"

Q.2a And on which step would you say you stood five years ago? Zero is the worst possible life and 10 the best possible life.

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
32	High (8-10)	37	32	25
28	Medium (6-7)	31	28	26
38	Low (0-5)	31	38	48
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100
6.2	<i>Mean Rating</i>	6.6	6.2	5.7

	<u>High (8-10)</u>	<u>Medium (6-7)</u>	<u>Low (0-5)</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Refused</u>	<u>Mean Rating</u>
And on which step would you say you stood <u>five years ago</u> ?	32	28	38	2=100	6.2
2007 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	34	25	39	2=100	6.2
2006	31	26	40	3=100	6.1
2005 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	31	26	41	2=100	6.1
2002 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	32	23	43	2=100	6.1
1999	27	23	49	1=100	5.7
1998	29	23	48	*=100	5.9
1997	28	25	46	1=100	5.9
1996	26	27	46	1=100	5.8
1989	28	27	44	1=100	6.0
1987	28	26	45	1=100	5.8
1985 <i>Gallup</i>	25	27	48	*=100	5.7
1979 <i>Gallup</i>	28	24	48	*=100	5.8
1976 <i>Gallup</i>	29	22	49	*=100	5.7
1974 <i>Gallup</i>	24	22	54	*=100	5.4
1972 <i>Gallup</i>	24	23	53	*=100	5.5
1971 <i>Gallup</i>	27	25	47	1=100	5.8
1964 <i>Gallup</i>	28	24	47	1=100	5.8

Q.2b And on what number step do you think you will be five years from now? Zero is the worst possible life and 10 is the best possible life.

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
58	High (8-10)	72	59	41
15	Medium (6-7)	14	15	18
17	Low (0-5)	8	14	30
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100
7.6	<i>Mean Rating</i>	8.3	7.8	6.5

Q.2b CONTINUED...

	High (8-10)	Medium (6-7)	Low (0-5)	Don't Know/ Refused	Mean Rating
And on what number step do you think you will be <u>five years from now</u> ?	58	15	17	10=100	7.6
2007 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	69	13	10	8=100	8.2
2006	60	13	14	13=100	7.8
2005 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	59	14	17	10=100	7.7
2002 <i>Pew Global Attitudes</i>	71	10	11	8=100	8.3
1999	69	14	10	7=100	8.2
1998	72	14	11	3=100	8.2
1997	73	13	10	4=100	8.2
1996	64	16	16	4=100	7.7
1989	56	21	18	5=100	7.4
1987	61	19	14	6=100	7.7
1985 <i>Gallup</i>	59	19	16	6=100	7.6
1979 <i>Gallup</i>	57	18	19	6=100	7.5
1976 <i>Gallup</i>	60	18	14	8=100	7.7
1974 <i>Gallup</i>	55	18	18	9=100	7.4
1972 <i>Gallup</i>	58	17	16	9=100	7.6
1971 <i>Gallup</i>	52	18	16	14=100	7.5
1964 <i>Gallup</i>	57	22	11	10=100	7.8

COMPARING PRESENT TO FUTURE LIFE (Q.2 AND Q.2b) Ratings of your future life compared with the present.

	Future life will be	-- Future life will be the SAME as present --		Future life will be	DK
	<u>BETTER than present</u>	<u>Present is positive</u>	<u>Present is negative</u>	<u>WORSE than present</u>	<u>Ref</u>
2008	53	18	5	13	11=100
2007	55	23	5	9	8=100
2006	49	21	4	12	14=100
2005	49	24	4	12	11=100
2002	61	20	3	7	9=100
1999	60	21	3	8	8=100
1998	58	26	3	10	3=100
1997	59	25	3	9	4=100
1996	55	22	5	13	5=100
1989	55	20	5	15	5=100
1987	59	20	4	11	6=100
1985 <i>Gallup</i>	57	19	5	12	7=100
1979 <i>Gallup</i>	52	20	6	15	7=100
1976 <i>Gallup</i>	52	25	4	11	8=100
1964 <i>Gallup</i>	51	25	5	7	12=100

COMPARING PRESENT TO PAST LIFE (Q.2 AND Q.2a) Ratings of your past life compared with the present.

