

<u>NEWS Release</u> 1615 L Street, N.W., Suite 700 Washington, D.C. 20036 Tel (202) 419-4350 Fax (202) 419-4399

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday June 22, 2010

<u>Life in 2050: Amazing Science, Familiar Threats</u>
PUBLIC SEES A FUTURE FULL OF PROMISE AND PERIL

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
Pew Research Center for the People & the Press
202-419-4350
http://www.people-press.org

<u>Life in 2050: Amazing Science, Familiar Threats</u> PUBLIC SEES A FUTURE FULL OF PROMISE AND PERIL

Imagine a future in which cancer becomes a memory, ordinary people travel in space, and computers carry on conversations like humans. Now imagine a darker future – a world beset by

war, rising temperatures and energy shortages, one where the United States faces a terrorist attack with nuclear weapons.

Most Americans think that these developments and many others are likely to unfold over the next 40 years. In the public's view, this promises to be an era of technological progress. Large majorities expect that computers will be able to carry on conversations (81% say this definitely or probably will happen) and that there will be a cure for cancer (71%). About two-thirds (66%) say that artificial arms and legs will outperform real limbs while 53% envision ordinary people traveling in space.

At the same time, most say that war, terrorism and environmental catastrophes are at least probable by the year 2050. Nearly sixin-ten (58%) see another world war as definite

Imagining Life in 2050					
In next 40 years	Probably Will	//Definite	ly		
,			DΙ		
Science/technology	happen %	happen %	<u>DK</u> %		
Computers will be able	, ,	, 0	, ,		
to converse like humans	81	18	1=100		
Cancer will be cured	71	27	2=100		
Artificial limbs will perform better than natural ones	66	31	3=100		
Ordinary people will travel in space	53	45	2=100		
Energy/environment Most of our energy will not come from coal/oil/gas	74	24	6=100		
World will face major energy crisis	72	25	3=100		
Earth will get warmer	66	30	4=100		
War/terrorism Another world war	58	37	4=100		
Major terrorist attack on U.S. involving nuclear weapons	53	43	4=100		
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of					

or probable; 53% say the same about the prospect for a major terrorist attack on the United States involving nuclear weapons. An even higher percentage (72%) anticipates that the world will face a major energy crisis in the next 40 years.

rounding.

The public is evenly divided over whether the quality of the earth's environment will improve over the next 40 years; as many say the environment is not likely to improve (50%) as say it is (47%). There continues to be a widespread belief that the earth will get warmer in the future, though the percentage expressing this view has declined by 10 points, from 76% to 66%, since 1999.

Moreover, 60% say the world's oceans will be less healthy 40 years from now than they are today; just 32% say the oceans will be more healthy. The survey was conducted just after the

April 20 explosion and fire on the Deepwater Horizon well in the Gulf of Mexico but before the full extent of the massive environmental damage caused by the oil leak became evident.

These are among the findings of a new survey of attitudes and expectations about the future, conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and Smithsonian

magazine in conjunction with the magazine's 40th anniversary (see "40 Things You Need to Know about the Next 40 Years"). The survey, conducted by landline and cell phones April 21-26 among 1,546 adults, was informed by a 1999 survey on the future that explored many of the same topics (see "Optimism Reigns, Technology Plays Key Role," October 24, 1999).

Despite the current economic slump and the widespread anticipation of crises to come, most Americans remain upbeat about the future, both for themselves and the nation. Today, 64% say they are very or somewhat optimistic about life for themselves and their family over the next 40 years, while 61% are optimistic about the future of the United States. Moreover, 56% say the U.S. economy will be stronger than it is today.

Most Americans Still Optimistic about the Long-Term Future					
Over next 40 years, view of Life for you/your family Optimistic Pessimistic Don't know	May 1999 % 81 15 4 100	April 2010 % 64 31 4 100			
Future of U.S. Optimistic Pessimistic Don't know	70 27 <u>3</u> 100	61 36 <u>3</u> 100			
U.S. economy will be Stronger Weaker Neither/DK	64 31 <u>5</u> 100	56 39 <u>5</u> 100			
Pew Research Center/Smith April 21-26, 2010. Figures mand 100% because of rounding.					

Today's recession-weary public is less sanguine about the long-term future than it was in May 1999, a time of very strong economic growth. Still, majorities across most demographic and political groups see things getting better – both for themselves and the nation – over the next four decades.

Race Relations and Health Care Expected to Improve

Thinking ahead 40 years, 68% say race relations in the United States will better, which is unchanged from the 1999 survey. And in the wake of the election of the nation's first African American president, large majorities say that the election of a woman (89%) and Hispanic (69%) will definitely or probably occur.

Notably, far more Americans think that health care will be more affordable in the future than did so in May 1999. Currently, 50% say health care will be more affordable in 2050, while 46% say it will be less affordable. In 1999, just 36% said health care would be more affordable compared with 60% who said it would be less affordable.

While a clear majority (58%) expects the gap between rich and poor in the United States to grow by 2050, fewer people say this than did so in 1999 (69%). About a third (34%) now says the rich-poor gap will get smaller, up from 27% 11 years ago.

However, Americans are less optimistic about long-term prospects for public education than they were 11 years ago. About half (49%) say the public education system will improve by 2050, down from 66% who expressed that view in 1999.

The public expresses mixed views about America's role in the world in 2050. On the one hand, people are divided over whether China will overtake the U.S. as the world's main superpower – 46% say this will definitely or probably happen, while 49% say it will not.

