

Americans just as proud to be an American citizen now as after 9/11

Two-thirds say living in freedom and owning a home are parts of the American Dream

New York, NY — September 10, 2009 — As the eighth anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 arrives, Americans are still as proud to be American citizens now as they were just months after the attacks when waves of patriotism were sweeping the nation. In May 2002, 97% of American citizens said they were proud to be an American citizen while currently 95% say they are proud. What has lessened a little is the number of Americans who are very proud – in 2002 84% were very proud while currently 78% say they are very proud.

These are some of the results of [The Harris Poll](#)[®] of 2,498 U.S. adults surveyed online between August 10 and 18, 2009 by [Harris Interactive](#)[®].

Thinking of the *Star Spangled Banner*, when Americans hear the national anthem being played, 87% say they usually feel proud to be an American. In 2002, nine in ten Americans (90%) said they felt proud when they heard the national anthem. There is an age difference, however. Among those aged 65 and older, 99% say they feel proud to be an American when they hear the national anthem as do 91% of those aged 50-64, 88% of those aged 40-49 and 86% of those aged 30-39. Among younger Americans this feeling is not as strong as 73% of those aged 18-24 and 72% of those aged 25-29 say they feel proud when they hear the *Star Spangled Banner*.

American Symbols

When Americans are asked what the top three symbols of the United States are, that is symbols that stand for or represent America to them and the world, 85% say the American flag. Over half (53%) say one symbol is the Statue of Liberty while two in five (42%) say it is the *Star Spangled Banner*. Just over one in five (22%) say the bald eagle is a symbol while 20% say the White House and 16% each say *God Bless America* and the President are symbols of the U.S.

American Foods

Looking to American foods, almost one-quarter of Americans (23%) say they think a hamburger/cheeseburger is a food that is more typically American over others. One in five (18%) say it is apple pie and the same number say a typical American food is a hot dog. Less than one in ten say each of the following are typically more American than others: barbeque (8%); fried chicken (6%), French fries (1%), and ice cream (1%). But one-quarter of U.S. adults (24%) say that no one food is more typically American than any others.

The American Dream

The American Dream is something that exists differently for each person. However, for two-thirds of Americans (68%) living in freedom is one of the top three parts of the American dream, for 56% it is being able to own a home and for 47% it is being financially secure. Interestingly, in 2002, just 40% said owning a home was one of the top three parts of the American dream but 78% said it was living in freedom. One-third (33%) say democracy is a part of the American dream and three in ten (30%) say it is having a good job.

So What?

One of the questions often asked after the events of September 11th was if the wave of patriotism would last over time. While there have probably been ups and downs, it is still clear that patriotism exists in the country as a whole. One thing that has changed is some of the pieces of the American dream. Most likely reflecting the recent economic turmoil, pieces such as owning a home, having a decent job and being financially secure are all at least a little more likely to come up as pieces of the dream than in 2002. But the pieces such as democracy and living in freedom are all down as Americans have not been challenged as a country since those events 8 years ago. The American dream is consistent in its existence, but also consistent in how the various pieces play an ever changing role, reflecting the greater American picture at the point in time.

TABLE 1

HOW PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN

"How proud would you say you are to be an American citizen?"

Base: U.S. citizens

	Total	AGE					
		18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65 +
		%	%	%	%	%	%
PROUD (NET)	95	91	88	96	95	97	99
Very proud	78	65	63	75	77	83	90
Somewhat proud	18	27	24	21	18	14	9
NOT PROUD (NET)	4	8	8	3	5	3	1
Not very proud	3	6	8	2	4	3	1
Not at all proud	1	2	1	1	1	*	*
Don't know	1	*	4	1	1	*	*

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 2

HOW PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN

"How proud would you say you are to be an American citizen?"

Base: U.S. citizens

	May 2002	Aug. 2009
	%	%
PROUD (NET)	97	95
Very proud	84	78
Somewhat proud	12	18
NOT PROUD (NET)	3	4
Not very proud	2	3
Not at all proud	*	1
Don't know	1	1

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 3

FEEL PROUD WHEN HEAR NATIONAL ANTHEM

“When you hear the national anthem, the Star Spangled Banner, being played, to you usually feel proud to be an American?”

Base: U.S. citizens

	Total	AGE					
		18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65 +
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, usually feel proud	87	73	72	86	88	91	99
No, do not usually feel proud	7	15	13	8	8	6	1
Don't know	6	13	15	6	5	3	1

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 4

FEEL PROUD WHEN HEAR NATIONAL ANTHEM

“When you hear the national anthem, the Star Spangled Banner, being played, to you usually feel proud to be an American?”

Base: U.S. citizens

	May 2002	Aug. 2009
	%	%
Yes, usually feel proud	90	87
No, do not usually feel proud	5	7
Don't know	5	6

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 5**TOP 3 SYMBOLS OF U.S. – THAT REPRESENT AMERICA**

“Which of the following do you think of as the top three symbols of the United States – that stand for or represent America to you and the world?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	May 2002	Aug. 2009
	%	%
The American flag (stars and stripes)	81	85
The Statue of Liberty	63	53
“Star Spangled Banner” (the national anthem)	42	42
The bald eagle	25	22
The White House	19	20
“God Bless America” (the song)	18	16
The President/President Bush	13	16
The English language	7	9
“America the Beautiful” (the song)	7	8
Washington, D.C.	7	7
The Capitol Building	4	5
McDonald’s	3	3
The Grand Canyon	1	3
The Empire State Building	3	2
Cowboys	1	2
Another symbol	2	n/a
Don’t know	*	2

Note: Multiple responses accepted

TABLE 6**THE TYPICAL AMERICAN FOOD**

“Which one of the following foods do you think of as more typically American than others?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	May 2002	Aug. 2009
	%	%
Hamburger/Cheeseburger	29	23
Apple pie	20	18
Hot dog	13	18
Barbecue	9	8
Fried chicken	7	6
French fries	2	1
Ice cream	1	1
Other food	*	n/a
No one food is more typically American than others	18	24
Don’t know	2	2

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 7
WHAT IS THE AMERICAN DREAM?

“Which of the following do you think of as the top three parts of the American dream?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	May 2002	Aug. 2009
	%	%
Living in freedom	78	68
Owning a home	40	56
Being financially secure	45	47
Democracy	42	33
Having a good job	23	30
Getting a decent education	30	22
Children do better than parents	17	18
Getting good medical care	14	12
Owning a car	4	3
Other	2	n/a
Don't know	*	2

Note: Multiple responses accepted

The Harris Poll® #101, September 10, 2009

By Regina A. Corso, Director, The Harris Poll

Methodology

This *Harris Poll* was conducted online within the United States August 10 and 18, 2009, among 2,984 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

J36836

Q860, 865, 870, 875, 880

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is a global leader in custom market research. With a long and rich history in multimodal research, powered by our science and technology, we assist clients in achieving business results. Harris Interactive serves clients globally through our North American, European and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.