

THE THE GENERATIONAL DIVIDE

How Deeply Do Women Differ?

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Generational Divides: How deeply do women differ?

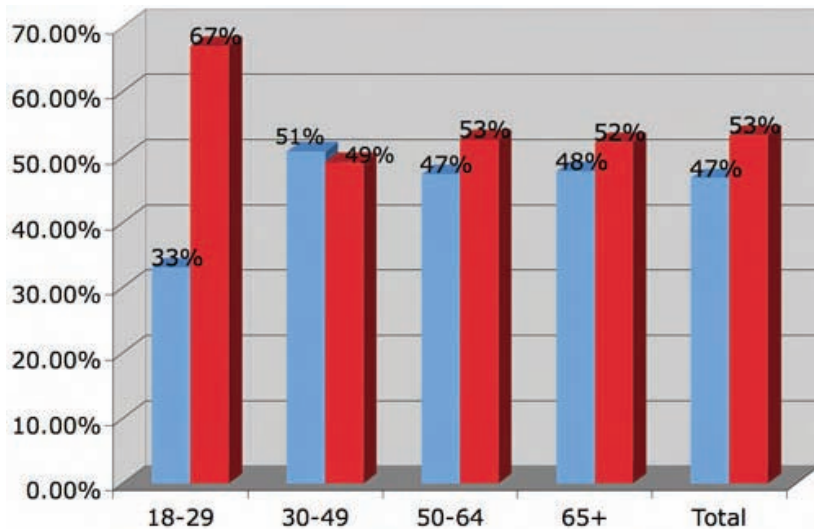
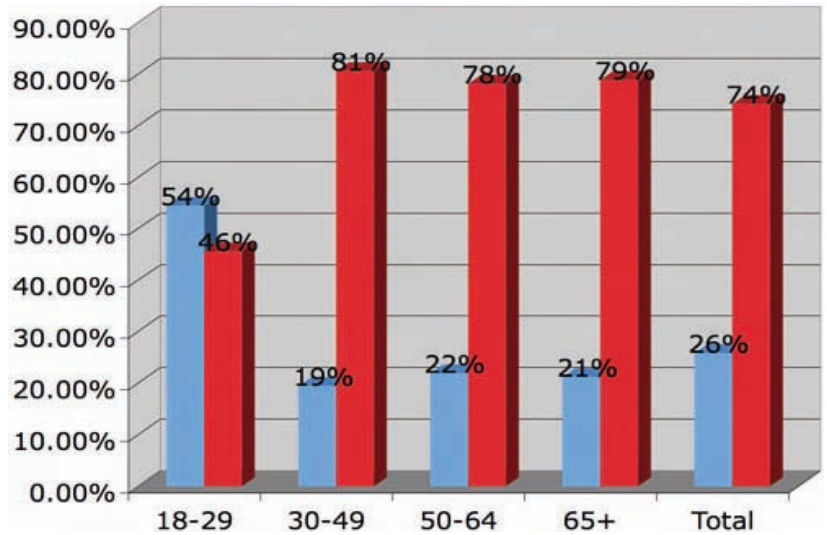
Last year, Zogby International and the Norman Lear Center surveyed 1,637 American women about their political beliefs and their media, entertainment and leisure preferences. Looking through the data, we realized that there were some stark differences among women of different ages. Not only do they gravitate toward different media and entertainment channels, they also spend their leisure time differently, and they often have widely varying views about the biggest political issues of our day.

Some of the results about political values were not surprising: when it comes to the environment, taxes, guns, affirmative action, war, and business regulation, the youngest group consistently took a more liberal position than older women. However, there were several provocative discoveries that suggested that we should not assume that women become more conservative as they grow older.

Morality and the Government

While over 74% of each group over 30 said the government is *too* involved in regulating morality, only 46% of 18-29 year olds agreed. The youngest group was the only one to have a majority say that “government should regulate morality.”