The U.S. in 2050						
More likely to happen in the U.S Race relations Will improve Will get worse	May 1999 % 68 28	April 2010 % 68 23				
Rich/poor gap Will grow Will get smaller	69 27	58 34				
<i>Health care</i> Will be more affordable Will be less affordable	36 60	50 46				
Public education Will improve Will get worse	66 30	49 46				
Role in the world Will be more important Will be less important		40 53				
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010.						

However, most Americans (53%) say that the United States will be less important in the world 40 years from now than it is today; 40% say it will be more important.

SECTION 1: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Many Americans see dramatic scientific and technological advancements on the horizon, with big developments in medicine, engineering, space travel and computers. However, despite the widely anticipated scientific breakthroughs – including the elimination of fossil fuels and

gas-powered cars – the public foresees a grim environmental future. Rising world temperatures, more polluted oceans and severe water shortages in the U.S. are seen as definite or probable over the next 40 years.

Fully 81% think computer science will have progressed to the point where a computer will probably or definitely be able to carry on a conversation indistinguishable from that of a human being – passing the so-called "Turing test" – by mid-century. And two-thirds of the public (66%) say that technological advancements will likely result in the development of "bionic" limbs – artificial arms and legs that perform better than natural ones.

Most Expect Manned Missions to Mars by 2050					
	Will	/Definitely Will not			
In next 40 years Computers will be able to	happen %	%	<u>DK</u> %		
converse like human beings	81	18	1=100		
There will be a cure for cancer	71	27	2=100		
There will be artificial limbs that perform better than natural ones	66	31	3=100		
Astronauts will land on Mars	63	34	2=100		
Ordinary people will travel in space	53	45	2=100		
An extinct animal will be brought back through cloning	51	47	2=100		
We will find evidence of life elsewhere in the universe	50	45	4=100		
Human beings will be cloned	48	49	3=100		
Computer chips will be embedder in Americans for identification	d 48	50	2=100		
Scientists will be able to tell thoughts from brain scans	42	55	4=100		
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.					

In the wake of recent shifts in NASA's plans for manned missions to the moon and the imminent end of the space shuttle program, Americans by and large remain optimistic that astronauts will land on Mars in the next 40 years.

However, fewer now say this is likely than did so 11 years ago (63% today, 76% in 1999). While there are few demographic differences in predictions about space exploration, college graduates are more doubtful than others; 57% of college graduates say astronauts will definitely or probably land on the red planet within 40 years, while 67% of those without college degrees expect this to happen.

The public is more divided when it comes to other space-related scientific advancements. Half (50%) say that by 2050 there definitely or probably will be evidence that humans are not alone in the universe, while 45% say that this evidence probably or definitely won't exist by then. And about as many people anticipate that within 40 years ordinary people will be able to travel in space (53%) as think it unlikely this will happen (45%).

Americans are also split in their expectations about the future of cloning. Roughly half of Americans foresee scientists bringing an animal species back from extinction through cloning (51%), while nearly as many (47%) say this will definitely or probably not take place by 2050. Views about whether human cloning is a probable part of the next 40 years are also mixed (48% say it is and 49% say it is not), little changed since 1999.

The embedding of computer chips in order to identify Americans – familiar to many through science fiction – also gets mixed predictions. While half (50%) say this probably or definitely will not occur by 2050, almost as many (48%) say that it probably or definitely will.

About four-in-ten (42%) say it is likely that scientists will be able to tell what people are thinking by scanning their brains, another prediction that may seem like something straight out of science fiction; yet researchers are currently exploring this through the use of functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). However, a majority (55%) says this will definitely or probably not happen.

Only about three-in-ten college graduates (31%) and 37% of those with some college experience say brain scans will allow scientists to read minds, while 50% of those who did not attend college anticipate that this will definitely or probably happen within 40 years.

Paper Will Be Passé?

If the public's predictions are to be believed, those working and living 40 years from now should be prepared for a paperless future. Nearly two-thirds (64%) say paper editions of newspapers will no longer exist, while 34% think they will still be around. Majorities of most demographic groups expect the demise of print newspapers, and those with at least some college experience are especially likely to do so.

Paperless Future Predicted						
In next 40 years Paper newspapers will no longer exist	Probabl Will happen % 64	y/Definitely Will not <u>happen</u> % 34	DK % 1=100			
Paper money won't exist, all electronic transactions	63	35	2=100			
Almost no one will send personal letters in mail	61	37	2=100			
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.						

A similar number (63%) thinks that paper money will definitely or probably cease to exist, with all financial transactions being electronic; some 35% do not think this will happen in the next 40 years. And with no newspaper clippings or cash-filled birthday cards to send, most predict that almost no one will send personal letters in the mail: 61% say this will definitely or probably happen; 37% of the public disagrees.

Energy and the Environment

Public opinion about the condition of the planet and the energy situation over the next 40 years includes several dire predictions as well as some optimistic ones. Across many of these

measures, those who hold more pessimistic views about the future of the environment are also more likely to be pessimistic about the future of the country.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) say that it is likely that "most of our energy will come from sources other than coal, oil, and gas" while just 24% say that this is unlikely. A smaller majority (54%) thinks that production of automobiles powered by gasoline will have stopped by 2050; 41% say this is unlikely to happen. At the same time, 72% of

More Alternative Energy, But Global Energy Crisis Nonetheless					
In next 40 years Most energy from alternative	<i>Probably</i> Will <u>happen</u> %	//Definitely Will not <u>happen</u> %	<u>DK</u> %		
sources	74	24	2=100		
Major world energy crisis	72	25	3=100		
The earth will get warmer	66	30	4=100		
No more gas-powered cars	54	41	4=100		
Severe fresh water shortages in most of U.S.	53	43	3=100		
Improved environmental quality	47	50	3=100		
Pew Research Center/ <i>Smithsonian</i> magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.					

