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# Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the sixth annual survey of racial attitudes in Pulaski County by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR). The Year 6 study addresses economic wealth, housing and financial well-being.

As a metropolitan university UALR seeks to utilize its research capabilities to address issues of vital importance. In UALR Fast Forward, the University's strategic planning document, UALR promises to be a "keeper of the flame on the subject of race." This pledge reflects recognition that issues of race relations remain a barrier to social and economic progress in Arkansas. Chancellor Joel E. Anderson has committed UALR to an ongoing role in seeking solutions, stating that "You have to face it to fix it."

Each year the survey includes a module of questions on a topic of current interest plus several modules of general questions assessing interracial attitudes and perceptions. In previous years, the topical interest modules focused on black and white attitudes toward local government, education, and health care. The general racial attitudes modules are repeated every two to three years in the study so that changes may be tracked over time.

The annual telephone survey is generally conducted in the fall semester with findings released in March of the following year.

The Year 6 report is organized with an introduction, executive summary, description of the study's methodology, survey findings, and appendices.

This study was funded entirely by the UALR to provide information, enhance thoughtful discussion, and improve race relations in our community. A number of community groups, especially religious organizations, have responded to the Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County annual surveys by inviting UALR to give presentations to their organizations on survey results and to engage in dialogue about racial perceptions.

Reports are available at no cost. Copies for viewing and circulation may be obtained at the following web address:

**[ualr.edu/racialattitudes](http://ualr.edu/racialattitudes)**

# Executive Summary

Year 6 of UALR's Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County study presents data collected from an annual telephone survey. The study examines attitudes about and experiences with economic wealth, housing, and financial well-being. In addition it revisits selected topics addressed in previous years, such as interracial trust.

The following are some of the major findings of the Year 6 study:

- More than four out of 10 respondents saw their standard of living as "much better" than that of their parents.
- White respondents were less likely than black respondents to believe their children would have a better standard of living than their own.
- A majority of respondents described their financial situations as less than comfortable.
- Twice as many black respondents as white respondents felt that they just met their basic living expenses or did not have enough to meet expenses.
- A majority of black respondents were at least somewhat worried or concerned about job security, not having enough money for retirement, and not being able to pay for housing costs.
- At least two times as many black respondents as white respondents were "very concerned" or "very worried" about job security, housing security, and funds for retirement.
- One in four black respondents believed that they had been denied housing they could afford just because of their race.
- One in five black respondents believed that blacks are "almost always" discriminated against when they try to rent an apartment or find a house to buy.
- White respondents were significantly more likely than black respondents to trust people in general.
- White respondents were four times more likely than black respondents to say they trust the other race "a lot."
- Very few black or white respondents believed "almost all" of one race dislikes the other.
- White respondents felt closer to blacks than black respondents felt to whites.
- Nine out of 10 respondents, both blacks and whites, believed that real estate agents should not be able to sell a house in a white neighborhood only to a white buyer, even if the seller instructs them to do so.
- Eight out of 10 respondents believed they had already reached "The American Dream" or would reach it in their lifetimes.
- White respondents were twice as likely as black respondents to believe they had already reached "The American Dream."

# Study Methodology

This study is based on a landline telephone survey conducted by the UALR Institute of Government Survey Research Center (SRC) between August 6, 2008 and October 19, 2008.

A total of 1,751 interviews were conducted with a stratified random sample of all residents age 18 and older living in Pulaski County, Arkansas. Since the study primarily focuses on black/white relations, the data analysis is divided into four geo-racial groups with a total of 1,701 white and black respondents:

<b>LR Blacks</b>	<b>OLR Blacks</b>	<b>LR Whites</b>	<b>OLR Whites</b>
Black respondents living <b>WITHIN</b> the Little Rock city limits	Black respondents living <b>OUTSIDE</b> the Little Rock city limits	White respondents living <b>WITHIN</b> the Little Rock city limits	White respondents living <b>OUTSIDE</b> the Little Rock city limits

Each geo-racial group contains between 405 and 441 respondents, providing a potential for sampling error of  $\pm 5$  percent at the conventional 95 percent confidence level. In theory, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results of surveying a sample of a geo-racial group differ no more than 5 percent in either direction from results that would have been obtained by interviewing all Pulaski County residents within a geo-racial group.

The response rate for the Year 6 survey is 43 percent (RR3) with a cooperation rate of 76 percent, based on standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations.

Research shows that responses to racial issue questions can be influenced by whether interviewers and respondents perceive themselves to be of the same or a different race as one another. For the Year 6 study, the SRC used the same methodology as in previous years whereby the races of the respondents and the telephone interviewers were matched. Using the same methodology each year allows for more consistent comparisons among groups and between years.

Several of the questions used in the Year 6 survey are based upon questions developed, tested, and used by the following national organizations: the Gallup Research Center, Pew Research Center, Roper Center, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. We gratefully acknowledge these organizations and their contribution to the study.

The study primarily analyzes black/white relations in Pulaski County. Although the county has a growing Hispanic population, the percentage of Hispanics is still relatively small at less than 8 percent. Because of the small number of Hispanics in the county, the survey does not yield sufficient interviews with Hispanics to make valid comparisons of their responses to the other racial groups.

At all times during this study, researchers were sensitive to the debate and uncertainty concerning the appropriate label for a racial group and its members. There has been a shift in terminology with many people using the term "black" rather than "African-American." In 2004, this Racial Attitudes study showed that most blacks have no preference for either group label and for those who did

indicate a preference, most say they are not offended or made uncomfortable when referred to by the other label. The same findings were supported in this year's study in which 63 percent of the black respondents stated they had no preference for either group label. For those who did have a preference, respondents were approximately equally divided between the two terms: "African-American" and "Black" (17 percent v. 14 percent, respectively). Based upon this information and the need to remain consistent with wording, the study team continued to adopt the terms "black" and "white" and utilized these terms throughout the survey and the report.

Descriptive data analysis included frequency distributions and cross-tabulations. Statistical significance was determined by chi-square analyses and t-tests on valid responses. All data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 17 software. Because of the size of the data set, the level of statistical significance was designated to be 0.05. When such a test indicates less than a 5 percent probability that a difference occurred by chance, that difference is considered to be statistically significant and the term is used that there is a "significant difference." The reader should be aware that a finding may be found as statistically significant but it does not imply the difference is of practical significance. In addition, differences that are not found to be statistically significant does not mean that the results are unimportant.

# Economic Wealth, Housing and Financial Well-Being

Wealth, housing, and financial well-being are particularly relevant topics in the present economic downturn. This study explores attitudes and opinions of Pulaski County blacks and whites in regard to standards of living, financial security, housing discrimination, and related subjects. Survey responses showed many differences of opinion between black and white respondents.

## Standards of Living

Respondents' perceptions about their standards of living compared to others can shed light on how they view their financial situations. The survey asked about changes in standards of living from generation to generation and changes in the standard of living gap between blacks and whites.

### *Generational Changes in Standards of Living*

Respondents were asked about a) perceived differences between their parents' standard of living and their own, and b) expectations in regard to their children's standard of living.

Most respondents reported that their standard of living was better than that of their parents. Results suggest a close level of agreement among the four groups that standards of living had improved for their generation.

However, in regard to expectations for their children's standard of living, differences were significant between blacks and whites and between the two groups of whites. Little Rock whites (LR-whites) were the least likely of the four groups to say their children's standard of living would be better than their own.



*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?*

- ◆ **More than four out of 10 respondents saw their standard of living as "much better" than that of their parents.**

A sizeable minority of respondents (41 to 46 percent) said their standard of living was "much better" than their parents' was at their age. Sixty-eight (68) to 78 percent said their standard of living was "somewhat better" or "much better" than their parents' standard of living.

Results were similar to 2005 results in a national poll.



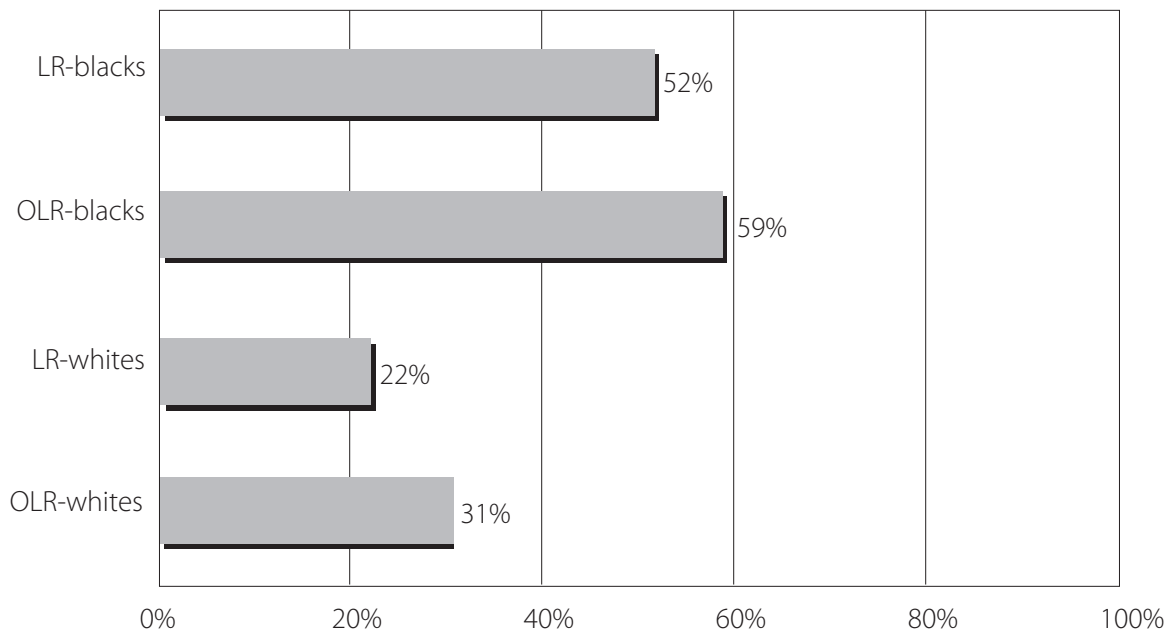
*When your children are the age you are now, do you think their standard of living will be much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than your's is now?*

- ◆ **Around one-half of black respondents and one-fourth of white respondents believed their children would have a “much better” standard of living than their own.**

Fifty-two to 59 percent of blacks thought their children would have a “much better” standard of living than theirs, as shown in Exhibit 1. Only 22 percent of LR-whites and 31 percent of whites within Pulaski County but outside of Little Rock (OLR-whites) displayed similar optimism about their children’s future standards of living.

**Exhibit 1**

**Percentages who believed their children will have a “much better” standard of living than they do**



Examining the combined responses of “better” and “much better” shows that LR-whites were the least optimistic about their children’s chances of surpassing their own standard of living. A total of 49 percent of LR-whites felt that their children would have a “better” or “much better” standard of living, compared to 59 percent of OLR-whites. A considerably higher percentage of blacks, 71 to 74 percent, believed their children would have a “better” or “much better” standard of living.

Differences in responses to this question are significant between blacks and whites and between the two groups of whites.



## *Changes in Standard of Living Gap Between Blacks and Whites*



*Compared with 10 years ago, do you think there is a wider gap or a narrower gap between black people and white people in their standard of living?*

- ◆ **The majority of respondents believed the gap in standard of living between blacks and whites narrowed over the past 10 years.**
- ◆ **White respondents were more likely than black respondents to believe that the standard of living gap is narrower now.**

Majorities of all four groups expressed a belief that the standards of living for blacks and whites are becoming more nearly equal. However, white respondents were much more likely than black respondents to believe that the standard of living gap had narrowed. Seventy-two to 73 percent of white respondents, compared to 55 percent of black respondents, said the gap was smaller compared with 10 years ago.

The opposing view — that the gap is wider — was held by 34 to 36 percent of black respondents and 17 to 20 percent of white respondents.

Responses from black and white respondents were significantly different. There were no significant differences between the two groups of blacks or the two groups of whites on the question of changes in the gaps in standards of living between blacks and whites.

Results from a 2007 national poll (not tabulated by race) were quite different from Pulaski County results. The largest portion of national respondents, 43 percent, volunteered the opinion that there had been no change in the gap over the last 10 years. Around two out of 10 respondents said the gap had narrowed and nearly the same percentages of respondents thought the gap had widened.