- Gov't should regulate morality
- Gov't too involved in regulating morality



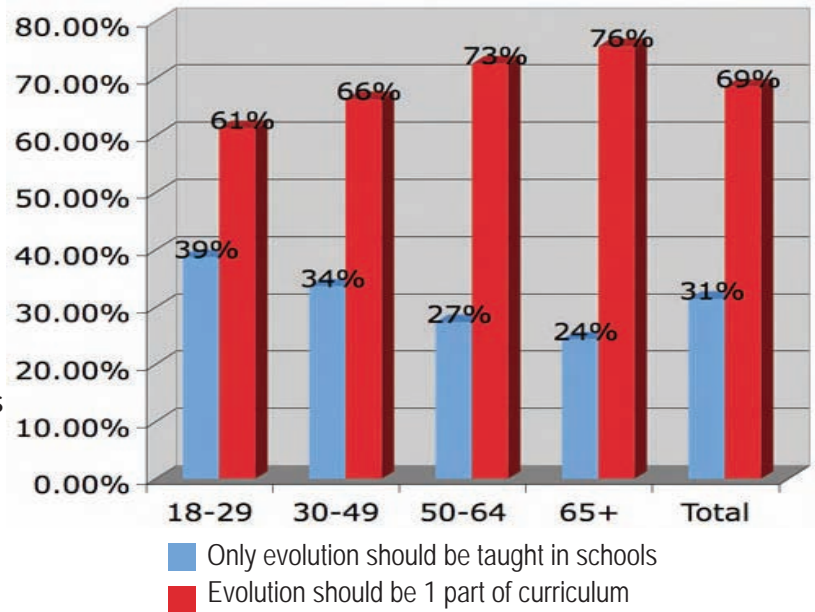
Religion's Role

In a sign that “morality” may not necessarily mean “religion,” our survey found that the youngest group were the most likely to believe that “religion should be left out of public life” (67%). Although we expected older women to be more open to the role of religion in public life, we found that all the age groups over 29 were nearly evenly split on the issue.

- More religion in public life
- No religion in public life

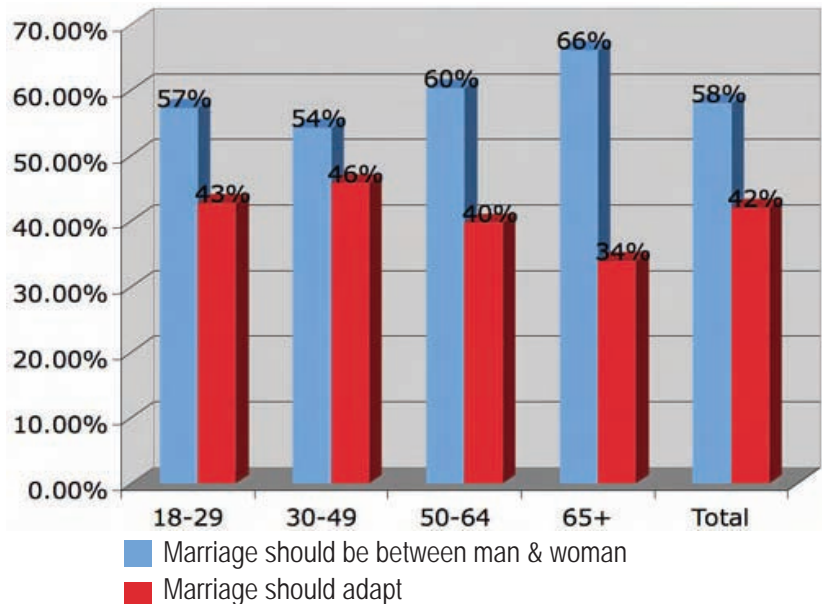
Evolution and Intelligent Design

A strong majority of women in all age groups (69%) believe that evolution should be just one part of the educational curriculum, which suggests that religious institutions and intelligent design proponents have been successful at convincing the public that evolution is just one theory among others. Although we did not see an increased religiosity among older women in the previous question, we did find that older women were less likely to endorse evolution over other theories.



Marriage Equality

A majority of women in every age bracket said that "marriage should only be between one man and one woman." While it is commonly believed that younger people are more open-minded about the issue, our survey found that 30-49 year-old women were the most likely to believe that "marriage should adapt to a changing society" (46%). When the Pew Research Center recently asked about [gay and lesbian marriage](#), they found that women are more likely than men to support it (43% vs. 34%) and we found similar results (42% vs 36%). However – and this could be due to the fact that we asked the question so differently – our results differ significantly among 18-29 year-olds: Pew found that 18-29 year-olds favor same-sex marriage by an 8% margin, while we found the group was split right down the middle. Unfortunately, Pew did not release data about women by age bracket.