Americans say that the world is likely to experience a major worldwide energy crisis by the end of the next four decades.

In terms of the overall quality of the environment, about as many expect it will not improve over the next 40 years (50%) as say it will get better (47%). Moreover, two-thirds (66%) say the earth will definitely or probably get warmer over this period; just 30% say this definitely or probably won't happen. Six-in-ten (60%) say the world's oceans will be less healthy in 40 years than they are today. And more Americans say the country is likely to experience severe fresh water shortages (53%) than say this is unlikely to happen (43%).

Young Are More Pessimistic about Environment

People younger than 30 are considerably more pessimistic than older Americans about the environment over the next four decades. About three-quarters (74%) of those under 30 say

the oceans will be less healthy in 2050 than they are today, a view shared by 60% of 30 to 49 year olds, but smaller majorities of older Americans.

Similarly, a 62% majority of those under 30 expect that the quality of the earth's environment will not improve by 2050, the highest percentage in any age

Young People Anticipate a Grim Environmental Future					
In next 40 years	18-29 %	30-49 %	50-64 %	<u>65+</u> %	Young-old <u>diff</u>
World's oceans will be less healthy than today	74	60	55	51	+23
Environmental quality will not improve*	62	51	43	42	+20
Earth will get warmer*	77	63	65	61	+16
* Definitely/probably. Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010.					

group. There is also an age gap in predictions of a rise in earth's temperature: 77% of younger Americans say the earth will definitely or probably get warmer, compared with 64% of those older than 30.

In general, Republicans are substantially less negative than Democrats and independents in their long-term environmental outlook. Fewer than half of Republicans (48%) say the earth will definitely or probably get warmer over the next 40 years, while large majorities of Democrats (83%) and independents (68%) expect the earth to get warmer over this period.

Moreover, just 37% of Republicans say the United States is likely to face severe water shortages in coming decades; 63% of independents and 56% of Democrats say severe water shortages in the U.S. are either definite or probable. And Republicans (52%) are less likely than Democrats (65%) to say that the world's oceans will be less healthy over the next 40 years.

Republicans Less Pessimistic about Environment						
<i>In next 40 years</i> Earth will get warmer*	<u>Total</u> % 66	Rep % 48	<u>Dem</u> % 83	<u>Ind</u> % 68	R-D <u>diff</u> -35	
U.S. will face water shortages*	53	37	56	63	-19	
World's oceans will be <u>less</u> healthy than today	60	52	65	61	-13	
* Definitely/probably. Pew Research Center/ <i>Smithsoniar</i>	n magaz	zine Ap	ril 21-20	6, 2010	0.	

Since 1999, there has been a sharp decline in the percentage of Republicans and older Americans who say the earth is likely to get warmer by 2050. Eleven years ago, 68% of Republicans said it was at least probable that the earth would get warmer. That figure has fallen to 48% currently. Independents also are somewhat less likely to expect the earth to get warmer than in 1999 (76% then, 68% today). By contrast, there has been virtually no change among Democrats (81% in 1999, 83% today).

Fewer Republicans Expect Earth to Get Warmer by 2050					
Probable/definite that earth will get warmer Total	May <u>1999</u> % 76	April <u>2010</u> % 66	<u>Change</u> -10		
18-29 30-49 50-64 65+	78 76 71 78	77 63 65 61	-1 -13 -6 -17		
Republican Democrat Independent	68 81 76	48 83 68	-20 +2 -8		
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010.					

In addition, fewer people 65 and older anticipate the earth will get warmer than did so 11 years ago (78% then, 61% today); the percentage of those ages 30 to 49 who predict that the earth will get warmer also has declined (76% then, 63% today).

The sizable partisan and age differences in opinions about future global warming correspond to views about whether earth's temperatures have been rising in recent decades. Pew Research Center surveys over the past few years have found a substantial decline in the proportion of Republicans saying there is solid evidence the earth's temperatures have been rising (see *Fewer Americans See Solid Evidence of Global Warming*, October 22, 2009).

SECTION 2: THE NATION, THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL TRENDS

Most Americans are optimistic about their own lives and the future of the United States over the next 40 years. But there are clouds on the horizon. Most expect the average family's standard of living will not improve by 2050 and there is a widespread belief that economic inequality will increase.

More than six-in-ten (64%) say they are either very (26%) or somewhat (38%) optimistic about life for them and their families over the next 40 years. Personal optimism has slipped somewhat from the 1999 survey when fully 81% said they were either very (40%) or somewhat (41%) optimistic about life in the future.

Most Americans (61%) also are optimistic about the future of the U.S. over the next 40 years. However, fewer today are optimistic than in 1999, when 70% expressed optimism.

Democrats (72%) stand out as being more optimistic about the nation's future than Republicans and independents (55% each). Optimism about the future of the country also is associated with expectations for the U.S. economy. Fully 78% of those who say the U.S. economy will be stronger by 2050 are optimistic about the nation's future, compared

Public Upbeat about Nation's Future						
	Optimistic %	Pessimistic %	<u>DK</u> %			
Total	61	36	3=100			
18-29 30-49 50-64 65+	59 61 61 62	40 36 36 32	2=100 3=100 4=100 6=100			
Republican Democrat Independent	55 72 55	43 26 41	2=100 2=100 3=100			
U.S. economy will be Stronger 78 20 2=100 Weaker 34 61 5=100						
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.						

with just 34% among those who say the economy will be weaker 40 years from today.