## **Financial Security and Insecurity**

Perceptions of financial security and insecurity are important in understanding attitudinal differences between racial groups on economic matters. The survey asked several questions about financial situations and concerns and found numerous differences between black and white respondents.

### *Wealth and Income*

Black respondents were more likely than white respondents to believe that they would become wealthy; however, they had a lower dollar definition of riches than white respondents.



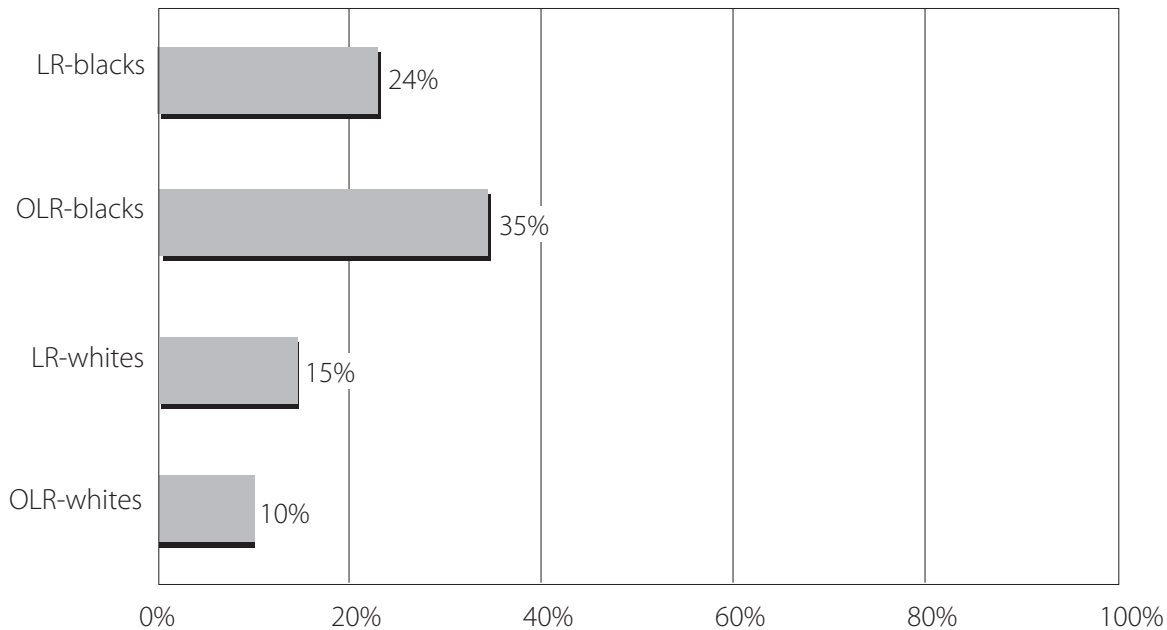
*Looking ahead, how likely is it that you will ever be financially wealthy? Would you say it is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?*

- ◆ In three out of the four groups of respondents the majority said they were at least “somewhat likely” to become financially wealthy.
- ◆ Blacks were more likely than whites to expect to become wealthy.

Sixty-four percent of Little Rock blacks (LR-blacks) and 67 percent of blacks living in Pulaski County outside of Little Rock (OLR-blacks) said it was either “somewhat likely” or “very likely” that they would “ever be financially wealthy.” A lower percentage of whites — 54 percent of LR-whites and 43 percent of OLR-whites — thought they had a likelihood of becoming wealthy.

Twenty-four percent of LR-blacks and 35 percent of OLR-blacks thought it was “very likely” they would be financially wealthy. Fifteen (15) percent of LR-whites and 10 percent of OLR-whites thought that their attaining wealth was “very likely.” (See Exhibit 2.)

**Exhibit 2**  
**Percentages who believed it is “very likely” they will be financially wealthy in their lifetime**



Responses were significantly different between blacks and whites. Responses were also significantly different between LR-blacks and OLR-blacks and between LR-whites and OLR-whites.

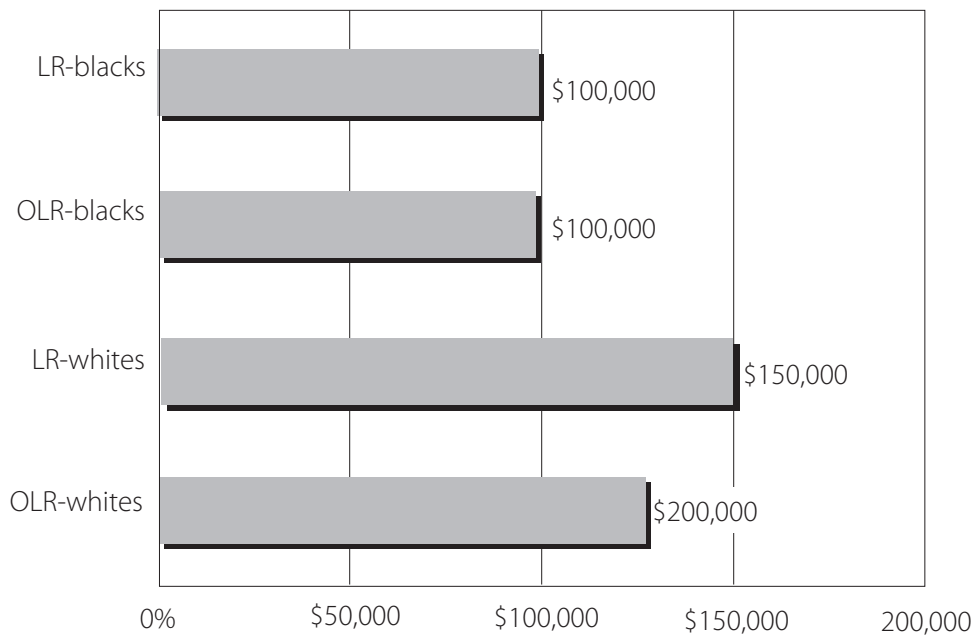


*About how much money per year, do you think the typical family of four needs to make, in order to be considered rich in Pulaski County? \_\_\_\_\_dollars*

- ◆ **White respondents look for a higher level of income than black respondents in order to consider a family rich.**

Black and white respondents expressed significantly different perceptions of the amount of money per year it takes for a family of four to be rich in Pulaski County. As Exhibit 3 demonstrates, the median response for both groups of blacks was that a family needs \$100,000 per year to be considered rich. The median response for OLR-whites was \$125,000 per year, while the median response for LR-whites was that a family needs \$150,000 per year to be considered rich.

**Exhibit 3**  
**Median responses for amount of annual income needed to be considered rich in Pulaski County**



Respondents believed that the average income of Pulaski County families was considerably below the level of riches, however defined. When respondents were asked to estimate the yearly Pulaski County family income, the median estimates by the four groups ranged from one-fourth to one-half of the perceived income of the rich.



*What do you think is the yearly household income for the average family of four in Pulaski County?  
\_\_\_\_\_dollars*

- ◆ **When asked to estimate the yearly household income in Pulaski County, the estimates of white respondents were higher than those of black respondents.**

Black and white respondents gave significantly different estimates of the income of an average family of four in Pulaski County. In responses of whites, the median estimated income level was \$45,000 per year. The median estimate for LR-blacks was \$40,000 and for OLR-blacks was \$38,410 per year.

(According to the 2005-2007 (three year average) American Community Survey of the United States Census Bureau, the median family income for a family of four in Pulaski County is \$66,059.)

## Financial Situation and Concerns

After exploring respondents' views of their prospects for wealth, the survey asked them to describe their actual financial situations. Even though most respondents felt they had a chance of becoming wealthy, a majority described their current financial situations as less than comfortable. Many respondents, especially black respondents, expressed concerns about job security, adequate funds for retirement, and ability to pay for housing costs.

### *Financial Situation*



*How would you describe your own personal financial situation? Would you say you live comfortably, meet your expenses with a little left over for extras, just meet your basic living expenses, or don't even have enough to meet expenses?*

- ◆ **A majority of respondents described their financial situations as less than comfortable.**
- ◆ **Twice as many black respondents as white respondents felt that they just met their basic living expenses or didn't have enough to meet expenses.**

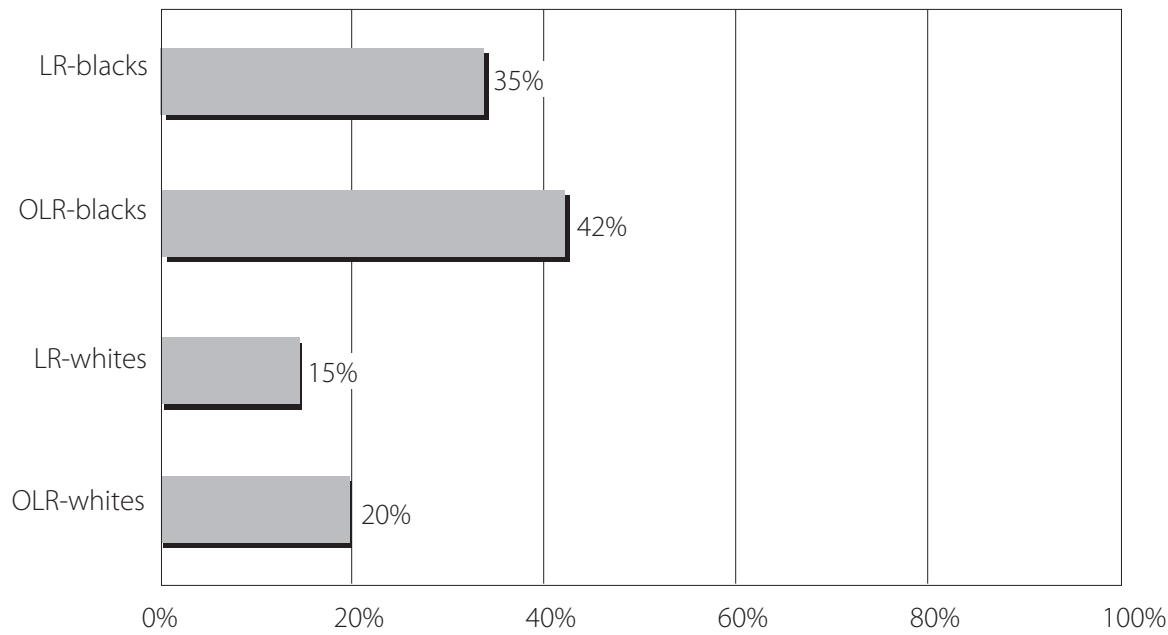
Most survey respondents described their personal financial situations in less than glowing terms. Of the four groups of respondents, LR-whites were the most likely to report that their financial situations allowed them to "live comfortably." Five out of 10 LR-whites, four out of 10 OLR-whites, and only three out of 10 black respondents said that they "live comfortably."

At the other end of the scale, sizeable minorities felt they were just barely making it or getting behind financially. Fifteen to 20 percent of whites and twice as many blacks (35 to 42 percent) replied either that they "just meet basic living expenses or "don't even have enough to meet expenses." Exhibit 4 shows these results.

Differences were significant between whites and blacks and between the two groups of whites in rating their personal financial situations.

**Exhibit 4**

**Percentages who said they just meet basic living expenses or don't have enough to meet expenses**



***Financial Concerns***

When asked about three common financial concerns — job security, retirement, and ability to pay for housing costs — black respondents expressed a significantly higher level of concern than whites in all three areas. Both blacks and whites were most concerned about retirement funds, followed by job security and housing costs.



*How worried are you about not having enough money for retirement — very worried, somewhat worried, or not at all worried?*

- ◆ Six out of 10 black and white respondents were at least “somewhat worried” about not having enough money for retirement.
- ◆ Two times as many black respondents as white respondents were “very worried” about not having enough money for retirement.

Fifty-eight to 61 percent of all respondents said they were “very worried” or “somewhat worried” about not having enough money for retirement. Fourteen to 17 percent of whites and 30 to 33 percent of blacks said they were “very worried” about retirement money.



*How concerned are you that in the next 12 months you or someone else in your household might be out of work and looking for a job — very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not concerned at all?*

- ◆ **One-half of black respondents and one-third of white respondents had some degree of concern about job security for their households.**
- ◆ **Three times as many black respondents as white respondents were “very concerned” that someone in their household might be out of work in the next 12 months.**

One-half of black respondents (51 to 52 percent) and one-third of whites (34 percent) indicated they were “very concerned” or “somewhat concerned” about job security for members of their household.