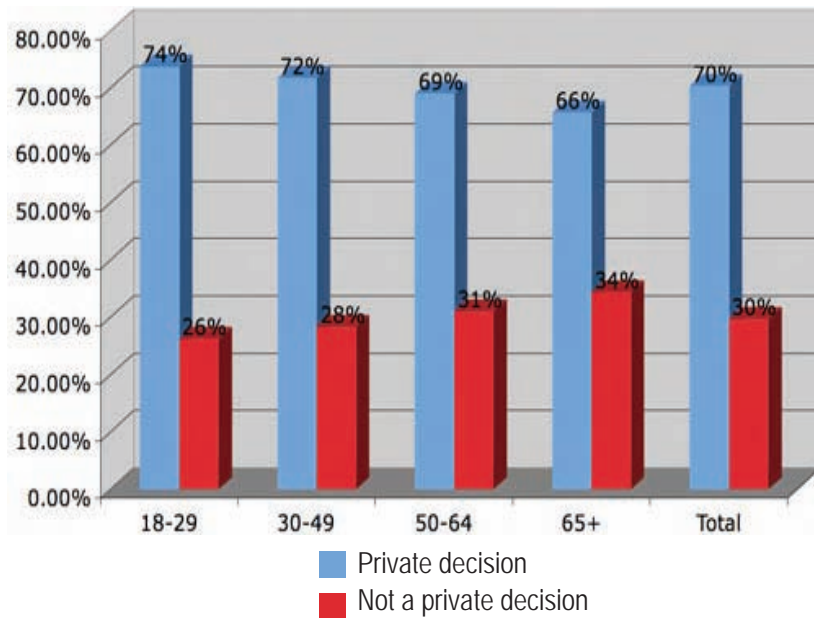
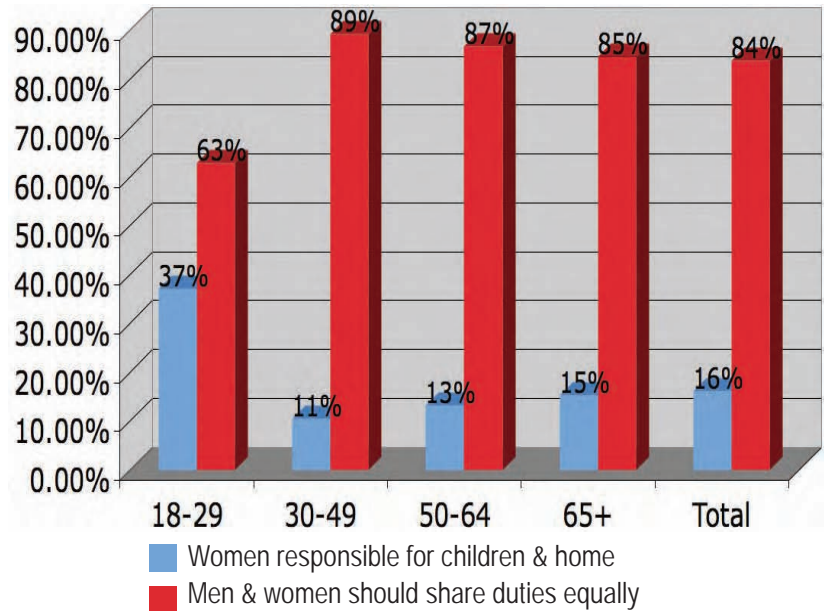


The Role of Women

It's not surprising that a majority of women in all age groups believes that men and women should share duties equally in the home. However, women in the 18-29 age group were the least likely to agree. While 37% of 18-29 year olds said a "woman's responsibility is to take care of the home," no more than 15% of women in older age groups agreed.

This finding resonates with the results of a 2009 *TIME* magazine survey published in [The Shriver Report](#). That survey found that a traditional family structure is still favored by a majority of men and women, even though

women are now half of the nation's workforce. Clearly, younger women are grappling with these opposing expectations in a way that most older women are not.