	Present life is <u>BETTER than past</u>	--- Present life is the SAME as the past --- <u>Present is positive</u> <u>Present is negative</u>		Present life is <u>WORSE than past</u>	DK <u>Ref</u>
2008	41	16	9	31	3=100
2007	50	19	8	21	2=100
2006	48	21	6	21	4=100
2005	48	19	6	25	2=100
2002	51	20	5	21	3=100
1999	56	20	8	15	1=100
1998	56	21	6	16	1=100
1997	57	21	5	16	1=100
1996	51	20	6	21	2=100
1989	47	18	8	26	1=100
1987	53	17	6	24	0=100
1985 Gallup	51	15	7	25	2=100
1979 Gallup	52	15	6	25	2=100
1976 Gallup	54	18	6	20	2=100
1964 Gallup	49	24	7	16	4=100

Q.3 Compared to your parents when they were the age you are now, do you think your own standard of living now is much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than theirs was?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>				
38	Much better	57	38	22				
27	Somewhat better	23	29	27				
19	About the same	13	21	19				
9	Somewhat worse	5	7	17				
5	Much worse	1	3	13				
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>				
100		100	100	100				
					GSS	GSS	GSS	GSS
<u>All</u>		<u>2006</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1994</u>
38	Much better	35	39	35	35	33	33	32
27	Somewhat better	31	31	33	31	32	29	32
19	About the same	21	18	19	21	21	21	21
9	Somewhat worse	9	8	10	9	10	12	10
5	Much worse	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

- Q.4 When your children are at the age you are now, do you think their standard of living will be much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than yours is now?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
26	Much better	27	27	23
23	Somewhat better	25	24	22
20	About the same	25	20	14
14	Somewhat worse	12	14	16
7	Much worse	5	5	15
5	No children (VOL.)	4	5	4
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		GSS <u>2006</u>	GSS <u>2004</u>	GSS <u>2002</u>	GSS <u>2000</u>	GSS <u>1998</u>	GSS <u>1996</u>	GSS <u>1994</u>
26	Much better	28	23	26	28	22	20	16
23	Somewhat better	29	30	35	31	33	27	29
20	About the same	18	22	18	16	20	20	22
14	Somewhat worse	11	11	8	7	9	17	15
7	Much worse	3	3	2	3	3	5	5
5	No children (VOL.)	10	9	9	11	9	7	9
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

- Q.5 And if you were asked to use one of these commonly used names for the social classes, which would you say you belong in? The upper class, upper-middle class, middle class, lower-middle class, or lower class?

<u>All</u>	
2	Upper class
19	Upper-middle class
53	Middle class
19	Lower-middle class
6	Lower class
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

ROTATE Q.6 AND Q.7

- Q.6 Thinking about today compared to ten years ago, do you think it is easier or harder for people to get ahead today, or is it about the same as it was? (READ)

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
15	Easier to get <i>ahead</i> today	15	16	11
59	Harder to get <i>ahead</i> today	50	59	70
24	About the same as it was ten years ago	33	23	17
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.7 Thinking about today compared to ten years ago, do you think it is easier or harder for people to fall behind today, or is it about the same as it was? **(READ)**

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
69	Easier to fall <i>behind</i> today	68	68	71
11	Harder to fall <i>behind</i> today	7	10	16
18	About the same as it was ten years ago	23	19	11
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.8 Which of these statements comes closer to your own views—even if neither is exactly right.
[ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS]

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
42	Most rich people today are wealthy mainly because of their own hard work, ambition or education	56	42	32
	OR			
46	Most rich people today are wealthy mainly because they know the right people or were born into wealthy families	33	47	53
8	Neither/Both equally (VOLUNTEERED-DO NOT READ)	9	7	9
*	Other (VOL.)	*	*	1
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.9 Now I am going to read you a series of statements on some different topics. For each statement, please tell me if you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly DISagree with it or completely disagree with it. The first one is... **[READ ITEMS, IN ORDER. DO NOT ROTATE]**

IF NECESSARY: Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly DISagree or completely disagree?

a. Success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
36	Agree (NET)	29	35	44
7	Completely agree	5	6	10
29	Mostly agree	24	29	34
61	Disagree (NET)	69	62	51
17	Completely disagree	22	16	14
44	Mostly disagree	47	46	37
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

b. It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
57	Agree (NET)	52	56	66
19	Completely agree	17	18	23
38	Mostly agree	35	38	43
39	Disagree (NET)	46	41	30
12	Completely disagree	15	12	10
27	Mostly disagree	31	29	20
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100

c. Today it's really true that the rich just get richer while the poor get poorer

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
69	Agree (NET)	56	68	80
33	Completely agree	18	32	48
36	Mostly agree	38	36	32
28	Disagree (NET)	42	29	17
8	Completely disagree	14	7	4
20	Mostly disagree	28	22	13
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

d. Women should return to their traditional roles in society

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
23	Agree (NET)	20	24	24
7	Completely agree	5	8	7
16	Mostly agree	15	16	17
72	Disagree (NET)	76	72	70
44	Completely disagree	50	43	41
28	Mostly disagree	26	29	29
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100

e. The government should guarantee health care to every citizen.