Three out of 10 blacks compared to one out of 10 whites said they were “very concerned” about the possibility of job loss for someone in their household in the next 12 months.



*How worried are you about not being able to pay your rent, mortgage, or other housing costs — very worried, somewhat worried, or not at all worried?*

- ◆ **Over one-half of black respondents and approximately one-fourth of white respondents were at least somewhat worried about not being able to pay their housing costs.**
- ◆ **Two times as many blacks as whites were “very worried” about not being able to pay for housing.**

Fewer respondents expressed concern about housing security than about job security or money for retirement. Nevertheless, sizeable minorities were at least somewhat worried about housing costs. Forty-four to 49 percent of black respondents and 27 to 28 percent of white respondents said they were “very worried” or “somewhat worried” about not being able to pay housing costs.

Sixteen to 19 percents of black respondents said they were “very worried” about not being able to pay housing costs, compared to 4 to 8 percent of white respondents.

Exhibit 5 is a table displaying the percentages of respondents who said they were “very concerned” or “very worried” about the three financial concerns addressed in the survey.

There were no significant differences between the responses of the two groups of whites or the two groups of blacks on any of the three questions about financial concerns.

**Exhibit 5**

**Percentages who said they were “very” concerned or worried about retirement funds, job security, or housing costs**

	Retirement	Job Security	Costs
LR-blacks	30%	28%	16%
OLR-blacks	33%	30%	19%
LR-whites	14%	9%	4%
OLR-whites	17%	13%	8%

## Getting Ahead

### *What it Takes to Get Ahead*

The survey asked three questions about what it takes to get ahead in life. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of three factors: coming from a wealthy family, hard work, and knowing the right people. All respondents rated “hard work” highly. In addition to hard work, black respondents were more likely than white respondents to see importance in “knowing the right people” and “coming from a wealthy family.”



*We have some questions about opportunities for getting ahead. How important do you think [coming from a wealthy family/hard work/knowing the right people] is for getting ahead in life — essential, very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?*

- ◆ **Eight to nine out of 10 respondents saw hard work as “essential” or “very important” for getting ahead in life.**
- ◆ **Black respondents were more likely than white respondents to believe that, in addition to hard work, it is important to know the right people and to come from a wealthy family in order to get ahead.**

Both blacks and whites placed a great deal of importance on hard work for getting ahead in life. From 82 to 91 percent of all four groups perceived hard work to be “essential” or “very important” for getting ahead. In their emphasis on hard work, Pulaski County respondents mirrored respondents to a 2005 nationwide poll (not tabulated by race), where 87 percent rated hard work as “essential” or “very important” for getting ahead.

Blacks were more likely than whites to believe that knowing the right people is also important for getting ahead in life. Sixty-three to 68 percent of blacks rated knowing the right people as “essential” or “very important.” Forty-four to 45 percent of whites agreed.

Nationally, 49 percent of respondents rated knowing the right people as “essential” or “very important.”

All groups were less likely to see coming from a wealthy family as important for getting ahead in life than either of the other two factors. Nevertheless, a sizeable minority of blacks (42 to 46 percent) rated family wealth as “essential” or “very important,” compared to only 20 to 26 percent of whites.

The results from the national poll (44 percent) were closer to those from Pulaski County blacks on the importance of coming from a wealthy family.

On results from these three questions, differences were significant between blacks and whites but not between Little Rock residents and other residents of Pulaski County.

Exhibit 6 is a table displaying the percentages of respondents who said the factors addressed in the survey are “essential” or “very important” for getting ahead in life.

**Exhibit 6**  
**Percentages who believed specified factors are “essential” or “very important” for getting ahead in life**

	Hard Work	Who you know	Wealthy family
LR-blacks	82%	68%	46%
OLR-blacks	85%	63%	42%
LR-whites	89%	45%	20%
OLR-whites	91%	44%	26%

## *Supporting Minority Owned Businesses*

Supporting minority owned businesses is believed by some to be a means of helping minorities get ahead in life. Black respondents were asked about their use of black-owned businesses.



*Do you make a point of shopping at or using black-owned businesses when possible, or is that something you don't really think much about?*

- ◆ **Around one-third of black respondents said that they make a point of shopping at or using black-owned businesses.**

Although the majority of black respondents said that they didn't think much about whether or not a business is owned by blacks, a sizeable minority of 31 to 35 percent replied that they make a point of shopping at or using black-owned businesses.



## Mortgages and Housing

The survey asked about experiences with and perceptions of housing discrimination. Sizeable minorities of black respondents felt that they or their friends and family had experienced discrimination in housing. More black respondents than white respondents felt that discrimination against blacks in housing was common. When asked about scenarios related to mortgage and real estate practices, large majorities of all four groups supported fair housing practices.

### *Housing Discrimination Experiences*



*Have you personally ever been in the situation where a realtor or rental agent assumed you would only want to buy or rent in areas where [same race] people lived and showed you only houses or apartments in all-[same race] neighborhoods? [Insert racial group of respondent.]*



*As far as you're aware, has that ever happened to a close friend or someone in your immediate family?*

- ◆ **Approximately one out of four black respondents believed that a realtor or rental agent had shown them houses or apartments only in all-black neighborhoods.**

Twenty-one percent of LR-blacks and 28 percent of OLR-blacks believed that a realtor or rental agent had shown them houses or apartments only in all-black neighborhoods. OLR-blacks were significantly more likely than LR-blacks to feel they had experienced this type of discrimination.

Considerably fewer white respondents — 14 to 16 percent — felt they had been shown only houses or apartments in all-white neighborhoods.

Larger percentages believed a friend or family member had been shown only houses or apartments in a same-race neighborhood — 36 to 39 percent of black respondents and 17 to 21 percent of white respondents.



*(Black respondents only) Have you personally ever felt that you were denied housing you could afford just because of your race, or not?*



*As far as you're aware, has that ever happened to a close friend or someone in your immediate family?*

- ◆ **One in four black respondents felt that they had been denied housing they could afford just because of their race.**

Twenty-five to 28 percent of black respondents, both LR-blacks and OLR-blacks, felt they had been denied housing because of racial discrimination. Thirty-six to 38 percent believed this had happened to a close friend or someone in their immediate family.

## Housing Discrimination Perceptions and Opinions

### Perceived Prevalence of Housing Discrimination

Most black respondents perceived that housing discrimination was quite prevalent. Whites agreed that blacks experienced housing discrimination but were less likely to think that it happened frequently.



*How often do you think blacks are discriminated against when they try to rent an apartment or find a house to buy — almost always, frequently, not too often, or hardly ever?*

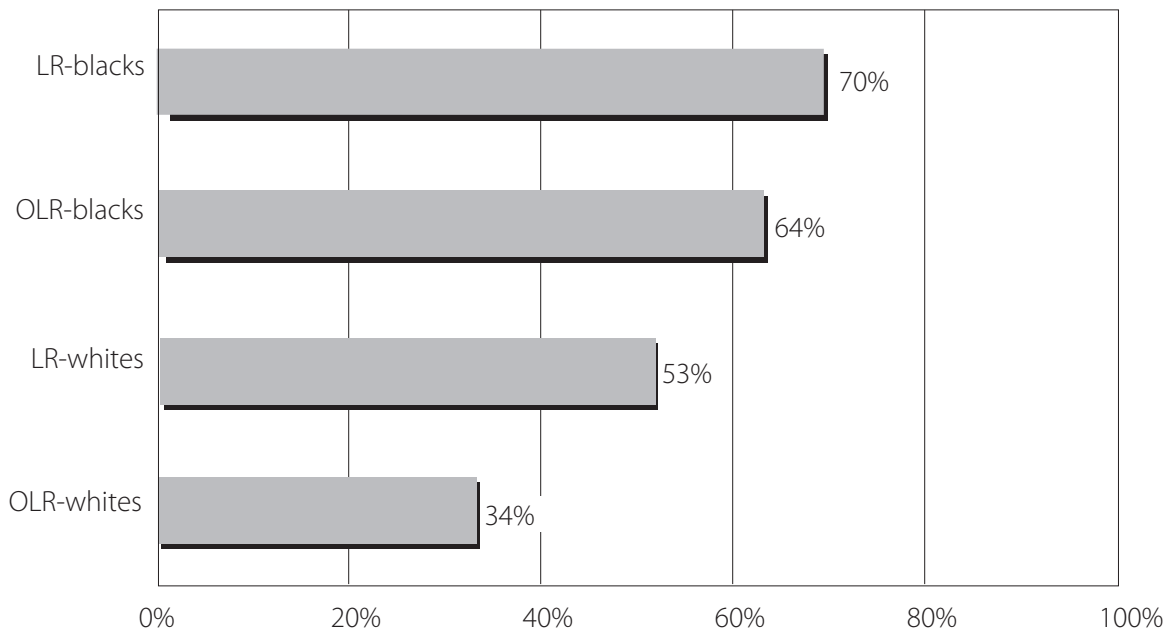
- ◆ **One in five black respondents believed that blacks are “almost always” discriminated against when they try to rent an apartment or find a house to buy.**

Nineteen to 24 percent of black respondents said that blacks “almost always” face discrimination when they look for housing. Only 1 percent of white respondents thought that blacks are “almost always” discriminated against in seeking housing.

When considering the respondents who replied either “frequently” or “almost always” significant differences emerge between the two groups of whites as well as between blacks and whites. Sixty-four to 70 percent of black respondents felt that blacks are “almost always” or “frequently” discriminated against when they look for housing. Fewer LR-whites, but still a majority (53 percent), agreed. However, only 34 percent of OLR-whites thought that blacks “almost always” or “frequently” face housing discrimination, as shown in Exhibit 7.

#### Exhibit 7

Percentages who believed that blacks “almost always” or “frequently” face housing discrimination



## Opinions about Fair Housing Scenarios

The survey described two scenarios related to fair housing practices and asked for opinions about whether specific decisions should be allowed.



*Next, I'm going to describe a variety of housing decisions that people made and I'd like your opinion about whether the people should or should not be allowed to make those decisions.*

*A [other race] person applies to a bank for a home mortgage. He does not have a steady job or enough income to pay a monthly mortgage payment. When he did work, the job did not pay very much. Because of his lack of a steady job and insufficient income, the loan officer decides not to give this person a mortgage. Regardless of what the law says, do you think the loan officer should be able to turn down the [other race] applicant because of the applicant's lack of steady job and income? [Insert different racial group than respondent.]*

On this question white respondents were asked about black loan applicants and vice versa. Eight to nine out of 10 respondents said that the loan officer should be able to turn down a home mortgage applicant because of lack of steady job and income.

More black respondents than white respondents expressed the opposite view that the loan officer should not be able to turn down the loan. Fifteen (15) to 16 percent of blacks and only 4 percent of whites said the loan officer should not be able to refuse to issue the loan.



*A family is selling their house through a real estate agent. They are white, and have only white neighbors. Some of the neighbors tell the family that, if a non-white person buys the house, there would be trouble for that buyer. Not wanting to make it difficult for a buyer, the family tells the real estate agent they will sell their house only to a white buyer. Regardless of what the law says, do you think the real estate agent should be able to sell this family's house only to a white buyer?*

- ◆ **Nine out of 10 respondents from all four groups believed that real estate agents should not be able to sell a house in a white neighborhood only to a white buyer, even if the seller instructs them to do so.**

Results suggest a high level of support for fair housing practices and close agreement among the four groups of respondents. Eighty-nine to 93 percent said that the real estate agent should be prohibited from selling the house only to a white buyer.

# Current Events: Obama's Influence on Race Relations

Each year the survey includes a topical question which is of interest and concern to the Pulaski County community. For example, 2007 marked the 50th anniversary of the desegregation of Central High, so respondents to the Year 4 survey were asked their opinions of how the legacy of the Central High crisis had impacted local black/white relations.

This year, the survey was conducted during the first campaign in which a candidate with both black and white heritage was nominated by a major political party as their candidate for the office of president. Given the unique nature of this situation and its undeniable significance to issues of race it was only appropriate to ask respondents a question pertaining to it.