Mixed Economic Expectations

As might be expected, fewer Americans (56%) expect the U.S. economy will be stronger in 2050 than said that during economic boom of the late 1990s (64%). Somewhat more also say the gap between rich and poor will get smaller than did so 11 years ago (34% today, 27% in 1999). Still, a majority (58%) continues to say that it is likely that the rich-poor gap will grow.

Despite the public's fairly upbeat assessment of the nation's economic future, only about a third (34%) says that the average American family will see its standard of living get better over the next 40 years. More than six-in-ten (63%) see the average family' standard of living getting worse (36%) or staying the same (27%) over the next four decades.

Opinions about the future of the economy and standard of living for average families are divided along partisan lines. Fully 71% of Democrats say the U.S. economy will be stronger 40

years from now than it is today. That compares with 50% of independents and 47% of Republicans.

Democrats also are more likely than independents or Republicans to see the average family's standard of living improve by 2050. Still, fewer than half of Democrats (44%) expect that the average family will be better off economically. Only about three-in-ten independents (29%) and Republicans (27%) see average families doing better in the future.

There is little optimism across most demographic and income groups that the standard of living for average families will improve. However, 61% of African Americans say that the standard of living for families will improve; just 27% of whites agree.

Among those who see the U.S. economy getting stronger over the next 40 years, 53% see average families doing better economically. Among those who say the economy will be weaker in the future, 67% say the standard of living will get worse by 2050.

A Stronger U.S, Economy, But Average Families Are Not Expected to Benefit						
In 40 years, more likely that U.S. economy will be Stronger Weaker	May 1999 % 64 31	April 2010 % 56 39	<u>Change</u> -8 +8			
Rich-poor gap will Grow Get smaller	69 27	58 34	-11 +7			
Over next 40 years, standard of living for average families will Get better Stay the same Get worse	 	34 27 36				
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010.						

Average Family's Standard of Living Is More Likely to							
Total	Get better % 34	Stay about the same % 27	Get worse % 36	<u>DK</u> % 3=100			
Republican Democrat Independent	27 44 29	30 27 25	41 25 43	2=100 3=100 3=100			
Family income \$75,000 or more \$30k-74,999 Less than \$30,000	31 33 38	29 29 22	38 36 35	2=100 2=100 5=100			
Economy will be Stronger 53 28 17 2=100 Weaker 7 23 67 3=100							

Health Care and Education

Public expectations are divided about progress on two major domestic issues – health care and education. Compared with 1999, many more people expect health care to be more affordable 40 years from now than it is today. By contrast, far fewer people say the public education system will improve than did so 11 years ago.

The changing expectations on both issues are strongly linked to partisanship. In the wake of passage of major health care legislation, twice as many Democrats say health care will be more affordable in the future than did so in 1999 (70% today, 35% then). Independents also are more likely to say that health care will be more affordable (47% today, 35% in 1999). But fewer

Democrats Optimistic Health Care in the U.S. Will Be More Affordable					
April 2010 In 40 years, health care more likely to be. More affordable Less affordable Other/DK	<u>Total</u> % 50 46 <u>5</u> 100	Rep % 30 65 <u>5</u> 100	Dem % 70 25 <u>5</u> 100	Ind % 47 51 <u>2</u> 100	
May 1999 In 50 years, health care more likely to be. More affordable Less affordable Other/DK	 36 60 <u>4</u> 100	41 57 <u>3</u> 100	35 61 <u>4</u> 100	35 63 <u>2</u> 100	
99-10 change in "more affordable"	+14	-11	+35	+12	
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.					

Republicans say health care is likely to become more affordable than did so in 1999 (30% today, 41% in 1999).

Republicans take a much more negative view of the future of the public education system than they did 11 years ago. Currently, a majority of Republicans (55%) say the public education system is more likely to get worse over the next 40 years. In 1999, most Republicans (63%) thought that public education would improve by 2050.

Independents also have turned more negative about the future of public education. Fewer than half (44%) see public education improving by 2050, down from 63% in 1999. Democrats remain much more positive about the education system: Currently, 66% say it is more likely to improve by 2050, little changed from 11 years ago (72%).

April 2010 In 40 years, public education more likely to Total width Rep width Dem width Ind Improve Get worse Other/DK 46 55 30 53 Other/DK 5 7 3 3 100 100 100 100						
<u>4</u>	33 4	26 3	33 4			
99-10 change in "improve" -17 -25 -6 -19						
	% 49 46 5 100 66 30 4 100	% % 49 38 46 55 5 7 100 100 66 63 30 33 4 100 100 -17 -25	% % 49 38 66 46 55 30 5 7 3 100 100 100 66 63 72 30 33 26 4 4 3 100 100 100			

Most Expect Female, Hispanic Presidents

There is much greater agreement among the public that political gender and ethnic barriers will fall in the next 40 years. Fully 89% say that a woman will definitely (28%) or probably (61%) be elected, up from 80% in 1999. Men (90%) are as likely as women (88%) to say they think a woman will become president; large majorities of all political and demographic groups expect this to happen.

Somewhat fewer (69%) – but still a clear majority – expect a Hispanic to be elected U.S. president in the next 40 years. Just 26% say this will definitely or probably not happen.