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
71	Agree (NET)	66	71	79
41	Completely agree	36	40	51
30	Mostly agree	30	31	28
26	Disagree (NET)	32	26	18
12	Completely disagree	17	12	6
14	Mostly disagree	15	14	12
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

TREND FOR Q9a-d

	<u>NET</u>	----AGREE----		----DISAGREE----		DK/ Ref	
		Completely <u>agree</u>	Mostly <u>agree</u>	Completely <u>disagree</u>	Mostly <u>disagree</u>		
a. Success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control	36	7	29	61	17	44	3=100
January 2007	34	10	24	62	23	39	4=100
August 2003	30	11	19	67	32	35	3=100
August 2002	30	10	20	66	30	36	4=100
Late September 1999	32	11	21	67	29	38	1=100
November 1997	33	10	23	65	28	37	2=100
July 1994	39	14	25	59	26	33	2=100
May 1993	41	11	30	57	16	41	2=100
June 1992	38	11	27	59	21	38	3=100
May 1990	40	11	29	57	18	39	3=100
May 1988	41	13	28	56	19	37	3=100
May 1987	38	8	30	57	16	41	5=100

Q.9 CONTINUED...

	----AGREE----			----DISAGREE----			DK/ Ref
	<i>NET</i>	Completely <u>agree</u>	Mostly <u>agree</u>	<i>NET</i>	Completely <u>disagree</u>	Mostly <u>disagree</u>	
b. It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves	57	19	38	39	12	27	4=100
January 2007	69	27	42	28	8	20	3=100
August 2003	66	25	41	31	11	20	3=100
August 2002	61	22	39	35	11	24	4=100
Late September 1999	62	20	42	35	14	21	3=100
November 1997	61	23	38	37	11	26	2=100
July 1994	57	20	37	41	15	26	2=100
May 1993	62	19	43	35	9	26	3=100
June 1992	69	28	41	28	8	20	3=100
May 1990	67	23	44	29	6	23	4=100
May 1988	74	26	48	23	6	17	3=100
May 1987	71	21	50	24	4	20	5=100
c. Today it's really true that the rich just get richer while the poor get poorer	69	33	36	28	8	20	3=100
January 2007	73	37	36	25	7	18	2=100
August 2003	68	34	34	29	7	22	3=100
August 2002	65	28	37	33	7	26	2=100
February 2002	68	37	31	29	9	20	3=100
Late September 1999	72	33	39	26	6	20	2=100
November 1997	70	34	36	28	6	22	2=100
July 1994	71	33	38	27	7	20	2=100
June 1992	78	38	40	20	4	16	2=100
November 1991	80	45	35	18	5	13	2=100
May 1990	78	38	40	19	3	16	3=100
February 1989	78	40	38	19	4	15	3=100
May 1988	76	34	42	21	3	18	3=100
May 1987	74	31	43	22	3	19	4=100
d. Women should return to their traditional roles in society	23	7	16	72	44	28	5=100
January 2007	20	8	12	75	51	24	5=100
August 2003	24	10	14	72	50	22	4=100
August 2002	20	8	12	75	48	27	5=100
Late September 1999	25	9	16	71	48	23	4=100
November 1997	24	10	14	73	43	30	3=100
July 1994	30	12	18	67	40	27	3=100
November 1991	23	10	13	75	49	26	2=100
May 1990	30	10	20	67	35	32	3=100
February 1989	26	10	16	71	41	30	3=100
May 1988	31	11	20	66	36	30	3=100
May 1987	30	9	21	66	29	37	4=100

Q.10 Do you favor or oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
40	Favor	45	38	39
49	Oppose	47	51	46
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>15</u>
100		100	100	100

TREND FOR COMPARISON

Now I'd like to get your views on some issues that are being discussed in this country today. All in all, do you strongly favor, favor, oppose or strongly oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally?¹²

	<u>Net</u>	---FAVOR--		---OPPOSE---			DK/ Ref
		<u>Strongly Favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	
August 2007	36	13	23	55	31	24	9=100
March 2007	32	12	20	57	38	19	11=100
January 2007	37	13	24	55	33	22	8=100
July 2006 ¹³	35	12	23	56	31	25	9=100
June 2006	33	13	20	55	32	23	12=100
March 2006	39	10	29	51	28	23	10=100
July 2005	36	13	23	53	31	22	11=100
December 2004	32	14	18	61	38	23	7=100
August 2004	29	8	21	60	35	25	11=100
July 2004	32	10	22	56	33	23	12=100
Mid-March 2004	32	10	22	59	35	24	9=100
Early February 2004	30	9	21	63	42	21	7=100
November 2003	30	10	20	62	41	21	8=100
October 2003	30	9	21	58	33	25	12=100
Mid-July 2003	38	10	28	53	30	23	9=100
March 2001	35	8	27	57	34	23	8=100
June 1996	27	6	21	65	41	24	8=100

¹² All trends were worded: "strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally?" This question was sometimes asked as part of a list of items.