*If Barack Obama is elected president, do you think race relations in the United States will get better, get worse, or stay about the same?*

- ◆ **Nearly one-half of all respondents felt that race relations would “stay about the same” if Obama were to be elected president.**

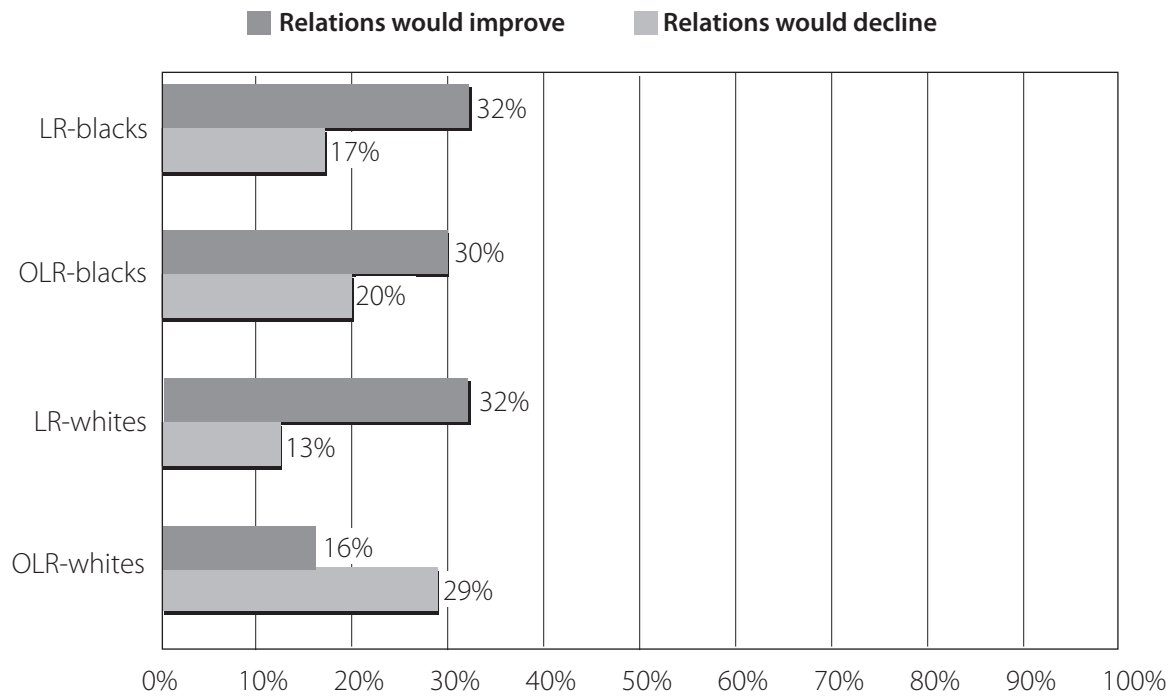
Forty-five percent of blacks and 49 percent of whites felt that race relations would not alter significantly with an Obama presidency.

However, the results for OLR-whites show a significant difference to the LR-blacks, OLR-blacks and LR-whites in the other response categories.

Thirty-two percent of LR-whites and 30 to 32 percent of blacks felt that race relations would improve if Obama were to win the presidential race. This number falls to 16 percent for OLR-whites.

Thirteen percent of LR-whites and 17 to 20 percent of blacks felt that a victory for Obama would mean a decline in race relations. Nearly one-third (29 percent) of OLR-whites selected this option. Therefore, OLR-whites were least likely to anticipate a positive change in race relations, and most likely to anticipate a deterioration. Exhibit 8 compares the percentages who said race relations would improve or decline.

**Exhibit 8**  
**Percentages who believed that race relations would improve or decline if Obama were elected**



# Attitudes and Actions

The second major section in the Year 6 report is devoted to the themes of interracial perceptions and interracial socializing. These areas are vitally important in the study of race relations. Perceptions inform attitudes, and in turn, attitudes can inform actions. In other words, preconceived ideas can have a bearing on the way individuals interact and socialize with others, whether they are of the same race or of a different race.

Trust, dislike, and feelings of closeness are perceptions that are particularly significant when it comes to interacting with others. Whether we trust or like another person or group of people will certainly influence our actions towards them. Similarly, if we feel close to a particular group we are likely to behave differently than if we feel removed from them. Therefore, a number of our questions focus on these topics.

Respondents were first asked about their willingness to trust people in general and about how much they trusted groups of people they might encounter on a regular basis, such as people in their neighborhood or at their place of worship. They were then asked about how much they trusted other racial and ethnic groups. It was important to know how much people were likely to trust others in general before asking them about specific groups. If one group says they do not trust another, it may be due in part to how likely they are to trust anyone else at all, rather than being a racially motivated perception.

In another series of questions, respondents were asked to estimate how many blacks and whites disliked each other. They were not asked for their own opinion of a particular race, rather they were asked about their perceptions about how many blacks and whites disliked each other.

The questions about closeness did focus on people's own opinions, however, and respondents were asked how close they felt personally to various other groups.

Having gained an idea about respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards others, we asked them about their *actions* towards others. We asked two questions about the extent to which respondents socialized with the other race, to see if their attitudes might be reflected in their behavior.

As well as asking respondents about their perceptions of blacks and whites, we asked several questions about their attitudes towards Hispanics.

Many of the questions in this section of the report have been asked in previous years of UALR's annual study of racial attitudes in Pulaski County. The questions are repeated in order to compare the results over time. Because attitudes and perceptions about topics such as race relations tend to change slowly, the study asks questions exploring these subjects every two, three, or four years.

As a reminder, this section references this year's results to those of previous years when information is available from more than one year. Previous year surveys are referenced as Year 1 (2003-2004), Year 2 (2004-2005), Year 3 (2005-2006), Year 4 (2006-2007), Year 5 (2007-2008) and Year 6 (2008-2009).

# Trust

## Everyday Trust



*I want to ask you some questions about how you view other people. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?*

- ◆ **White respondents were significantly more likely than black respondents to trust people in general.**
- ◆ **Black respondents were significantly more likely than white respondents to say, “you cannot be too careful” in dealing with people.**

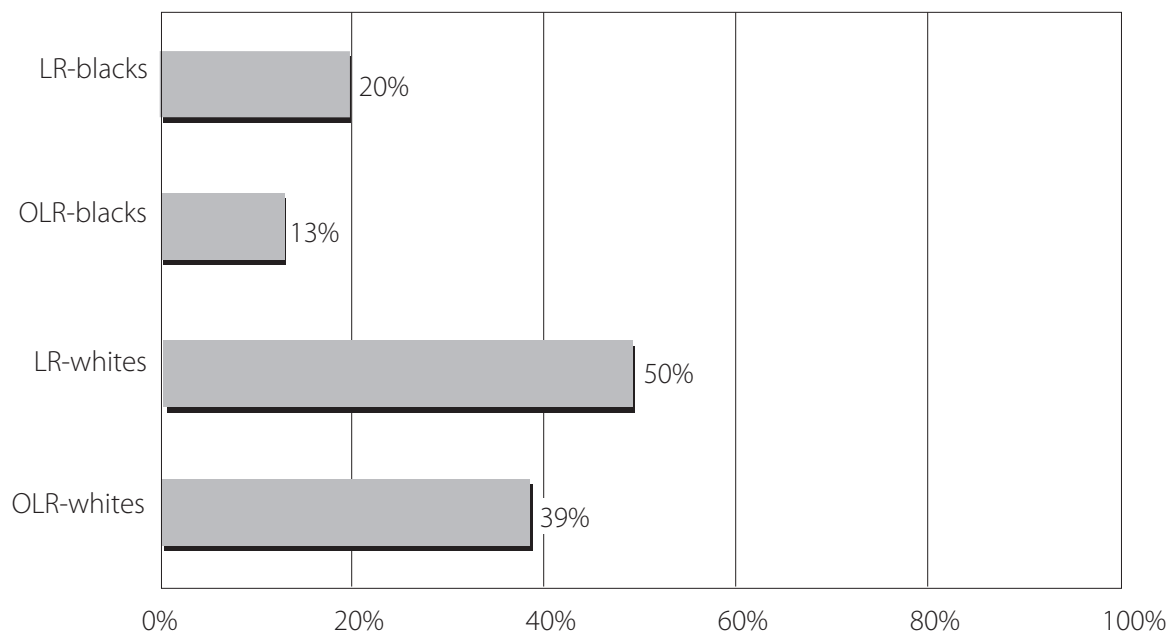
The responses to this question revealed a significant difference between racial groups, and between same-race geographic groups.

The most noticeable disparity occurs between the racial groups. The majority of black respondents (74 to 81 percent), said that “you cannot be too careful” when dealing with other people.

The white groups were more trusting overall, but a significant difference can be observed between LR-whites and OLR-whites. LR-whites were the most trusting group, with 50 percent saying, “most people can be trusted” and 44 percent saying they would exercise caution when dealing with others. OLR-whites were less likely to trust other people, with 58 percent saying, “you cannot be too careful.”

Exhibit 9 compares the percentages of the four groups who responded that “most people can be trusted.”

**Exhibit 9**  
**Percentages who said “most people can be trusted”**



Similar results were gathered when this question was asked in Year 3 and Year 4 of the survey, suggesting there has been no substantive change in levels of trust among black or white respondents.

- ◆ Whites were significantly more likely to trust the people they encounter in everyday situations than blacks were.



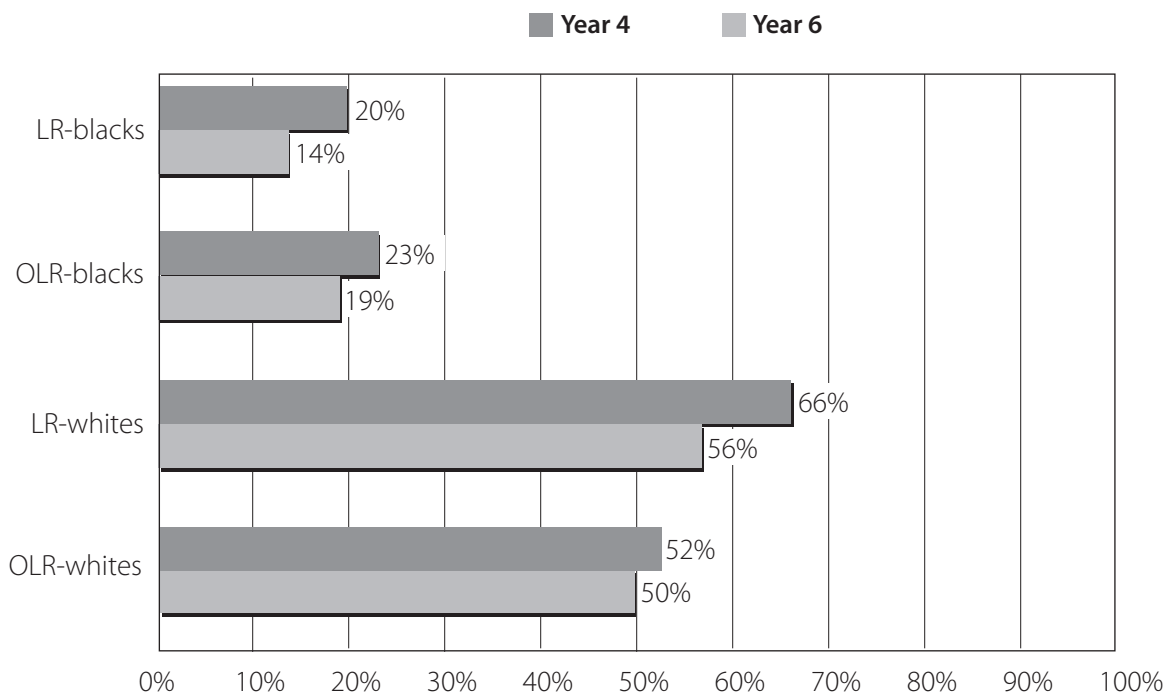
*Next, we'd like to know how much you trust different groups of people. First, think about the people in your neighborhood. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?*

At least one-half of white respondents expressed a high level of trust in their neighbors, with between 50 to 56 percent saying they trusted people in their neighborhood “a lot.” The rates for black respondents were significantly lower, with only 14 to 19 percent reporting they trusted their neighbors “a lot.”