White House's Glass Ceiling to Shatter by 2050			
In 40 years, probable/ definite that Woman will be elected U.S. president	May 1999 %	April <u>2010</u> % 89	
Hispanic will be elected U.S. president		69	
More likely that U.S. race relations will Improve Get worse Other/DK	68 28 <u>4</u> 100	68 23 <u>9</u> 100	
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

The public also anticipates that race relations

in the United States will improve, rather than get worse, over the next 40 years. Nearly seven-inten (68%) now say that race relations are likely to improve, which is unchanged from 1999. Those under the age of 50 are somewhat more optimistic about the future of race relations in this country than are older Americans: 75% of those under 50 think race relations will improve, compared with 61% of those 50 and older.

Aging Workforce Envisioned

An overwhelming majority (86%) says that it is at least probable that in the next 40 years most Americans will have to work into their 70s before retiring. Just 11% say this is definitely or probably not going to happen.

There are only modest demographic differences on this issue. But young people today – who would actually experience extended time in the workforce – are less likely than older people to see this as probable. While 78% of those under 30 say most Americans will have to work into their 70s before retiring, fully 89% of those 30 and older expect this to happen.

What Golden Years?			
In 40 years, probable/ definite that Most Americans will have to work into 70s before retiring	April 2010 % 86		
More likely that Many more will live to 100 About as many will live to 100 Other/DK	42 50 <u>8</u> 100		
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% beca rounding.			

A sizable minority (42%) say it is likely that the nation's population of those 100 and older – already the largest in its history – will grow substantially by 2050. Half (50%) say that about as many people will live to 100 as do so today. College graduates (55%) are much more

likely than those with no college experience (34%) to predict many more people living to age 100 in the future.

Demographic Trends

Most experts agree that the U.S. population will continue to grow in the decades to come. Asked about estimates that the nation's population will grow by 100 million by 2050, far

Americans more say the burgeoning population will harm the country (42%) than benefit the country (16%); 37% say it will neither benefit nor harm the country.

On a related subject, the public is divided over whether legal immigration will need to be increased, kept at current levels, or reduced in order to maintain the strength of the U.S. economy over the next 40 years. Slightly more than a third (36%) say legal immigration will need to maintained at current levels, 34% say it will need to be decreased, while 26% say it will need to be increased.

Notably, far more of those who do not have a college degree (39%) than college graduates (21%) say legal immigration will need to be decreased keep the

Public Wary of Population Growth, Increased Immigration			
U.S. population growth of about 100 million will Benefit the country Harm the country Neither benefit nor harm Don't know	April 2010 % 16 42 37 5 100		
To keep U.S. economy stron legal immigration will need to be Increased Kept at current levels Decreased Don't know	26 36 34 <u>5</u> 100		
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

U.S. economy strong. There also are partisan differences; 43% of Republicans say immigration will need to be decreased compared with 31% of independents and 28% of Democrats.

SECTION 3: WAR, TERRORISM AND GLOBAL TRENDS

The public sees the next 40 years as a time of violent conflict, both globally and in the United States. Fully 58% see another world war as definite or probable over the next 40 years. Nearly as many (53%) expect the United States to face a terrorist attack with nuclear weapons.

Opinions about America's future role in the world are mixed: 53% say the United States will be less important in the world than it is today while 40% say it will be more important. At the same time, 49% say China will definitely or probably *not* overtake the United States as the world's main superpower, while 46% say it will.

War and Terrorism Expected, Not Falling Asteroids					
Probably/definitely Will Will not <u>happen</u> <u>happen</u> <u>DK</u> % %					
Another world war	58	37	4=100		
A major terrorist attack on U.S. with a nuclear weapor	n 53	43	4=100		
China will overtake U.S. as world's main superpowe	er 46	49	5=100		
Jesus Christ will return	41	46	13=100		
Single global currency	41	55	4=100		
An asteroid will hit earth	31	62	7=100		
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.					

Notably, opinions about the U.S. role in the world – and whether China will overtake the United States as the main superpower – are associated with optimism about the nation's future. An overwhelming majority (81%) among those who predict the U.S. will be more important in the future are optimistic about the future of the United States. But among those who say the nation will be less important in the future, just 46% express optimism.

On a very different subject, the public is divided over whether Jesus Christ will return to earth by 2050. About four-in-ten (41%) expect Jesus Christ to return while slightly more (46%) say this will definitely or probably not happen. Opinions about the return of Jesus Christ are little changed from 1999 when 44% said it would definitely or probably happen.

Most Americans do not expect the adoption of a single global currency in the next 40 years. And while the survey finds that the public sees many potential dangers looming in the decades ahead, there is not widespread concern about the possibility that an asteroid will collide with earth. Fewer than one-third (31%) say an asteroid will definitely or probably hit earth, which is unchanged from 1999.

Apocalypse Soon?

The expectation that there will be another world war by 2050 is more common among younger and less educated Americans than among those in other groups. Fully 68% of those younger than 30 predict another world war; that compares with 56% of those ages 30 and older.

And while 69% of those with no more than a high school education say another world war is at least probable, that view is shared by just 48% of those with a college education.

At the same time, young people are a bit less likely than older Americans to predict that the United States will face a terrorist attack with nuclear weapons. Those under 30 are the only age

Young and Less Educated More Likely to Foresee World War World Nuclear terrorism Definite/probable War against U.S. in next 40 years... % % Total 58 53 18-29 68 46 30-49 54 54 50-64 59 56 65+ 55 57 College grad + 48 46 Some college 54 54 HS or less 69 57 Republican 61 57 Democrat 53 46 Independent 62 58 Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010.

group in which fewer than half (46%) say such an attack is at least probable. As with expectations about another world war, those with a high school education or less are more likely than college graduates to predict a nuclear terrorist attack on the United States (57% vs. 46%).