¹³ In June and July 2006, mid-March through August 2004, and October 2003, the question was not part of a list of items.

Q.10a Based on what you know or may have heard, do you think the globalization of the world economy is mostly good for the United States, mostly bad for the United States, or doesn't make much difference?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
24	Mostly good	31	24	19
37	Mostly bad	31	37	42
29	Doesn't make much difference	32	29	28
2	Haven't heard of globalization (VOL.)	1	2	2
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
100		100	100	100

Post/Kaiser/Harvard

<u>All</u>		<u>2007</u>
24	Mostly good	30
37	Mostly bad	35
29	Doesn't make much difference	27
2	Haven't heard of globalization (VOL.)	1
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>7</u>
100		100

Q.11 I'm going to read you a list of things that some people value in their lives but other people say they are not important. Please tell me how important each thing is to you personally—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important. First, [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]

IF NECESSARY: How important is this to you personally—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

a. Being successful in a career

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
94	Important (NET)	96	94	91
61	Very important	64	59	62
33	Somewhat important	32	35	29
5	Not Important (NET)	4	5	8
4	Not too important	3	4	6
1	Not at all important	1	1	2
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

b. Having enough free time to do things you want to do

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
95	Important (NET)	96	95	93
67	Very important	69	68	63
28	Somewhat important	27	27	30
4	Not Important (NET)	3	4	6
3	Not too important	2	3	4
1	Not at all important	1	1	2
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.11 CONTINUED...

c. Being married

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
80	Important (NET)	83	82	72
53	Very important	55	55	46
27	Somewhat important	28	27	26
19	Not Important (NET)	17	17	25
12	Not too important	11	11	16
7	Not at all important	6	6	9
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

d. Living a religious life

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
80	Important (NET)	81	81	79
52	Very important	50	53	53
28	Somewhat important	31	28	26
18	Not Important (NET)	19	18	18
11	Not too important	10	11	13
7	Not at all important	9	7	5
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

e. Having children

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
84	Important (NET)	86	85	81
61	Very important	61	62	59
23	Somewhat important	25	23	22
15	Not Important (NET)	13	14	17
9	Not too important	8	8	10
6	Not at all important	5	6	7
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

f. Being wealthy

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
56	Important (NET)	66	55	51
13	Very important	15	12	13
43	Somewhat important	51	43	38
43	Not Important (NET)	34	44	48
33	Not too important	28	35	34
10	Not at all important	6	9	14
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.11 CONTINUED...

g. Doing volunteer work or donating to charity

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
92	Important (NET)	95	93	89
52	Very important	55	52	52
40	Somewhat important	40	41	37
7	Not Important (NET)	5	6	10
5	Not too important	4	5	7
2	Not at all important	1	1	3
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Trend for Q11a-f

	<u>Net</u>	---IMPORTANT---		---NOT IMPORTANT---		DK/ <u>Ref</u>	
		<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Not too important</u>		<u>Not at all important</u>
a. Being successful in a career	94	61	33	5	4	1	1=100
<i>Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project, 2006¹⁴</i>	87	53	34	12	7	5	*=99
b. Having enough free time to do things you want to do	95	67	28	4	3	1	1=100
<i>Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project, 2006</i>	94	63	31	6	5	1	*=100
c. Being married	80	53	27	19	12	7	1=100
<i>Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project, 2006</i>	76	56	20	24	14	10	*=100
d. Living a religious life	80	52	28	18	11	7	2=100
<i>Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project, 2006</i>	79	54	25	21	13	8	*=100
e. Having children	84	61	23	15	9	6	1=100
<i>Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project, 2006</i>	81	64	17	18	8	10	1=100
f. Being wealthy	56	13	43	43	33	10	1=100
<i>Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project, 2006</i>	53	11	42	47	34	13	*=100

¹⁴ The 2006 figures are from a *Post/Kaiser/Harvard Black Men Project* survey conducted March 20 through April 29, and were part of a longer list of items.