A substantial portion of black respondents chose answers from the lower end of the trust scale. Between 27 to 31 percent of blacks reported that they trust people in their neighborhoods “only a little,” and between 11 to 15 percent believe that their neighbors cannot be trusted “at all.”

This question was also asked in Year 3 and Year 4 of the survey. For the most part, there were few changes during this time. However, there has been a 10 percent decline in the numbers of LR-whites who said they trusted people in their neighborhood “a lot” between Year 4 and Year 6, as shown in Exhibit 10.

**Exhibit 10**  
Percentages who said they trusted people in their neighborhood “a lot”







*... People you work with*

Between 48 to 51 percent of whites said that they trust the people they work with “a lot.” Blacks were significantly less likely to trust people at their work place to this degree, with only 16 to 20 percent expressing the highest level of trust in their work colleagues.

As with the previous question, many black respondents selected answers at the lower end of the trust scale. Twenty-three to 28 percent of blacks said they trust colleagues “only a little,” and 10 to 12 percent said they don’t trust them “at all.”

These figures were much lower for white respondents, with three percent or fewer choosing the responses “only a little” or “not at all.”

This question was asked in Year 3 of the survey, and very similar results were found.



*... People at your church or place of worship*

The responses to this question echoed the pattern seen in the previous trust questions; black respondents exhibited lower levels of trust than their white counterparts.

Around two-thirds of white respondents (66 to 67 percent) said they trust the people in their place of worship “a lot.” The rates for black respondents were significantly lower, with less than one-half (41 percent) saying they trust people in their place of worship “a lot.”

Black respondents were also more likely to say they trusted fellow churchgoers “only a little” or “not at all.” Two percent or fewer of white respondents chose this response, compared with 14 to 17 percent of blacks.

This question was asked in Year 3 and Year 4 of the survey, and overall, little change can be seen. However, the number of LR-whites who said they trusted people at their place of worship “a lot” declined between Year 4 and Year 6. In Year 4, 77 percent of LR-whites said they trusted their congregation “a lot”; this year, the number had fallen to 66 percent.



*... People who work in the stores where you shop*

Similar numbers of blacks and whites said they trust shop-workers they encounter “some.” This was true for 49 to 53 percent of whites, and 43 to 44 percent of blacks.

The difference between the opinions of black and white respondents on this question becomes more apparent at the upper and lower ends of the trust scale. Around three in 10 whites said they trust people who work in the stores where they shop “a lot,” compared to around one in 10 blacks.

When it comes to the lower levels of trust, 41 to 42 percent of LR and OLR-blacks said they trust store workers “only a little” or “not at all,” compared to 10 percent of LR-whites. OLR-whites however, were significantly more likely to select “only a little” or “not at all” than LR-whites, with 21 percent choosing these categories.

## Trust and Race



*How about <other race>? Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all? [Insert different racial group than respondent.]*

- ◆ **White respondents were four times more likely than black respondents to say they trust the other race “a lot.”**

The majority of black and white respondents said they trust the other race “some,” with 65 to 67 percent of whites giving this response, along with 57 to 63 percent of blacks.

However, significant differences between the races can be observed at the upper and lower ends of the trust scale. Black respondents were more likely to say they trust the other race “only a little”, with 21 to 30 percent of blacks choosing this response, compared to only 3 to 10 percent of white respondents.

Twenty-three to 25 percent of whites replied that they trusted the other race “a lot,” compared with 5 percent of blacks.

This question was asked in Year 3 and Year 4 of the survey, and for the most part, little change occurred.



*How about <same race>?*

- ◆ **The majority of black and white respondents said they trust their own race “some.”**

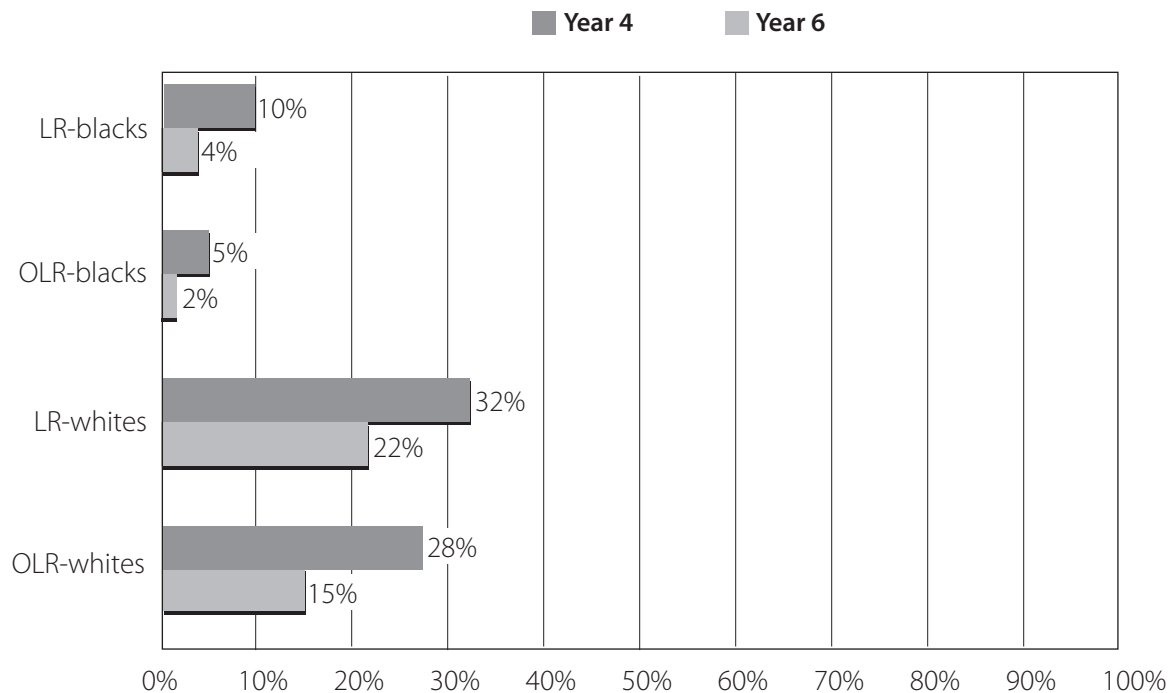
In keeping with a trend observed throughout the trust questions, white respondents were more likely to exhibit higher levels of trust than black respondents were. More than two-thirds of whites (66 to 68 percent) said they trust other whites to some degree, whereas the number of blacks who said they trust other blacks “some” falls at 49 to 55 percent, revealing a significant difference between the races.

White respondents were also more likely than black respondents to say they trust their own race “a lot,” though there was some variation between the white groups. LR-whites were most likely to say they trusted other whites, with 22 percent choosing this option, compared to 15 percent of OLR-whites.

Interestingly, blacks were more likely to say they don’t trust other blacks “at all,” at 9 to 10 percent, than they were to say they trust them “a lot,” at 2 to 4 percent.

This question was asked in Year 3 and Year 4 of the survey, and for the most part, the results are similar. However, one noticeable difference between Year 4 and Year 6 is that the percentages of whites who said they trust their own race “a lot” declined, as shown in Exhibit 11.

**Exhibit 11**  
**Percentages who said they trusted people of their racial group “a lot”**



*How about Hispanics?*

- ◆ **White respondents were significantly more likely than black respondents to say they trust Hispanics “a lot.”**

As well as trusting whites and blacks to a greater degree than black respondents, white respondents also had higher levels of trust toward Hispanics. Between 15 to 22 percent of whites said they trusted Hispanics “a lot,” compared to 3 to 4 percent of blacks.

The majority of both blacks and whites said they trust Hispanics “some,” but whites were still more likely than blacks to choose this category. On average, around two-thirds (60 to 65 percent) of whites said they trust Hispanics “some,” compared to around one-half of blacks (44 to 51 percent).

However, there are differences to be noted between the white groups. Only 6 percent of LR-whites said they trusted Hispanics “only a little” or “not at all,” compared to 20 percent of OLR-whites. The numbers for black respondents were still higher however, with between 38 to 45 percent of blacks saying they trust Hispanics “only a little” or “not at all.”

## Perceptions of Dislike



*Do you think only a few white people dislike blacks, many white people dislike blacks, or almost all white people dislike blacks?*



*Do you think only a few black people dislike whites, many black people dislike whites, or almost all black people dislike whites?*

- ◆ **Very few black or white respondents believed “almost all” of one race dislikes the other.**
- ◆ **White respondents were more likely than black respondents to believe “few” whites dislike blacks.**

Five out of 10 black respondents and six out of 10 white respondents felt that “few” whites dislike blacks, marking a significant difference between the races in this perception. Thirty-seven (37) to 43 percent of blacks and 30 to 35 percent of whites felt that “many” whites dislike blacks.

Although the perceptions of black and white respondents differed on whether whites dislike blacks, there were no significant differences among the four geo-racial groups about whether blacks dislike whites. Nearly one-half of all respondents — 44 to 50 percent — reported that they felt “few” blacks disliked whites. Almost as many respondents, 40 to 45 percent, believed that “many” blacks disliked whites.

Few respondents (6 percent or fewer) felt that “almost all” whites disliked blacks, and the same was true of the reverse; few respondents (9 percent or fewer) believed “almost all” blacks disliked whites.

These questions were also asked in Year 2 and Year 4 of the survey. The number of respondents who felt that “many” whites dislike blacks shows little variation between Year 2 and Year 4. However, the Year 6 survey shows an increase in the number of people who think “many” whites dislike blacks. A considerable increase can be seen in all geo-racial groups except for LR-blacks, whose opinions varied little. Interestingly, there is also an increase in the number of LR-whites and OLR-blacks who thought that “many” blacks dislike whites between Year 4 and Year 6.

Overall, perceptions of dislike appear to have decreased between Year 2 and Year 4 of the survey and increased between Year 4 and Year 6, as shown in Exhibits 12 and 13.

**Exhibit 12**  
**Percentages who perceived that many white people dislike blacks**

	Year 2	Year 4	Year 6
LR-blacks	42%	34%	37%
OLR-blacks	32%	26%	43%
LR-whites	29%	20%	35%
OLR-whites	27%	19%	30%

**Exhibit 13**  
**Percentages who perceived that many black people dislike whites**

	Year 2	Year 4	Year 6
LR-blacks	42%	35%	43%
OLR-blacks	46%	30%	40%
LR-whites	42%	33%	44%
OLR-whites	44%	37%	45%

## Perceptions of Closeness



*I'm going to read a list of groups and I'd like you to tell me how close you feel to each group. For each, using a scale of 1 to 10, where "1" means you do not feel at all close to the group and "10" means you feel extremely close to the group, please tell me how close you feel to whites? To blacks? To Hispanics?*

- ◆ **White respondents felt closer to blacks than black respondents felt to whites.**
- ◆ **Both black and white respondents felt closer to members of their own race than they felt to members of the other race.**

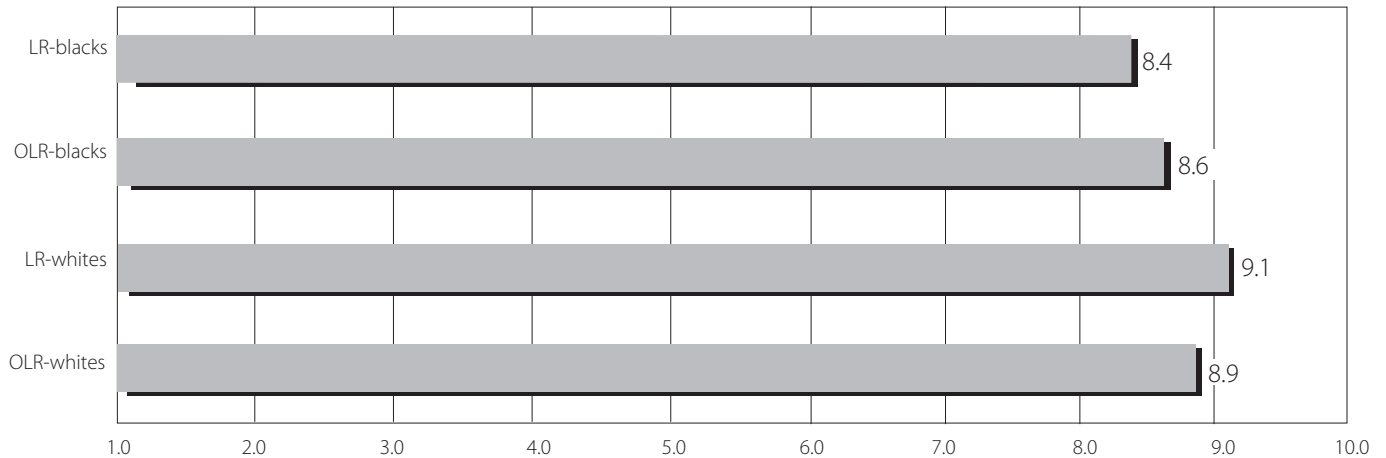
On average, white respondents rated their closeness to other whites 8.9 and 9.1 on the scale of one to 10, indicating that they felt very close to members of their own race. When black respondents were asked how close they felt to other blacks, the results were slightly lower, with average ratings of 8.4 and 8.6.