Jesus Christ's Return

As expected, predictions about whether Jesus Christ will return to earth in the next 40 years divide along religious lines. Fully 58% of white evangelical Christians say Jesus Christ will definitely or probably return to earth in this period, by far the highest percentage in any religious group. Only about a third of Catholics (32%), and even fewer white mainline Protestants (27%) and the religiously unaffiliated (20%) predict Jesus Christ's return to earth.

In addition, those with no college experience (59%) are much more likely than those with some college experience (35%) and college graduates (19%) to expect Jesus Christ's return. By region, those in the South (52%) are the most likely to predict a Second Coming by 2050.

Most White Evangelicals Expect Jesus Christ's Return to Earth

Probably/Definitely

	i robably/Delitilitely			
	Will	Will no	t	
<u> </u>	<u>Happen</u>	<u>Happer</u>	<u>n DK</u>	
	%	%	%	
Total	41	46	13=100	
Protestant	54	32	15=100	
White evangelica	al 58	25	16=100	
White mainline	27	58	15=100	
Catholic	32	57	12=100	
Unaffiliated	20	72	8=100	
College grad+	19	64	17=100	
Some college	35	51	14=100	
HS or less	59	31	10=100	
East	29	64	7=100	
Midwest	39	47	14=100	
South	52	33	15=100	
West	35	51	14=100	

Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

On a related subject, 65% of Americans say that religion in the United States will be about as important as it is now in 40 years; 30% say religion will become less important. Majorities across all religious groups, including the unaffiliated, see religion continuing to be about as important as it is now in the coming decades.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a national sample of 1,546 adults living in the continental United States, 18 years of age or older, from April 21-26, 2010 (1,006 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 540 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 203 who had no landline telephone). Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see http://people-press.org/methodology/.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race/ethnicity, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2009 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample is also weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2009 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group Total sample	Sample Size 1,546	Plus or minus 3.0 percentage points
Form 2		

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors

Michael Remez, Senior Writer

Robert Suls, Shawn Neidorf, Leah Christian, Jocelyn Kiley and Alec Tyson, Research Associates Jacob Poushter, Research Analyst

© Pew Research Center, 2010

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS APRIL 2010 POLITICAL AND FUTURE SURVEY FINAL TOPLINE

April 21-26, 2010 N=1546

QUESTIONS 1-39 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 40-44

ASK ALL:

Now, I'd like you to think about what things will be like in 2050 [**PRONOUNCED: "twenty-fifty"**], that is, 40 years from now...

Q.45 First, thinking about you and your family... Would you say you are very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic, or very pessimistic about life for you and your family over the next 40 years?

Apr 21-26		May
<u>2010</u>		1999 ¹
26	Very optimistic	40
38	Somewhat optimistic	41
19	Somewhat pessimistic	10
12	Very pessimistic	5
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4

ASK ALL:

Q.46 And, thinking about the United States... Would you say you are very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic, or very pessimistic about the future of the U.S., over the next 40 years?

Apr 21-26		May
<u>2010</u>		1999^{2}
23	Very optimistic	23
38	Somewhat optimistic	47
23	Somewhat pessimistic	20
13	Very pessimistic	7
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3

NO QUESTIONS 47-49

ASK ALL:

Q.50 Over the next 40 years, do you think that the average American family will see its standard of living... [READ AND RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 & 3, WITH OPTION 2 ALWAYS IN THE MIDDLE]

Apr 21-26	
<u>2010</u>	
34	Get better
27	Stay about the same [OR]
36	Get worse
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

NO QUESTIONS 51-52

In May, 1999 the question asked about: "life for you and your family over the next 50 years."

In May, 1999 the question asked about: "the future of the U.S., over the next 50 years."

ASK ALL:

Q.53 Still thinking ahead 40 years, as I read the following pairs, please tell me which is more likely to happen here in the U.S... First, do you think . . . [INSERT ITEM PAIRS; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS] Next, do you think [NEXT ITEM] [IF NECESSARY: 40 years from now, which is more likely to happen here in the U.S. (REPEAT ITEM)] [DO NOT READ NUMBERS "1" OR "2"]³

	Apr 21-26		May 1999 ⁴	Dec 1996
a.	2010 56	The U.S. economy will be stronger than today	64	53
	39	OR The U.S. economy will be weaker than today	31	42
	1	Neither/No change (VOL.)	2	
	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3	2 3
	4	Don't know/Kerused (VOL.)	3	3
AS	K FORM 2	ONLY [N=767]:		
	Apr 21-26		May	Dec
	2010		1999 ⁵	1996
b.F	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Health care will be MORE affordable than today OR		36
	46	Health care will be LESS affordable than today	60	61
	1	Neither/No change (VOL.)	1	1
	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3	2
	Apr 21-26		May	Dec
	2010		1999	1996
c.F		Race relations will improve	68	54
	_ 00	OR	00	٠.
	23	Race relations will get worse	28	40
	4	Neither/No change (VOL.)	3	
	5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	3
	Apr 21-26			
	2010			
d.F	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	The United States will be more important in the	world than	it is now
u.I	2 70	OR	vi oria mai	1 10 13 110 W
	53	The United States will be less important in the w	orld then	it is now
	5	<u> •</u>	oriu uiali .	11 15 HOW
		Neither/No change (VOL.)		
	3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)		

NO ITEM e.F2

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=779]:

	- 0 - 1 - 1	O1121 [11-772]•	
A	pr 21-26		May
	2010		1999
f.F1	58	The gap between rich and poor will grow OR	69
	34	The gap between rich and poor will get smaller	27
	3	Neither/No change (VOL.)	2
	5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2

In May, 1999 the question began: "Thinking ahead over the next 50 years..."