Now thinking about the economy in general...

Q11h. Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as: excellent, good, not so good, or poor?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
2	Excellent	3	2	1
21	Good	29	23	12
50	Not so good	47	53	45
26	Poor	21	21	40
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>	
2	Excellent
21	Good
50	Not so good
26	Poor
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

OWNRENT Do you own or rent your home?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
64	Own	76	68	46
30	Rent	19	26	48
5	Other arrangement (VOL.)	5	5	4
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>March 2007</u>	<u>Oct 2006</u>	<u>June 2006</u>	<u>Feb 2006</u>	<u>Oct 2005</u>
64	Own	69	68	68	68	68
30	Rent	26	27	27	27	26
5	Other arrangement (VOL.)	5	5	4	4	6
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

Q.12 Now I am going to read to you a list of things that some families have and others do not. For each, I'd like your best guess as to whether this is something that only rich families have, or is it something that most families have? What about [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; ALWAYS ASK ITEM A FIRST].

IF NECESSARY: Is this something that only rich people have, or is it something that most people have?

a. Two or more cars.

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
10	Only rich	11	8	14
88	Most people	88	90	84
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.12 CONTINUED...

b. Paid household help, such as someone who comes to your home and helps with the cleaning, yard work or child care

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
75	Only rich	76	73	78
21	Most people	21	22	19
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

c. A vacation home

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
87	Only rich	87	86	90
10	Most people	10	12	7
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

d. A child under the age of 18 who attends private school

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
69	Only rich	73	68	68
24	Most people	22	25	26
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100

e. A high-definition or flat-screen TV

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
32	Only rich	31	31	35
62	Most people	64	63	58
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100	100

f. High-speed Internet access at home

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
10	Only rich	14	9	8
86	Most people	83	87	87
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

g. Cable television or satellite beyond the basic service

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
8	Only rich	8	7	10
90	Most people	90	91	88
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.13 Now for each, please tell me if this is something your family has. What about **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; ALWAYS ASK ITEM A FIRST]**.

IF NECESSARY: Does your family have **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**, or not?

a. Two or more cars.

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
70	Yes	83	72	57
29	No	16	27	42
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

BASED ON HOMEOWNERS [N=1597]:

b. **(ASK IF OWNRENT=1)** A second mortgage or a home equity loan

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
27	Yes	31	26	24
71	No	66	72	74
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

c. Paid household help, such as someone who comes to your home and helps with the cleaning, yard work or child care

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
16	Yes	36	13	7
83	No	64	86	93
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>
100		100	100	100

d. A vacation home

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
10	Yes	19	9	4
90	No	81	91	96
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>
100		100	100	100

BASED ON THOSE WITH MINOR CHILDREN [N=813]:

e. A child under the age of 18 who attends private school

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
15	Yes	31	14	6
85	No	68	86	94
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.13 CONTINUED...

f. A high-definition or flat-screen TV

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
42	Yes	59	42	28
57	No	41	57	71
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

g. High-speed Internet access at home

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
66	Yes	80	67	50
33	No	18	32	49
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

h. Cable television or satellite beyond the basic service

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
70	Yes	80	71	62
29	No	19	29	37
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.14 How often do you eat at restaurants, including fast-food restaurants--everyday, several times a week, about once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or less often?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
5	Everyday	7	4	3
27	Several times a week	35	26	19
31	About once a week	32	33	28
26	Once or twice a month	19	25	36
6	A few times a year	4	7	7
4	Less often	3	4	6
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.15 How would you describe your household's financial situation? Would you say you (READ)

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
38	Live comfortably	66	39	9
32	Meet your basic expenses with a little left over for extras	23	37	31
22	Just meet your basic expenses	7	20	39
7	Don't even have enough to meet basic expenses	4	3	19
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.16 On the whole, would you say you are saving as much money as you should, or do you feel you should probably be saving more?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
21	Saving as much as you should	30	21	13
75	Should be saving more	69	75	82
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.17 For each of the following, please tell me whether or not it is something that happened to you in the past year....Have you [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]?

a. Had trouble getting or paying for medical care for yourself or your family

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
23	Yes	11	18	43
76	No	89	81	56
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

b. Had problems paying your rent or mortgage

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
16	Yes	5	12	33
83	No	94	87	66
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

c. Or someone else in your household had to start working or take on an extra job because you needed the money

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
24	Yes	10	21	42
76	No	90	78	57
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

d. Been laid off or lost your job

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
14	Yes	9	10	25
85	No	91	89	74
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

e. Gotten a pay raise at your current job or gotten a better job

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
41	Yes	47	44	31
57	No	52	55	67
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.17 CONTINUED...

f. Had to cut back your household spending because money was tight

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
55	Yes	36	53	75
45	No	64	47	24
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

TREND FOR COMPARISON

For each of the following, please tell me whether or not it is something that happened to **you and your immediate family** during the past year....Have you **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**?

**KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION/HARVARD/WASHINGTON POST:
LATINO SURVEY, 1999**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>
a. Had trouble getting or paying for medical care for yourself or your family	21	78	*=100
b. Had problems paying your rent or mortgage	13	87	*=100
c. Or someone else in your household had to start working or take on an extra job because you needed the extra money	28	72	*=100
d. Been laid off or lost your job	n/a	n/a	n/a
e. Gotten a promotion or a big pay raise at work	29	69	2=100
f. Had to cut back your household spending because money was tight	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q.18 Looking ahead to the coming year, how likely is it that you will **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? Is it very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely or not at all likely?

IF NECESSARY: Is it very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely or not at all likely that you will **(REPEAT ITEM)**

a. Have trouble paying your bills

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
31	Likely (NET)	14	25	60
11	Very likely	3	7	25
20	Somewhat likely	11	18	35
67	Not likely (NET)	86	72	39
35	Not too likely	41	38	23
32	Not at all likely	45	34	16
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.18 CONTINUED...

b. Have trouble saving money for the future

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
52	Likely (NET)	38	51	67
22	Very likely	12	20	37
30	Somewhat likely	26	31	30
45	Not likely (NET)	60	46	29
25	Not too likely	34	26	15
20	Not at all likely	26	20	14
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100

c. Have to cut back on household spending because money is tight

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
54	Likely (NET)	37	50	77
24	Very likely	10	19	45
30	Somewhat likely	27	31	32
44	Not likely (NET)	62	47	22
25	Not too likely	33	27	13
19	Not at all likely	29	20	9
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

E3 Are you now employed full-time, part-time or not employed?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
51	Full-time	54	54	45
13	Part-time	12	13	14
35	Not employed	34	33	40
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.--DO NOT READ)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>Mar</u> <u>2007</u>	<u>Oct</u> <u>2006</u>	<u>June</u> <u>2006</u>	<u>Feb¹⁵</u> <u>2006</u>	<u>Oct</u> <u>2005</u>
51	Full-time	48	53	48	49	52
13	Part-time	13	12	12	15	12
35	Not employed	38	35	39	35	36
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.--DO NOT READ)	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

¹⁵ The employment question in February 2006 and October 2005 was preceded by questions about retirement and school enrollment. If respondent was retired, the question was asked: "Some people who have retired do some type of work for pay..." If respondent was a student, the question was asked: "Some students also do some type of work for pay..."

ASK IF EMPLOYED (E3= 1,2):Q.19 Overall, how satisfied are you with your job? Are you **(READ)****BASED ON THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED [N=1535]:**

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
87	Satisfied (NET)	91	89	78
31	Completely satisfied	36	34	18
56	Mostly satisfied	55	55	60
12	Dissatisfied (NET)	9	10	21
10	Mostly dissatisfied	6	8	16
3	Completely dissatisfied	3	2	5
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.--DO NOT READ)	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>June 2006</u>	<u>PSRAI¹⁶ July 1997</u>	<u>Gallup July 1989</u>
87	Satisfied (NET)	89	86	89
31	Completely satisfied	28	24	28
56	Mostly satisfied	61	62	61
12	Dissatisfied (NET)	10	13	11
10	Mostly dissatisfied	8	10	8
3	Completely dissatisfied	2	3	3
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.--DO NOT READ)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK IF EMPLOYED (E3=1,2)Q.20 Thinking about the next 12 months, how likely is it that **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? Is it very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely or not at all likely?**IF NECESSARY:** Is it very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely or not likely at all likely that **(REPEAT ITEM)****BASED ON THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED [N=1535]:**

a. Your employer may go out of business or relocate to another city

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
12	Likely (NET)	6	12	17
4	Very likely	2	4	7
8	Somewhat likely	4	8	10
87	Not likely (NET)	93	88	81
24	Not too likely	22	25	25
63	Not at all likely	71	63	56
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

¹⁶ The July 1997 PSRAI question was worded "Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current job? Are you...[READ RESPONSES]"

Q.20 CONTINUED...