The results look different when respondents were asked about how close they felt to members of the other race. On average, white respondents rated their closeness to blacks at 7.0 on the scale, indicating that although they felt fairly close to blacks, they felt closer to members of their own racial group.

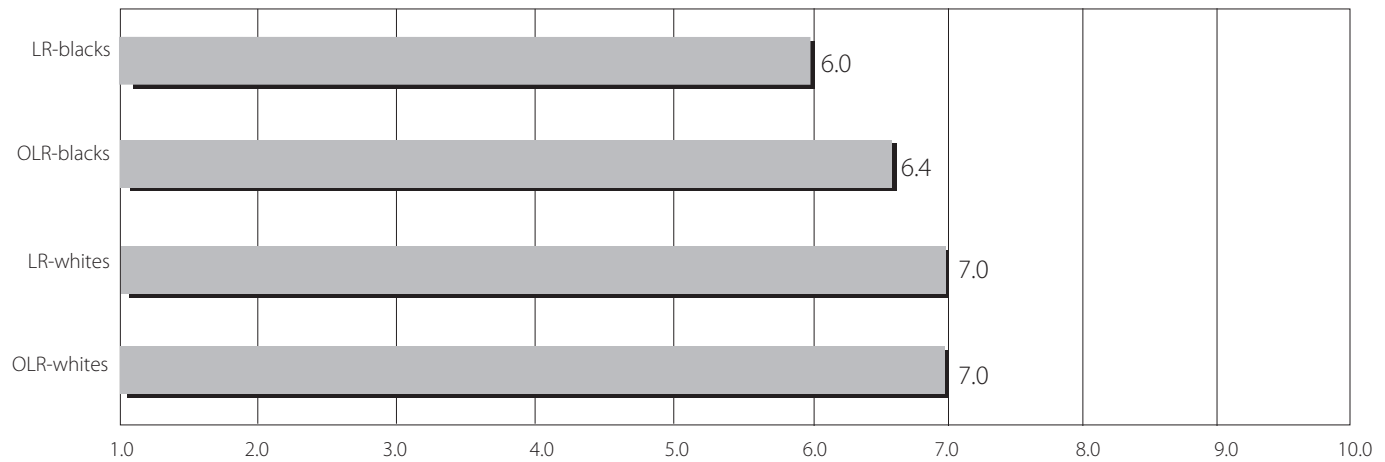
These results were mirrored in the attitudes of black respondents towards whites. LR-blacks gave an average rating of 6.0 and OLR-blacks of 6.4 for their feelings of closeness to whites. (This difference between the two groups of blacks is statistically significant.)

These results suggest that whites felt closer to blacks than blacks felt to whites. Exhibit 14 shows the mean ratings of closeness to members of the same racial group and Exhibit 15 the mean ratings of closeness to members of the other racial group.

**Exhibit 14**  
**Mean ratings of closeness to members of the same racial group**

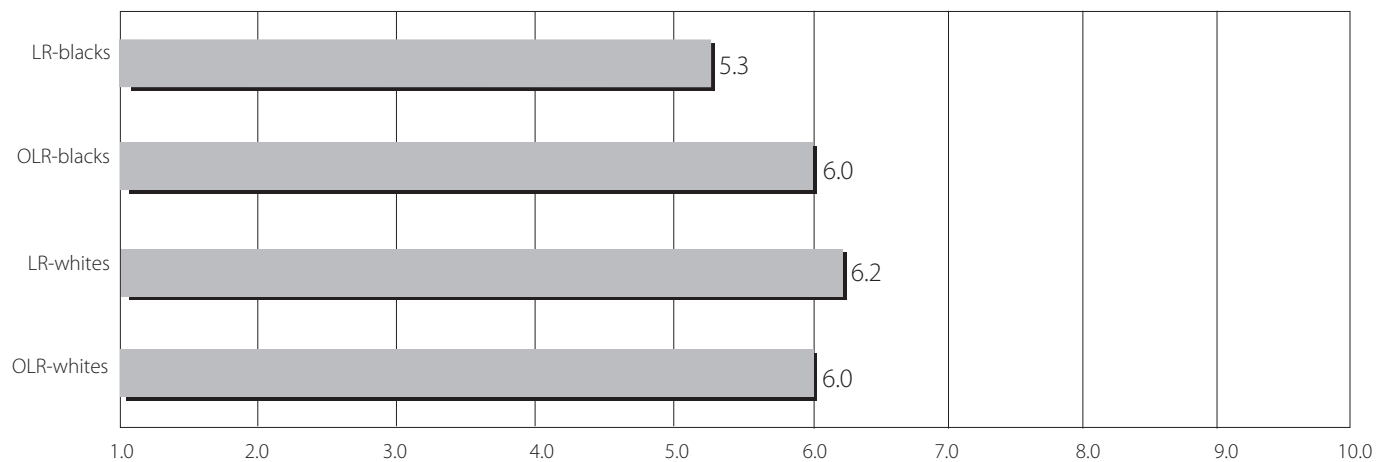


**Exhibit 15**  
**Mean ratings of closeness to members of the other racial group**



Blacks and whites were also asked about how close they felt to the Hispanic population. On average, OLR-blacks, LR-whites and OLR-whites placed their closeness to Hispanics between 6.0 to 6.2 on the scale. LR-blacks rated their closeness to Hispanics slightly lower, at 5.3. These results show that OLR blacks feel about as close to Hispanics as they do to whites, and LR-blacks feel closer to whites than they do Hispanics. The responses of whites also indicate that they felt closer to blacks than they did to Hispanics.

**Exhibit 16**  
**Means of ratings of closeness to Hispanics**



These questions were first asked in Year 1 and Year 2 of the survey, and the results indicate that attitudes about closeness have not changed much over time.

## Socializing

As in previous years, the survey asked how often respondents went out socially or visited in the homes of friends of another race. Black respondents were asked about socializing with whites and white respondents about socializing with blacks.



*How many times in the past year have you been inside the home of a (black/white) friend or have they been inside your home? [Insert difference race than respondent]*

- ◆ **One out of four black and white respondents said they had visited one another's homes on more than 10 occasions during the previous year.**
- ◆ **One out of four black and white respondents said they had not visited one another's homes at all during the previous year.**

Between 29 to 31 percent of blacks and 29 to 32 percent of whites said that over the past year they had not been inside the home of a member of the other race, nor had a member of the other race come to their home.

However, similar numbers of blacks and whites said they had visited or been visited by a member of the other race more than 10 times during the course of the previous year. Between 23 to 29 percent of blacks and 27 percent of whites said they had visited with friends of the other race more than ten times.

At least one in 10 respondents said they had visited with friends of the other race between five to 10 times. The remainder of respondents said this interaction had occurred between one to five occasions.

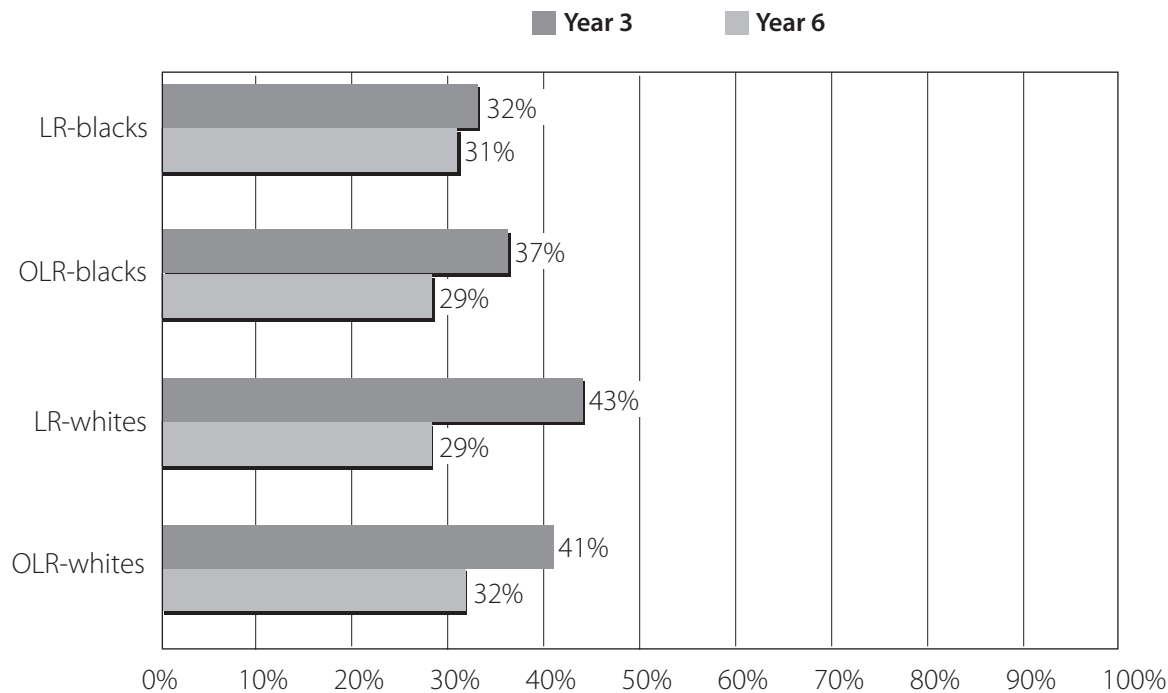
Responses indicated a high level of agreement among the four geo-racial groups, with no significant differences.

This question was asked in Year 2 and Year 3 of the survey, and similar results were found. However, between Year 3 and Year 6, several changes can be observed which suggest there has been a slight increase in the number of times black and white friends had visited each other's homes.

All geo-racial groups, particularly LR-whites, showed a decline in the number of respondents who said they had not visited with friends from the other race at all during the preceding year, as shown in Exhibit 17.



**Exhibit 17**  
**Percentages who said they had not visited in the home of a different race friend in the preceding year**



*How many times in the past year have you gone with a (black/white) friend to a restaurant, bar, theatre, or other entertainment place? [Insert difference race than respondent]*

- ◆ **More than one-third of all respondents said they had not gone out socially with friends of the other race at all during the previous year.**
- ◆ **Two out of 10 respondents said they had gone out socially with friends of the other race on more than 10 occasions during the previous year.**

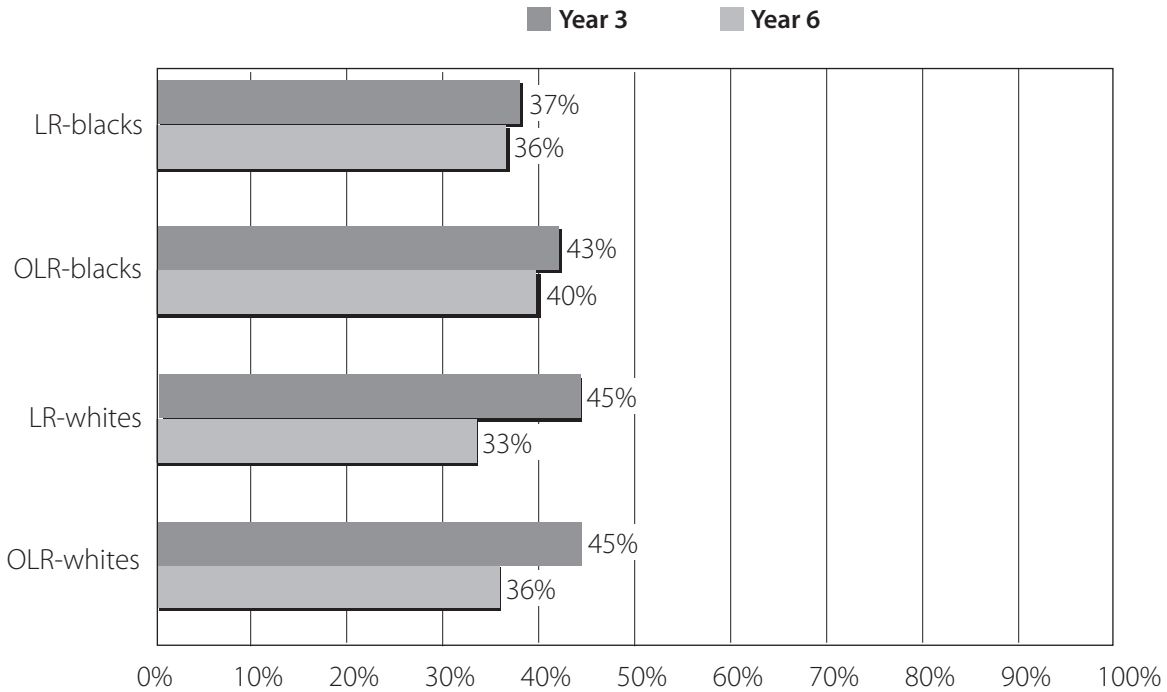
Black and white respondents gave very similar responses to this question.