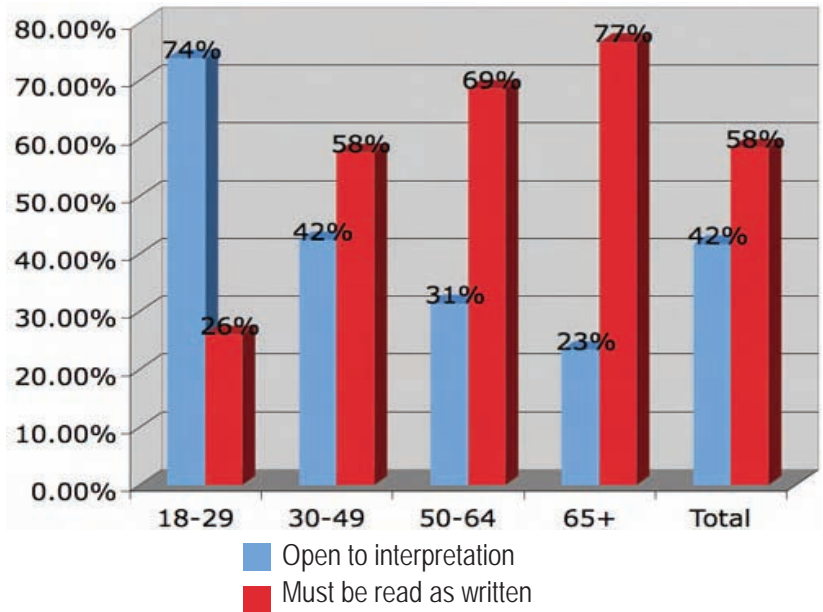


Abortion Rights

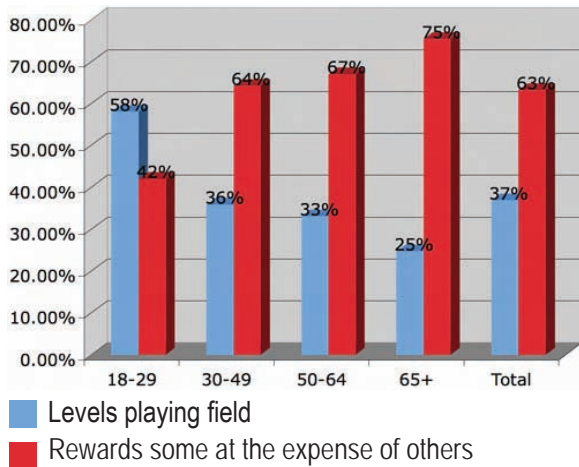
We expected to see a stronger commitment to abortion rights among younger demographics, but we found a very consistent belief among the majority of women of all ages that "abortion is a private decision between a woman and her doctor." Recently, there have been reports that [support for abortion is slipping](#), but when the issue is framed as a "private decision," as [Zogby](#) has, American public opinion remains consistent, with 64% in favor and 27% against.

Interpreting the Constitution

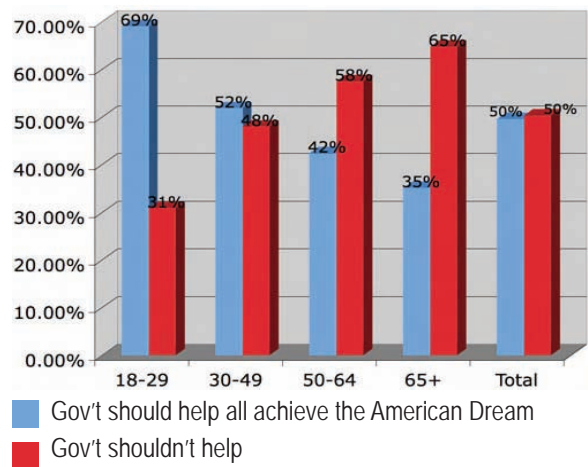
One of the most polarizing questions had to do with how the U.S. Constitution ought to be read. While 74% of 18-29 year olds believe the document is open to interpretation, 77% of women over 65 believe it should be read just as it is. The generation gap apparent in these attitudes toward the founding document of our democracy suggests that we may see profound shifts in our political and judicial system as these young women come of age.