b. You may not get a raise

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
43	Likely (NET)	38	43	48
20	Very likely	16	18	29
23	Somewhat likely	22	25	19
55	Not likely (NET)	60	56	50
22	Not too likely	20	24	21
33	Not at all likely	40	32	29
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

c. You may have your health care benefits reduced or eliminated by your employer

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
20	Likely (NET)	18	20	25
7	Very likely	7	6	11
13	Somewhat likely	11	14	14
74	Not likely (NET)	78	76	65
25	Not too likely	23	27	23
49	Not at all likely	55	49	42
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100	100

d. Your job may be outsourced to a worker in another country

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
10	Likely (NET)	5	10	14
5	Very likely	2	4	9
5	Somewhat likely	3	6	5
88	Not likely (NET)	94	89	84
18	Not too likely	17	18	21
70	Not at all likely	77	71	63
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

e. You may be asked to take a cut in pay

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
13	Likely (NET)	10	12	18
4	Very likely	2	3	7
9	Somewhat likely	8	9	11
86	Not likely (NET)	90	88	81
27	Not too likely	25	29	29
59	Not at all likely	65	59	52
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.20 CONTINUED...

f. You may be laid off

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
15	Likely (NET)	6	14	25
5	Very likely	2	4	10
10	Somewhat likely	4	10	15
84	Not likely (NET)	94	85	74
28	Not too likely	29	29	27
56	Not at all likely	65	56	47
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

g. Your income may not keep up with the cost of living

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
49	Likely (NET)	35	47	66
20	Very likely	11	17	34
29	Somewhat likely	24	30	32
50	Not likely (NET)	63	52	33
26	Not too likely	25	29	19
24	Not at all likely	38	22	14
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK ALL:

Q.21 Compared with five years ago, do you think it is now more or less difficult for middle-class people to maintain their standard of living?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
79	More difficult	72	78	89
12	Less difficult	15	13	7
6	About the same (VOL.)	11	6	1
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

NBC/Wall

Street Journal

Nov 1986

<u>All</u>		
79	More difficult	65
12	Less difficult	22
6	About the same (VOL.)	9
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>4</u>
100		100

ASK IF MORE DIFFICULT (Q21=1)

Q.21/22 In your opinion, who or what is most to blame for the difficulties the middle class is facing [ROTATE RESPONSE OPTIONS] the government, private corporations, foreign competition, the price of oil, people themselves or [ALWAYS LAST] is something else to blame?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
79	More difficult (NET)	72	78	89
28	The government	20	26	39
5	Private corporations	4	5	5
8	Foreign competition	6	8	8
13	The price of oil	10	15	13
12	People themselves	17	11	9
4	Combination/Mixture of these things	6	3	5
*	President George Bush	1	*	1
1	Economy/cost of living	*	1	*
3	Miscellaneous/other	4	3	4
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	6	5
12	Less difficult	15	13	7
6	About the same (VOL.)	11	6	1
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK IF HOMEOWNER (OWNRENT=1)

Q.23 Thinking about your family's financial assets, would you say that the value of your home represents (READ)

BASED ON HOMEOWNERS [N=1597]:

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
30	More than half of your family's financial worth	25	29	45
32	About half of your financial worth	25	36	26
31	Less than half of your financial worth	44	27	24
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

TREND FOR COMPARISON

Thinking about **your financial assets**, would you say that the value of your home represents (READ)

<u>Oct</u> <u>2006</u>	<u>US News &</u> <u>World Report</u> <u>Jan 1992</u>	
34	33	All or most of your personal financial worth
34	35	About half of your financial worth
25	25	Less than half of your financial worth
<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	100	

ASK IF HOMEOWNER [OWNRENT=1]

Q.24 What would you say is the current value of your home? Just stop me when I get to the right category. Is it... **(READ)**

BASED ON HOMEOWNERS [N=1597]:

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
20	Less than \$100,000	5	19	43
40	\$100,000 to under \$250,000	30	46	35
25	\$250,000 to under \$500,000	33	24	15
8	\$500,000 to under 1 Million	18	5	2
1	\$1 million or more	6	*	0
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>Oct 2006</u>
20	Less than \$100,000	22
40	\$100,000 to under \$250,000	35
25	\$250,000 to under \$500,000	25
8	\$500,000 to under 1 Million	8
1	\$1 million or more	3
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>7</u>
100		100

ASK IF HOMEOWNER [OWNRENT=1]

Q.25 And have you paid off all, more than half, about half or less than half, the money you owe on your home?