From 36 to 40 percent of black respondents said they had not gone out socially with members of the other race at all during the previous year, along with 33 to 36 percent of white respondents. At the other end of the scale, between 18 to 20 percent of black and between 20 to 22 percent of white respondents said they had socialized with members of the other race on more than 10 occasions.

The numbers of respondents who said they had gone out with friends of the other race occasionally, once or twice, between three to five times, or five to 10 times, was fairly evenly distributed.

As with the previous question, this question was asked in Year 2 and Year 3 of the survey. The results revealed a similar trend — fewer black and white respondents said they had not gone out socially with other-race friends, as shown in Exhibit 18.

**Exhibit 18**  
**Percentages who said they had not gone out socially with a different race friend in the preceding year**



# The American Dream

The attainment of the “American Dream” is a measure of success or fulfillment familiar to all Americans, whether they subscribe to the concept or not. In 2005 the New York Times ran a poll in which it asked its readers to give their definition of the American Dream. Having and sustaining wealth emerged as the most popular category in this poll. As economic wealth and financial well-being were key features of this year’s special topic, we wanted to ask this same question of Pulaski County residents, to see how they might define the American Dream.

The survey asked, “Do you think you will reach, as you define it, the “American Dream” in your lifetime, or have you already reached it?” This question had a predefined response set: “will reach,” “already reached,” or respondents could volunteer “will not reach.”

The initial question was followed by a second, open-ended, question, “What does the “American Dream” mean to you?” The open-ended question gave respondents the opportunity to express their ideas about the American Dream in their own words, giving context and depth to the answers gathered in the quantitative question. The second question focuses less on numbers and more on individual voices and perceptions.

## Reaching the American Dream

Firstly, we wanted to know if our respondents felt that, according to their own measures, they had achieved the American Dream, or if they felt they would achieve it in their lifetime. We also wanted to see if there were any discernible similarities or differences in the attitudes of whites and blacks on this issue.



*Do you think you will reach, as you define it, ‘The American Dream’ in your lifetime, or have you already reached it?*

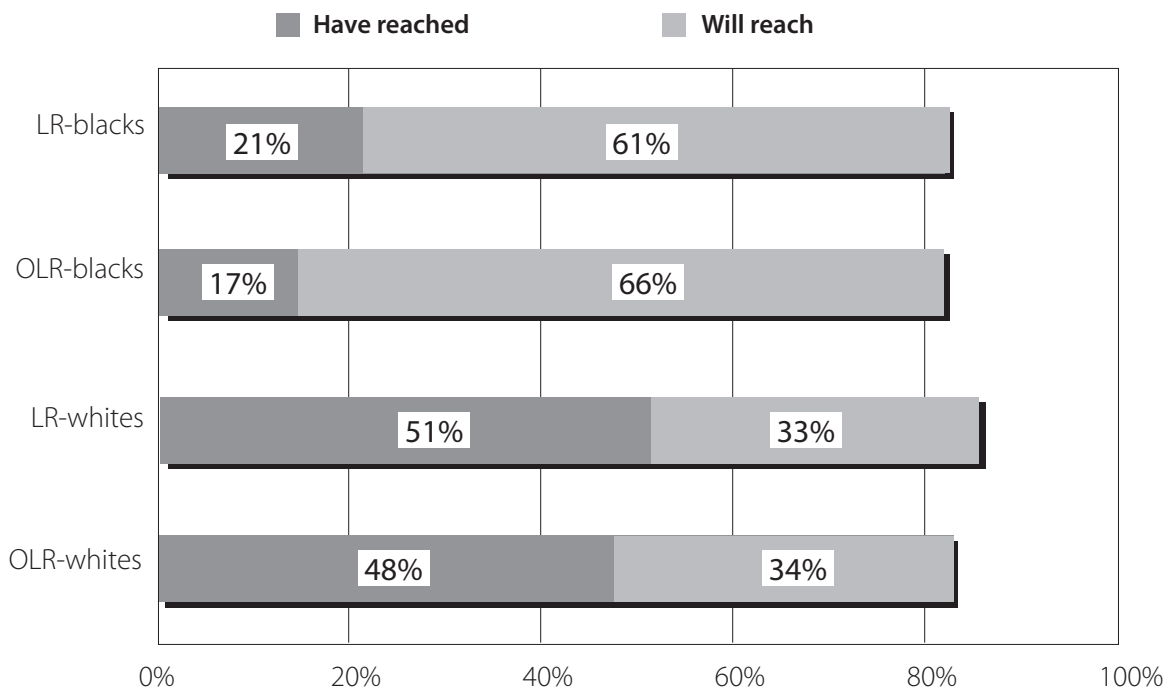
- ◆ **Whites were more than twice as likely as blacks to believe that they have already achieved the American Dream.**
- ◆ **Blacks were nearly twice as likely as whites to believe that they will reach the American Dream in their lifetime.**

The majority of black and white respondents felt that they had already achieved their definition of the American Dream, or that it would be attainable in their lifetimes. However, significant differences can still be seen between black and white respondents.

Whites were nearly twice as likely as blacks to say that they have already reached the American Dream, with approximately one-half of white respondents (48 to 51 percent) giving this answer. Only 17 to 21 percent of black respondents reported feeling they had already reached the American dream at this point in their lives.

However, around two-thirds of black respondents (61 to 66 percent) said that although they had not yet attained the American Dream, they believed that they would reach it in their lifetime. Between 33 to 34 percent of whites gave this response. (See Exhibit 19.)

**Exhibit 19**  
**Percentages who said they have reached or will reach The American Dream**



Some respondents volunteered that they felt they would not reach the American Dream at all. There was little difference here in the number of blacks and whites, with 14 to 15 percent of blacks volunteering this answer compared with 11 to 15 percent of whites. These results are considerably lower than the national average; a 2007 poll found that 27 percent of respondents felt that they would never attain the American Dream. However, these national survey results are not broken down by race, so a direct comparison of these results is not possible.

## Descriptive Responses — the Meaning of the American Dream



*What does the American Dream mean to you?*

The open-ended nature of this question was best served by using a qualitative approach to analysis. A thematic analysis was conducted, and recurrent patterns were identified. These patterns were then organized into categories or themes that shared common characteristics. This section is an overview of the major themes that have emerged from this analysis. The words “theme” and “category” are used interchangeably here.

Although numbers are of less importance for open-ended questions, the themes here are ordered according to popularity. This is to give a sense of what the respondents in our sample perceived to be important. For practical purposes, only the larger themes are explained in detail. If a definite theme emerged, but it contained less than 50 comments, it is included in list form only.

The rest of the results in the Year 6 study have been broken down by geo-racial groups, but in this instance the only breakdown occurs by category. Responses were so varied that any further breakdown would produce unrepresentative results, because so few respondents would be in each category.

The phrase “the American Dream” was first used by James Truslow Adams, in his 1931 book, “The Epic of America.” According to Truslow,

The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement ... It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.

Many of the elements of Truslow’s definition are mirrored in the responses of the Year 6 survey participants. Some of the categories that emerged were quite simple and straightforward, such as “Education.” Others, such as “Money” were more multi-faceted, and contained a broad spectrum of responses.

*"Living comfortably, not worrying about the next paycheck for paying bills (because) you have enough money in the bank."*

*Black Female*

*"A nice neighborhood service-able automobile, decent house, and a few dollars in the bank."*

*White Male*

*"Being able to provide for family, live well, have an education, wealth of knowledge, being able to help family make more positive decisions, to provide child with value and traditions."*

*Black Female*

*"Being able to accomplish anything you set your mind to and having the opportunities regardless of race and religion."*

*Black Male*

*"It means the ability to make a living, worship the way you choose, free to speak [your] mind and earn your living according to ability with no restraints."*

*White Female*

*"Be independent citizen and having the equal opportunity as the declaration states, being economically stable, and being able to pursue your dreams and having freedom."*

*Black Male*

## **Themes Containing More than 5 Percent of Comments**

### **Money: 14 percent of comments**

Money was clearly a very important component of the American Dream for many respondents, and was one of the most popular answers. The majority of responses that formed this theme focused on the idea of having "enough" money to live on, and the ideas of financial security and stability were key.

People wanted to be safe in the knowledge that they could pay their bills, manage or be free from debts, and support themselves and their families. Having a nest egg or money in the bank to provide a financial safety net in times of need or to safeguard the future was also perceived to be important.

Some respondents also wanted to feel that they had some disposable income, so they could enjoy a good standard of living and indulge in some luxuries. A smaller number of respondents went further than this, and felt that achieving the American Dream meant not just being financially stable but being rich or wealthy.

Others felt that financial security was a gateway to independence and freedom of choice.

For some respondents, financial success could be measured by social mobility, or being wealthier than their parents had been. For others, the American Dream was less about individual wealth and more about having a stable national economy.

### **Success: 11 percent of comments**

The notion of being successful was valued by many respondents. The comments included in this theme refer to a broad definition of success. In other words, these are the respondents who said they wanted success or wanted to fulfill dreams and goals, but did not identify a particular area of achievement.

Other elements of this category include attaining the life they desired, reaching their full potential, and having successful children.

### **Freedom: 9 percent of comments**

For some respondents, the idea of the American Dream was powerfully interlinked with the idea of freedom, and this was also bound up with the ideas of opportunity and independence. Constitutional rights were

mentioned frequently, and a great deal of value was placed on the fundamentals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The notion of freedom took on many forms for different people, and included the freedom to succeed, to pursue dreams, and to live the life you want where you choose to live it.

Individual freedom, in the form of independence, was particularly important for some respondents. Respondents wanted to feel free to be themselves, to be in control of their own destinies and to be free from governmental interference or restrictions.

Some respondents referred to macro-level freedoms, such as democracy, freedom to vote and living in a free country. For others, simply being alive and being in America was to live the American Dream. These respondents saw America as a land in which anything was possible, and citizens had the opportunities and freedoms to do what they chose with their lives.

### ***Family and Relationships: 9 percent of comments***

The comments that comprise this category center on interpersonal relationships. The majority of these respondents felt that having a happy marriage or partnership, and a stable family life best typified the American Dream. For many, having children and grandchildren fulfilled their ideals.

Non-familial relationships were also viewed as important, and many respondents spoke about the value of having good friends, solid social networks and good neighbors. For some, the American Dream simply meant having "love" in their lives.

### ***Happiness: 9 percent of comments***

The respondents whose comments form this theme talked about a desire for happiness, contentment and peace of mind. Some of the respondents who spoke about contentment referred to the idea of being content with what you have, but not necessarily in a financial context.

Others spoke about having a life free from stress and worries. For some, happiness meant having a "good life", or a good quality of life, and doing what you want to do with your life. Comments relating to satisfaction and fulfillment are also included in this theme.