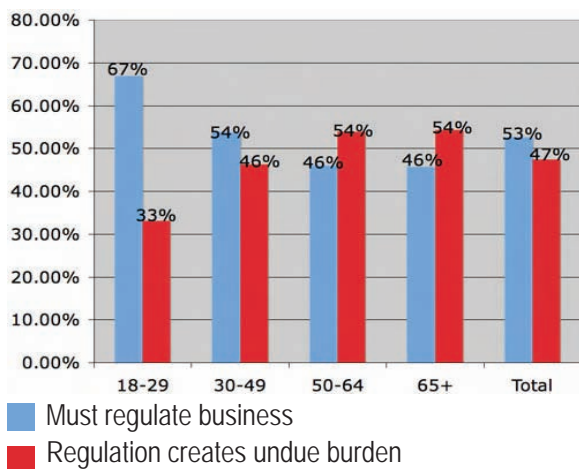
Affirmative Action



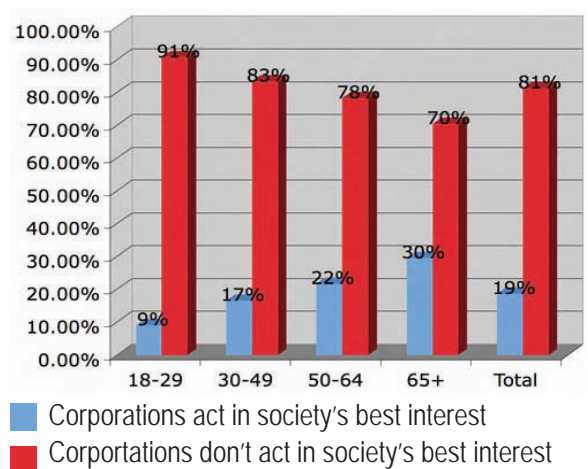
American Dream



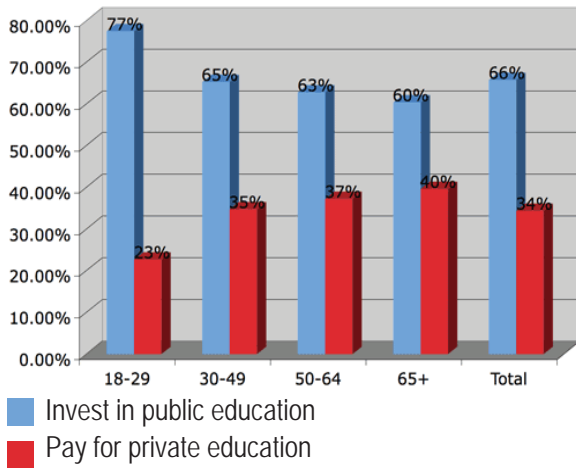
Business Regulation



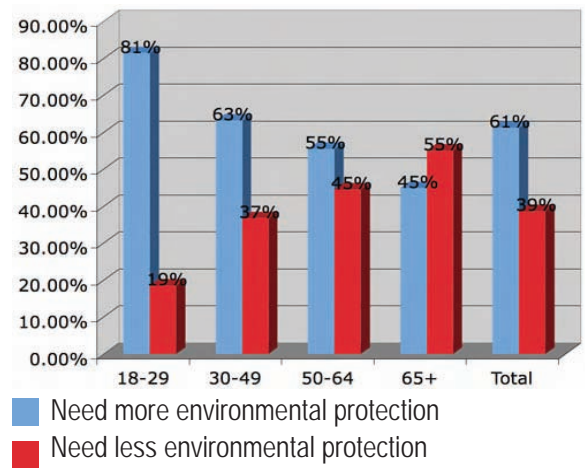
Corporate Responsibility



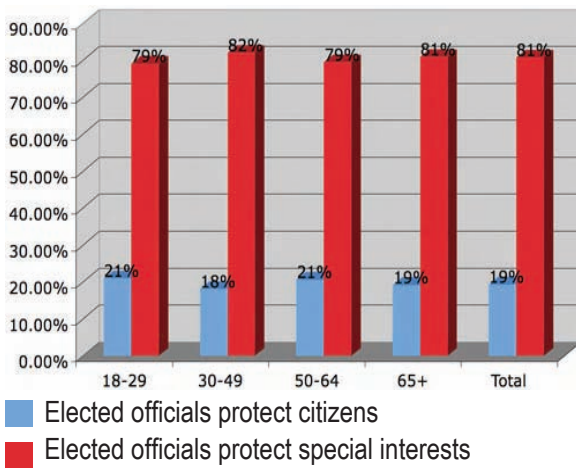
Education



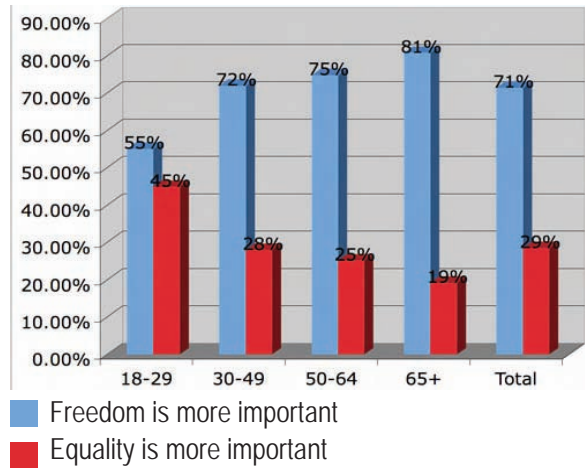
Environment



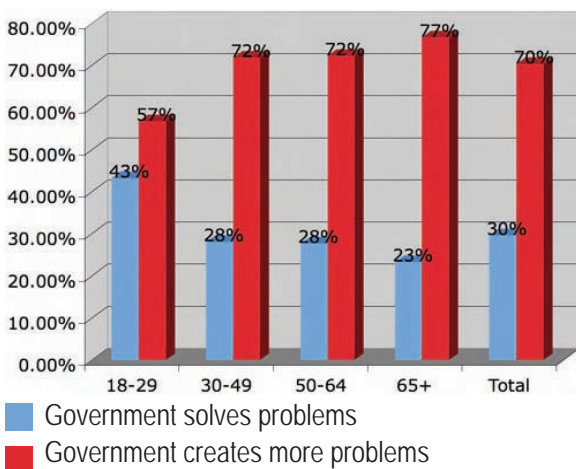