BASED ON HOMEOWNERS [N=1597]:

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
30	All	27	30	35
18	More than half	25	15	16
10	About half	9	12	8
38	Less than half	35	40	37
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK ALL:
MARITAL

Are you currently married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married? **(IF R SAYS "SINGLE," PROBE TO DETERMINE WHICH CATEGORY IS APPROPRIATE)**

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
50	Married	59	51	37
8	Living with a partner	6	8	12
10	Divorced	6	10	15
2	Separated	1	2	4
8	Widowed	6	9	7
21	Never been married	22	19	24
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>Mar 2007</u>	<u>Oct 2006</u>	<u>June 2006</u>	<u>Feb 2006</u>	<u>Oct 2005</u>
50	Married	53	53	51	52	55
8	Living with a partner	5	6	7	8	6
10	Divorced	10	10	11	10	9
2	Separated	3	3	2	3	2
8	Widowed	9	9	9	8	8
21	Never been married	20	19	20	18	18
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

Q.26 Do you **[IF MARITAL=1]** or your spouse: **(READ AND RANDOMIZE)**

a. Own any stocks, bonds or mutual funds

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
44	Yes	67	45	21
55	No	31	53	78
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

b. Have a checking or savings account

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
88	Yes	95	88	83
11	No	4	10	16
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

c. Have an IRA, 401K or a similar kind of retirement account

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
57	Yes	73	60	38
41	No	25	39	60
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.26 CONTINUED...

d. Own a business or a farm

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
16	Yes	24	15	9
84	No	76	85	90
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

e. Have some kind of health insurance

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
84	Yes	92	86	71
16	No	8	14	28
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>0</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.27 Just your best guess: How much does a family of four need to have in total annual income to lead a middle-class lifestyle in your area? **OPEN-END. RECORD AMOUNT IN THOUSANDS (RANGE 20-500) IF NECESSARY, ADD:** Just your best estimate to the nearest thousand dollars...

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
17	Under \$50,000	11	17	23
46	\$50,000 to \$99,999	50	45	44
20	\$100,000 or more	27	20	16
13	Not sure	10	14	13
<u>4</u>	Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100

Now a couple of questions about the political parties.

ROTATE Q.28 AND Q.29

Q.28 In general, do you think the Republican Party favors the rich, favors the middle class or favors the poor?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
59	Favors the rich	54	58	65
21	Favors the middle class	30	21	13
3	Favors the poor	3	3	3
4	Favors none/all equally (VOL.)	6	4	3
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>16</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today Jan 2003</u>	<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today Nov 1998</u>	<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today March 1995</u>	<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today Oct 1994</u>
59	Favors the rich	62	67	68	71
21	Favors the middle class	26	24	24	20
3	Favors the poor	1	2	2	3
4	Favors none/all equally (VOL.)	7	4	3	4
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100	100

Q.29 In general, do you think the Democratic Party favors the rich, favors the middle class or favors the poor?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
16	Favors the rich	14	16	19
38	Favors the middle class	40	39	36
27	Favors the poor	32	26	24
5	Favors none/all equally (VOL.)	5	4	3
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>18</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today Jan 2003</u>	<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today Nov 1998</u>	<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today March 1995</u>	<u>Gallup/CNN/ USA Today Oct 1994</u>
16	Favors the rich	19	20	n/a	29
38	Favors the middle class	42	43	n/a	36
27	Favors the poor	27	28	n/a	28
5	Favors none/all equally (VOL.)	5	4	n/a	4
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	n/a	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	n/a	100

HEALTH How would you rate your own health in general these days? Would you say your health is excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
30	Excellent	43	29	18
48	Good	43	52	45
17	Only Fair	11	14	26
5	Poor	3	4	10
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

<u>All</u>		<u>Feb 2006</u>	<u>Oct 2005</u>	<u>June 2003</u>	<u>Mid-July 1990</u>
30	Excellent	29	30	28	27
48	Good	51	48	52	53
17	Only Fair	15	17	15	15
5	Poor	5	5	5	5
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>
100		100	100	100	100

SOURCES And did any of your total household income last year come from:

a. Salaries or wages from a job

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
76	Yes	79	75	75
22	No	19	22	23
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

b. Self-employment, including a self-owned business or farm

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
20	Yes	29	19	14
79	No	70	80	85
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

c. Social Security, pension or a retirement plan, including 401k plan

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
30	Yes	28	30	31
68	No	71	68	68
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

d. Dividends, income from estates or trusts, or net rental income

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
14	Yes	26	13	6
83	No	71	84	92
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

e. Interest on savings or bonds

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
23	Yes	39	22	11
74	No	59	75	87
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100

f. Another source **(SPECIFY)**

<u>All</u>		<u>Upper</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Lower</u>
9	Yes	12	7	11
88	No	85	90	87
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100