In May, 1999 and before the statements read: "The U.S. economy will be stronger [OR] the U.S. economy will be weaker."

In May, 1999 and before the statements read: "Health care will be MORE affordable [OR] health care will be LESS affordable."

Q.53 CONTINUED...

TREND FOR COMPARISON

A	pr 21-26		May	
	<u>2010</u>		1999 ⁶	
g.F1		Many more people than now		
	42	will live to be 100 years of age	58	
		OR		
		About as many people		
	50	will live to 100 as do now	40	
	5	Neither/No change (VOL.)	2	
	3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	*	
A	pr 21-26		May	Dec
	<u>2010</u>		<u>1999</u>	<u> 1996</u>
h.F1	49	The public education system will improve OR	66	59
	46	The public education system will get worse	30	37
	1	Neither/No change (VOL.)	2	2
	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2	2
A	pr 21-26			
	2010			
i.F1	30	Religion will become less important in the U.S	5.	
		OR		
	65	Religion will be about as important in the U.S.	as it is now	
	3	Neither/No change (VOL.)		
	3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)		

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=767]:

Q.54F2 And 40 years from now, do you think [READ AND RANDOMIZE]?

The world's oceans will be MORE healthy than they are now [OR]
The world's oceans will be LESS healthy than they are now
Neither/No change (VOL.)
Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=779]:

Q.55AF1 It's estimated that by 2050 the population of the United States will grow by about 100 million. Do you think this population growth will [READ, RANDOMIZE ITEMS 1 & 2, KEEP ITEM 3 LAST]?

Apr 21-26	
<u>2010</u>	
16	Benefit the country
42	Harm the country [OR]
37	Neither benefit nor harm the country
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

In May, 1999 the statements read: "People will live much longer [OR] people will live about as long as they do now."

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=767]:

Q.55BF2 In order to maintain the strength of the U.S. economy over the next 40 years, do you think, that LEGAL immigration will...[READ AND RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 & 3, WITH OPTION 2 ALWAYS IN THE MIDDLE]

Apr 21-26	
<u>2010</u>	
26	Need to be increased
36	Need to be maintained at current levels [OR]
34	Need to be decreased
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

Q.56 Now I'm going to read you a list of things that may or may not happen in the next 40 years. Please tell me how likely you think it is that each will happen. First, How likely do you think it is that [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]... do you think this will definitely happen, will probably happen, will probably NOT happen, or will definitely not happen, will probably NOT happen, or will definitely not happen, will probably NOT happen, or will definitely not happen, in the next 40 years?]...⁷

FORM 1 ITEMS BASED ON N=779 FORM 2 ITEMS BASED ON N=767

		Will definitely happen	Will probably happen	Will probably not happen	Will definitely not happen	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a.F1	Jesus Christ will return to earth	<u></u>	<u></u>			
	Apr 21-26, 2010	23	18	29	17	13
	May, 1999	22	22	27	17	12
b.F1	There will be another world war					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	16	42	31	6	4
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
	There will be a nuclear war					
	May, 1999	9	32	46	11	2
c.F2	There will be a major terrorist attack on the U.S. involving a nuclear weapon					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	10	43	36	7	4
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
	There will be a major terrorist attack					
	on the U.S. involving biological or					
	chemical weapons					
	May, 1999	13	51	28	4	4
d.F2	The world will face a major energy crisis					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	21	51	21	4	3
	May, 1999	15	48	30	4	3
e.F1	The earth will get warmer					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	27	39	21	9	4
	May, 1999	28	48	16	3	5

-

In May, 1999 the question began: "Now I'm going to read you a list of things that may or may not happen in the next 50 years."

O.56 CONTINUED...

Q.56 C	CONTINUED					
		Will definitely happen	Will probably <u>happen</u>	Will probably not happen	Will definitely not happen	(VOL.) DK/Ref
f.F2	The quality of the earth's environment will improve					
	Apr 21-26, 2010 TREND FOR COMPARISON:	9	38	41	9	3
	We will make progress in improving our environment	10	50	10	2	2
	May, 1999	19	59	18	2	2
g.F1	An asteroid will hit the earth	E	26	4.6	16	7
	Apr 21-26, 2010 May, 1999	5 6	26 25	46 48	16 14	7 7
h.F2	We will find evidence of life elsewhere					
П.Г2	in the universe					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	12	38	33	12	4
	TREND FOR COMPARISON: We will make contact with alien life					
	May, 1999	4	23	42	27	4
i.F1	Ordinary people will travel in space					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	14	39 45	35	10	2 2
	May, 1999	12	45	32	9	2
j.F2	Astronauts will land on Mars	1.4	40	27	7	2
	Apr 21-26, 2010 May, 1999 ⁸	14 18	49 58	27 17	7 5	2 2
	•	10		-,	· ·	_
k.F2	There will be a cure for cancer Apr 21-26, 2010	18	53	23	4	2
	May, 1999	23	58	16	2	1
	TREND FOR COMPARISON: There will be a cure for AIDS					
	May, 1999	19	60	16	4	1
1.F2	Most Americans will have computer chip	c				
1.1 2	embedded in their bodies for identificatio					
	Apr 21-26, 2010	9	39	36	14	2
m.F1	China will overtake the U.S.					
	as the world's main superpower Apr 21-26, 2010	12	34	33	16	5
	TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:	12	3.	33	10	3
	China will become a rival superpower to the U.S.					
	May, 1999	18	49	24	5	4
	The U.S. will remain the world's only superpower					
	May, 1999	13	31	43	10	3

-

In May, 1999 the item read: "A manned spacecraft will land on Mars."