Elected Officials Interests



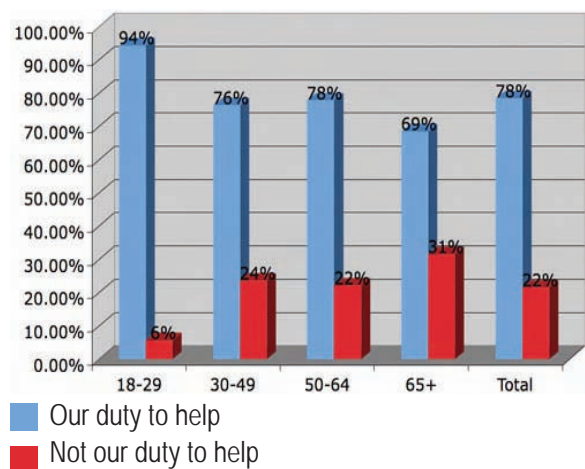
Freedom vs. Equality



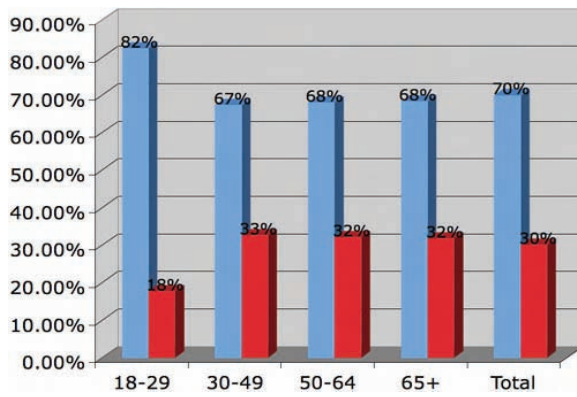
Government Problems



Helping the Less Fortunate

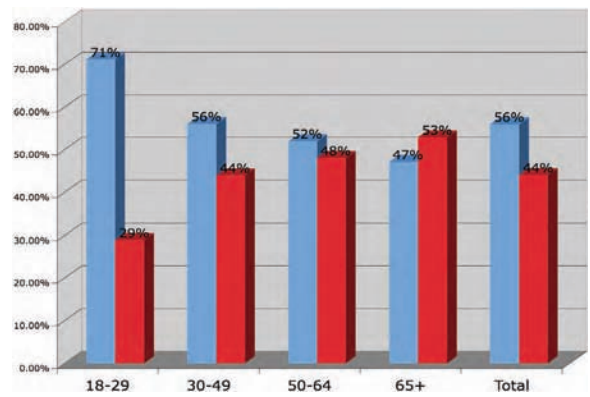


Immigrants



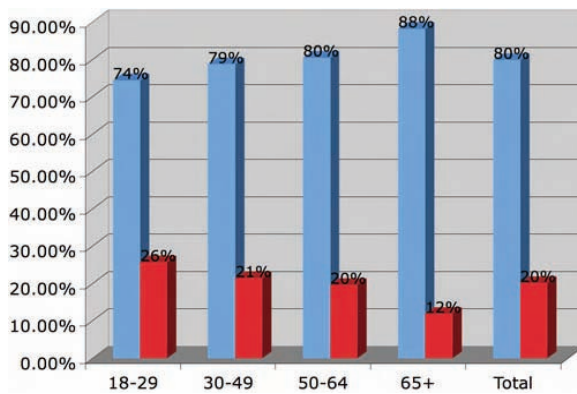
■ Immigrants work for a better life
■ Immigrants want to be handed a better life