*"You've reached some measure of financial security and you have a good family life, good work life, and a good extracurricular family life, you have a healthy family and friends."*

*White Male*

*"Being able to provide for family, live well, have an education, wealth of knowledge, being able to help family make more positive decisions, to provide child with value and traditions."*

*Black Female*

*"Happiness and fulfillment with the way your life is."*

*White Male*

*"Having peace, being financially stable, seeing other people's dreams come to life, being blessed, reaching dreams."*

*Black Female*

*"Being able to do and say anything I want, have the biggest house in the neighborhood with enough money to have that house. Being satisfied with what you have, and being able to worship God."*

*White Female*

### ***Property: 9 percent of comments***

The majority of comments in this theme referred to having a home, and particularly to owning one's own home. Some respondents specified that they wanted to have their mortgages paid off, or to be able to maintain their homes financially.

Others talked about the kind of dwelling or area they would want to live in to satisfy their version of the American Dream. Examples of this include owning a farm or living in the countryside. A smaller number of respondents said that they simply wanted to own property, and did not specify the nature or location of the property.

## ***Themes Containing Less than 5 Percent of Comments***

### ***Comfort: 5 percent of comments***

Comfort/stability, living comfortably, being comfortable, not specifically financial comfort, stability in general, including settling down

### ***Career and Employment: 5 percent of comments***

Career, being successful at job, well paying job, job you enjoy, choose job you want, good job, making a living, being employed, owning own business

### ***Religion, Spirituality and Morality: 4 percent of comments***

Religion/spirituality/morality; worship, freedom to worship, religious life, (Christian) values, being blessed/saved, getting to heaven, no discrimination based on religion, belief, faith, personal qualities, frame of mind, way of living, personal growth, personal development, living life right, honesty

Note: This category is particularly interesting as it marks a departure from the *New York Times* poll. None of the *New York Times'* categories mention religion, spirituality or morality, or indeed any comparable concept.

### ***Health: 3 percent of comments***

Being healthy, health insurance, long life, health care, affording health care, personal health, healthy family

### ***Philanthropy: 3 percent of comments***

Philanthropy, altruism, community; unity, harmony, peace, contribute/give back to society, help others, make the world a better place, loving fellow man, be a good citizen

### ***Education: 2 percent of comments***

Education; for self, children, college/high school education

### ***Equality: 2 percent of comments***

Social equality in all areas, especially race. Equal access to jobs/education, justice, fairness, no prejudice, ending racism, having a black president, Martin Luther King



Note: this category did not emerge in the national poll.

***Retirement: 2 percent of comments***

Retirement; comfortable retirement, early retirement, comfortable old age, savings for retirement, specific date for retirement, pension, being able to afford to retire

***Material possessions: 2 percent of comments***

Specific material possessions, including cars

***Security and Environment: 2 percent of comments***

Safety / security (non-financial); good neighborhood, able to live without threat or harassment, peaceful environment to live in, no fear

***Miscellaneous: 3 percent of comments***

***Further Descriptions of Wealth and Status***

The results of this study and those of the *New York Times* poll indicate that for a great many Americans, wealth and status are an extremely important part of the American Dream. Because of this, and because the special topic in the Year 6 survey relates to money and economic well-being, a second question from the *New York Times* poll was included as an adjunct: “What one thing do you think of as a symbol of wealth and status in the United States?” The responses to this question are included as Appendix C, at the end of the report.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Cell Phone Subsample Study

Because of the concerns that bias may be introduced into the results as the percentage of cell phone only households increases, this year a separate sub-sample study was conducted in conjunction with the Year 6 Racial Attitudes Study. The goal of the study was to explore the similarities and differences between those interviewed by landline and those interviewed by cell phone and develop an understanding of the costs and issues related to cell phone sampling.

For the separate cell phone study, a total of 113 interviews were completed with respondents reached on a cell phone: 60 interviews with cell phone only households and 53 interviews with respondents from households that had both a cell phone and a landline. For the main survey group, 196 interviews were completed with persons who indicated they were in landline-only households (1.2 percent) and 1,442 interviews with respondents in households with both a landline and a cell phone (84.8 percent).

### *Differences between White Respondents (Cell Phone vs. Landline)*

The white respondents in the cell phone study group differed significantly from white respondents in the main survey group on five questions ( $p < .05$ ). A higher percentage of those in the white cell phone study group reported thinking there is a “narrower gap” between black and white people in their standard of living (Q11); that blacks are “not too often” or “hardly ever” discriminated against when they try to rent or find housing (Q23); and have significant lower levels of trust in blacks, whites and Hispanics groups (Q36-Q38). There were no significant differences across the other variables examined between the two groups.

### *Differences between Black Respondents (Cell Phone vs. Landline)*

The black respondents in the cell phone study group differed significantly from black respondents in the main survey group on eight questions ( $p < .05$ ). A higher percentage of those in the black cell phone study group reported that hard work is “essential” or “very important” to get ahead in life (Q9); that it is only “somewhat important” or “not very important” to “know the right people” to get ahead in life (Q10); described their personal financial situation as “just meeting needs” or “not enough to meet expenses” (Q13); that the loan officer “should” be able to turn down the applicant because of lack of a steady job (Q18); that they have not been in a situation where an agent assumed they only wanted to live in black neighborhoods (21b); that blacks are “not too often” or “hardly ever” discriminated against when they try to rent or find housing (Q23); that “almost all” white people dislike blacks (Q29); and reported a higher education level (Q45). There were no significant differences across the other variables examined between the two groups.

## *Conclusion*

Because of the differences seen in this sub-sample study and in numerous national research studies, incorporating cell phone interviews in future years of the Racial Attitudes study is a necessity if surveys are to provide valid, reliable, and representative data. It has been determined that future surveys, because of issues of differential nonresponse and cost per interview, will include all eligible sample members reached by telephone and not focus on cell phone only households. However, there is still much to be considered with regard to weighting and postsurvey adjustments in future years.

## Appendix B: Data Analysis and Demographics

The data were weighted in order to bring the sample representations in line with the actual population proportions in Pulaski County. The data were weighted for age and gender for each of four geo-racial groups. The 2005-2007 American Community Survey, three-year estimates provided the sample estimates that formed the basis for weighting. There were six age groups: 18 to 24 years of age, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55 to 64, and 65 and over. This resulted in a total of 48 weighted groups (six age groups x two gender categories x four geo-racial groups). Weighting values ranged from 0.39 for black women age 65+ living outside the city limits of Little Rock to 7.64 for black men aged 18 to 24 living outside the city limits of Little Rock.

Tables B1 & B2 display the basic demographic characteristics of each geo-racial group sample. The tables show the sample breakdown for the weighted variables (age and gender). Tables B3 & B4 display both the sample and the American Community Survey estimates of the unweighted variables of education and income.

**Table B1: Age**

	LR-blacks	OLR-blacks	LR-white	OLR-whites
18 to 24 years	14%	18%	7%	9%
25 to 34 years	23%	15%	15%	13%
35 to 44 years	18%	20%	17%	18%
45 to 54 years	18%	20%	22%	19%
55 to 64 years	11%	12%	16%	18%
65+ years	8%	10%	18%	20%
Don't Know/ Refused	9%	7%	5%	3%

**Table B2: Gender**

	LR-blacks	OLR-blacks	LR-white	OLR-whites
Male	42%	47%	47%	47%
Female	58%	53%	53%	53%

**Table B3: Education**

	LR-blacks		OLR-blacks		LR-white		OLR-whites	
	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census
Less than High School	5%	15%	15%	17%	3%	7%	7%	12%
High School Graduate	32%	32%	37%	39%	10%	19%	28%	32%
Some post-high-school	32%	34%	26%	32%	24%	24%	24%	30%
College-Degree or more	26%	19%	16%	12%	61%	51%	41%	27%
Don't know/Refused	5%		5%		3%		1%	

**Table B4: Income**

	LR-blacks		OLR-blacks		LR-white		OLR-whites	
	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census
\$0 - \$19,999	19%	34%	21%	37%	4%	12%	9%	17%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	21%	23%	23%	20%	9%	17%	12%	18%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	19%	17%	14%	14%	13%	16%	12%	16%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18%	15%	16%	16%	19%	18%	19%	19%
\$75,000 or more	13%	11%	13%	13%	43%	38%	38%	31%
Don't know/Refused	10%		13%		13%		10%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey, 3-Year Estimates.

## Appendix C: Symbols of Wealth and Status

The survey asked respondents to name something that they thought of as a symbol of wealth and status in the United States. Interestingly, in many cases, responses would not normally be regarded as symbols of wealth or status in the traditional sense of the terms — “religion,” for example. However, the themes which emerged reveal a great deal about the attitudes and perceptions of respondents by indicating what was most important to them in their lives.



*What one thing do you think of as a symbol of wealth and status in the United States?*

### ***Money: 26 percent of comments***

Perhaps unsurprisingly, respondents felt that money was the item which best exemplified wealth and status in the United States. Paralleling the “Money” category in the American Dream question, some respondents spoke about having “enough” money; enough to support themselves and their family, to be able to purchase necessities or to be free of debt. For others, responses range from having a disposable income and material comfort to being extremely wealthy.

Having long term financial security was also viewed as a symbol of wealth and status. Many respondents mentioned savings, portfolios and investments. Related to this was the ability to retire early and/or to retire with no financial worries.

### ***Property: 22 percent of comments***

Again, one of the major themes which emerged in the American Dream question is mirrored here. Having a house or a home was perceived by many to be a symbol of wealth and status. The idea of home-ownership was a key element of this theme.

Other popular responses included owning property or land, living in a location perceived to be desirable, such as the countryside, and owning a second home.

### ***Career and Employment: 5 percent of comments***

Some respondents felt that having a successful or well-paid job was an indicator of wealth and status. For others, it meant being employed, enjoying your job, or owning your own business.

### ***Religion, Morality, and Philanthropy: 4 percent of comments***

This theme is similar in scope to two of the categories found in the results of the American Dream question, “Religion, Spirituality and Morality” and “Philanthropy.” Once again, some respondents felt that spiritual or metaphysical ideals were important as a measure of success and achievement in American society.

Faith and religion were key elements of this theme, as was living a life bound by moral principles such as honesty and integrity. Other comments made reference to the ideas of altruism, charity and “giving back” to society.

For some respondents in this category, a just society and equality for all were of the greatest importance.

There is no comparable category in the *New York Times* poll results.

### ***Cars: 4 percent of comments***

For some respondents, having a car indicated wealth and status. Others felt that this was especially true of expensive cars, or if a person owned more than one vehicle.

### ***Education: 4 percent of comments***

The respondents whose comments form this category felt that having or pursuing an education was a symbol of success. Having children in college or having a college education oneself was also a feature of this theme.

### ***Family and Interpersonal Relationships: 4 percent of comments***

Once again, some respondents valued family and interpersonal relationships. The majority of comments made reference to familial relations; having a family, especially a happy family, having grandchildren, or having a spouse or partner.

Others focused on having good friends, and having love as a part of their life.

### ***Health: 4 percent of comments***

As with the “Health” category in the American Dream question, responses referring to health can be divided into roughly two sub-categories; those respondents who spoke about having or maintaining personal physical and/or mental health, and those who focused on having a good health plan or benefits.

### ***Happiness: 3 percent of comments***

The theme of happiness emerged as non-material indicator of wealth and status. These respondents spoke about contentment and having peace of mind, as well as being content with what you have in life. Other respondents mentioned the notion of peace, as a general concept or quality.

### ***Freedom: 2 percent of comments***

Although “Freedom” emerged as a theme once again, fewer respondents referred to this concept on this occasion.

The key features of the category were similar however to those found in the American Dream question, with respondents referring to freedom of choice, freedom to pursue dreams and opportunities, and being independent and self-sufficient.

### *Miscellaneous*

- Status: Class, standing, recognition, respect, privilege, external appearances, fame, celebrity
- Material Possessions: Specific material goods (airplane, yacht), consumer goods in general
- Comfort: Comfortable living, being comfortable, not necessarily financial comfort
- Neighborhood: Living in a good neighborhood or community
- Specific person, thing or symbol: E.g. Donald Trump, oil, Statue of Liberty
- Government: Politics, being a politician, having a good government, ability to vote
- Negative comments: E.g. Symbols of wealth and status are meaningless, poverty and corruption exist in America
- Way of life, lifestyle
- Travel, vacations
- Being American, living in America
- Stability