Q.56 CONTINUED...

Q.56 C	ONTINUED	Will definitely happen	Will probably <u>happen</u>	Will probably not happen	Will definitely not happen	(VOL.) DK/Ref
n.F1	There will be a single global currency in use throughout the world Apr 21-26, 2010	10	31	40	15	4
o.F1	A woman will be elected U.S. president Apr 21-26, 2010 May, 1999	28 27	61 53	7 16	2 3	1 1
p.F2	A Hispanic will be elected U.S. president Apr 21-26, 2010 TREND FOR COMPARISON: An African American will be elected U.S. president May, 1999	8	61 59	20 17	6 5	4
q.F1	We will clone human beings Apr 21-26, 2010 May, 1999	12 12	36 39	33 32	16 13	3 4
r.F1	There will be artificial arms and legs that perform better than natural ones Apr 21-26, 2010	20	46	22	9	3
s.F2	Almost no one will send personal letters in the mail Apr 21-26, 2010	18	43	30	7	2
t.F2	Gasoline powered cars will no longer be made Apr 21-26, 2010	12	42	35	6	4
u.F1	Most of our energy will come from sources other than coal, oil, and gas Apr 21-26, 2010	21	53	20	4	2
v.F1	There will be computers that can carry on a conversation just like a human being Apr 21-26, 2010	28	53	13	5	1
w.F2	Most Americans will have to work into their 70s before retiring Apr 21-26, 2010	32	54	10	1	2
x.F2	Scientists will be able to tell what people are thinking by scanning their brains Apr 21-26, 2010	7	35	38	17	4
y.F1	Most of the U.S. will experience severe shortages of fresh water Apr 21-26, 2010	14	39	36	7	3

Q.56 CONTINUED...

		Will definitely happen	Will probably happen	Will probably not happen	Will definitely not happen	(VOL.) DK/Ref
z.F1	Paper editions of newspapers will no longer exist Apr 21-26, 2010	19	45	27	7	1
aa.F2	Paper money will no longer exist, all financial transactions will be electronic Apr 21-26, 2010	15	48	27	8	2
bb.F2	Scientists will bring back an extinct animal species by cloning it Apr 21-26, 2010	9	42	36	11	2

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? **ASK IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY:**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)			
				No	Other	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	<u>Independent</u>	preference	<u>party</u>	DK/Ref	\underline{Rep}	<u>Dem</u>
Apr 21-26, 2010	26	33	36	3	1	3	16	13
Apr 8-11, 2010	23	32	38	5	*	2	17	13
Apr 1-5, 2010	24	29	40	3	1	3	17	15
Mar 18-21, 2010	24	30	40	2	1	3	17	13
Mar 11-21, 2010	28	34	32	3	*	3	13	12
Mar 10-14, 2010	22	33	37	6	*	3	14	13
Feb 3-9, 2010	26	31	37	3	*	3	14	17
Jan 6-10, 2010	22	33	42	2	1	2	17	16
Dec 9-13, 2009	25	32	38	2	*	2	14	15
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	27	35	32	3	*	2	13	13
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	23	34	37	3	1	3	16	14
Sep 10-15, 2009	23	34	34	4	*	5	13	17
Aug 20-27, 2009	26	32	36	3	*	3	14	16
Aug 11-17, 2009	23	33	38	3	*	3	16	15
Jul 22-26, 2009	22	34	37	5	*	2	15	14
Jun 10-14, 2009	25	34	34	3	*	3	11	16
Apr 28-May 12, 2009	9 23	39	29	4	*	4	9	14
Yearly Totals								
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.3	35.8	31.7	3.8	.3	3.1	10.5	15.4
2007	25.4	32.9	33.7	4.6	.4	3.1	10.7	16.7
2006	27.6	32.8	30.3	5.0	.4	3.9	10.2	14.5
2005	29.2	32.8	30.3	4.5	.3	2.8	10.2	14.9
2004	29.7	33.4	29.8	3.9	.4	2.9	11.7	13.4
2003	29.8	31.4	31.2	4.7	.5	2.5	12.1	13.0
2002	30.3	31.2	30.1	5.1	.7	2.7	12.6	11.6
2001	29.2	33.6	28.9	5.1	.5	2.7	11.7	11.4
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28.2	34.6	29.5	5.0	.5	2.1	11.7	12.5
2000	27.5	32.5	29.5	5.9	.5	4.0	11.6	11.6
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.5	33.2	31.9	4.6	.4	2.4	11.8	13.5

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)			
				No	Other	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	<u>preference</u>	party	DK/Ref	\underline{Rep}	<u>Dem</u>
1997	28.2	33.3	31.9	4.0	.4	2.3	12.3	13.8
1996	29.2	32.7	33.0	5.2			12.7	15.6
1995	31.4	29.7	33.4	5.4			14.4	12.9
1994	29.8	31.8	33.8	4.6			14.3	12.6
1993	27.4	33.8	34.0	4.8			11.8	14.7
1992	27.7	32.7	35.7	3.9			13.8	15.8
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	4.5			14.6	10.8
1990	31.0	33.1	29.1	6.8			12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34					
1987	26	35	39					