Liberties vs. Security



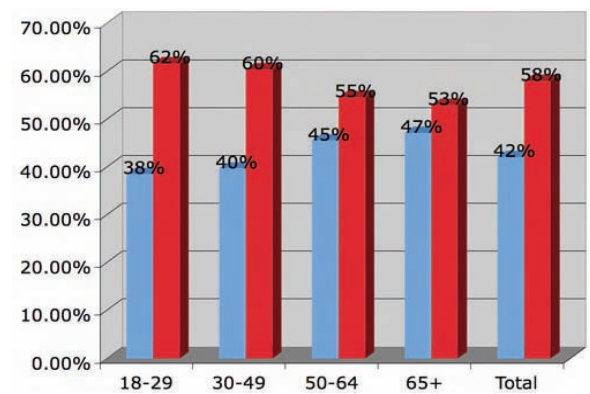
■ Liberties are more important
■ Security is more important

Mainstream Media



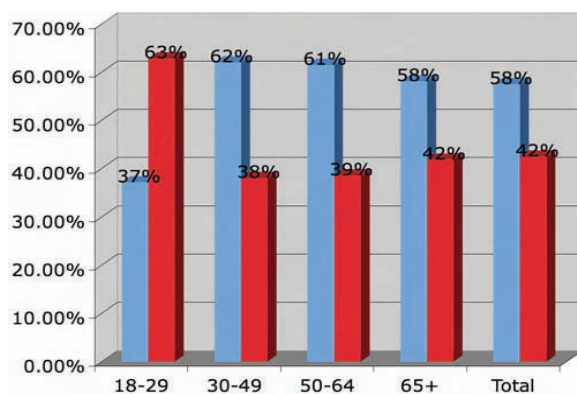
■ Mainstream media drives political agenda
■ Mainstream media is market-driven

Promoting Democracy



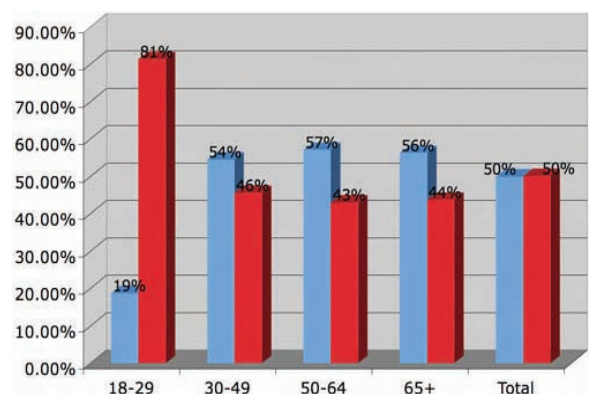
■ America should promote democracy
■ Not America's job to promote democracy

Reduced Taxes



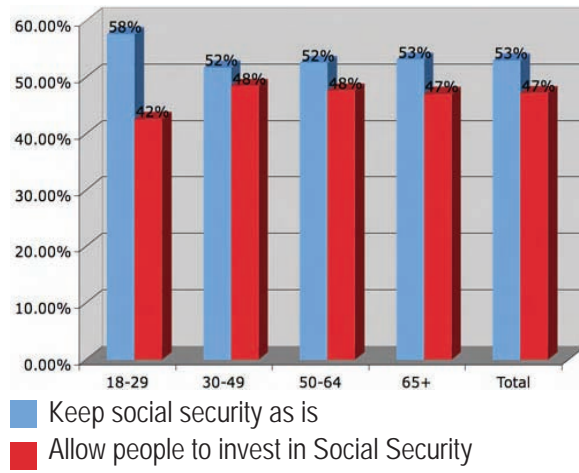
■ All would benefit
■ Not all would benefit

Right to Arms



■ Absolute right to bear arms
■ Regulate gun ownership

Social Security



War on Terror

