

Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Poverty Pulse

Wave VI

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Presented By:

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Objectives and Methodology

This is a report of findings from Wave VI of the Poverty Pulse survey, a study designed to evaluate attitudes toward poverty in America. This is the sixth in a series of studies conducted annually beginning in December of 2000. The results of each Poverty Pulse are used by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) to promote understanding of poverty in America and greater awareness of the problem in our society.

This year's Pulse used a different methodology than previous years. Earlier studies used a telephone methodology for data collection, but this year's study was conducted online. A total of 1,131 surveys were completed among the general adult population through Harris Interactive Service Bureau (HISB), a separate operating unit of Harris Interactive. The surveys were completed between December 5 and 28, 2005. The sample was selected at random by HISB using their database of potential respondents. The results of the study were tabulated and weighted to ensure that they are reasonably representative of the entire general adult population. The questionnaire was designed in conjunction with CCHD by Market Research Bureau LLC. Market Research Bureau also conducted the analysis and prepared this report.

In some cases, results from previous years are presented in this report for reference purposes, but because of the differences in data collection, comparisons between studies from previous years and this Poverty Pulse should be made with caution. While general comparisons can be made, numerical differences may reflect the difference in data collection technique rather than true differences in people's opinions. In addition to the data collection differences, some questions were asked differently. For example, in some cases questions were asked this year in an aided fashion – that is, respondents were shown a list from which to choose their response – while in previous years, the question was unaided (no options provided to respondents). Also, in some cases only one response was accepted from respondents where in previous years respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. Any general comparison made in this report is accompanied with a caveat reflecting these differences.

The results presented on the following pages have been tabulated and analyzed by various demographics. If a table total is 99% to 101%, this is likely due to rounding the individual percentages in the table. For some questions, more than one response was accepted from each respondent. In these cases the table percentage totals exceed 100%.

Statistical significance testing was conducted to determine differences by demographics and other criteria, but no significance testing was conducted among the different years (because of the differences in methodology). All testing for statistical significance was conducted at the 95% level of confidence. Any statistical differences are indicated in the tables with an “s”. The sample tolerance for the total sample is +/- 3 percentage points. This study can be considered reasonably representative of all adults in the United States.

One of the demographic categories analyzed was a combination of income and household size to determine people living with low incomes. The following definition of low income was used in this year’s study:

Low Income Definition

<i>Household size of . . .</i>	1+	<i>and income less than . . .</i>	\$15,000
	2 or 3+		\$25,000
	4+		\$35,000
	5+		\$50,000

For comparison, the poverty guidelines as established by the Federal government are as follows:

Poverty Guidelines

<i>Household size of . . .</i>	1	<i>and income less than . . .</i>	\$ 9,570
	2		\$12,830
	3		\$16,090
	4		\$19,350
	5		\$22,610
	6		\$25,870

Findings

- *The concern over poverty continues to be high.* Half of all respondents in 2005 (53%) indicated that they were “very concerned” about poverty (on an aided basis) and an additional 35% indicated that they were “somewhat concerned” (for a total of 88% who are concerned). Only 2% were “not at all concerned” about poverty in this most recent survey.

**Thinking just in terms of the problem here in the United States,
how concerned would you say that you are about poverty?
Would you say that you are very concerned, somewhat concerned,
not very concerned, or not at all concerned with poverty?**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very	55	54	50	52	56	53
Somewhat	<u>32</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>35</u>
Total Concerned	87	90	89	89	90	88
Not Very	8	8	7	8	7	10
Not at All	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
Total Not Concerned	13	10	11	11	10	12
Base - Total respondents	1015	1014	1015	1008	1004	1131

Among four issues asked in this survey – poverty, health care, access to education and affordable housing – poverty ranks second behind health care in terms of the level of concern that Americans have.

**Thinking just in terms of the problem here in the United States,
how concerned would you say that you are about _____?
Would you say that you are very concerned, somewhat concerned,
not very concerned, or not at all concerned with _____?**

	Poverty %	Health Care %	Access to Education %	Affordable Housing %
Very	53	64	37	44
Somewhat	<u>35</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>41</u>
Total Concerned	88	92	76	84
Not Very	10	6	20	14
Not at All	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Total Not Concerned	12	8	24	16
Base - Total respondents	1131	1131	1131	1131

Women are more concerned about poverty than are men (92% versus 83% for both “very” and “somewhat concerned”). Women were more concerned than men about access to education and affordable housing (there was no difference between men and women on health care). Individuals living with low incomes (as defined in this study; see Methodology) were also more concerned about poverty (95% versus 86%) and for affordable housing (92% versus 83%), but showed no differences for the concern regarding health care or access to education.

- *On an unaided basis, poverty ranks third as the “biggest social problem facing the U.S. today.”* Seven percent (7%) cited poverty as the biggest concern (top of mind) and a total of 14% cited it in response to either question regarding social problems (the biggest problem and all other problems – total unaided). These are higher levels than we have seen in the past (in 2004 it was 2% and 6% respectively for poverty, ranking tenth on the list of concerns/problems). This could be due to the attention in New Orleans or it could be due to the differences in methodology (online versus telephone methodology, and a slight difference in question wording – see below). Health care and racism are at higher levels than in the past as well, but government/ politics and education are at comparable levels while war/U.S. involvement in war is lower this year than in previous years.

**What do you feel is the single biggest social problem facing the U.S. today?
(Top-of-Mind)**

**What other social issues or problems in the U.S. are you concerned about?
(Combined with top-of-mind for Total Unaided)**

Note - Only those items with at least 5% Total Unaided are shown.

	Top of Mind	Total Unaided
	%	%
Health care	8	19
Racism/ethnic discrimination/prejudice/intolerance/bias	8	17
War/U.S. involvement in war	4	15
Poverty	7	14
Education	3	12
Government/Politics	4	11
Unemployment/under employment/low wages	4	10
Economy	4	9
Drug/alcohol abuse	4	8
Foreign/Foreigners	3	7
Lack of religion	2	7
Homelessness	2	6
Immorality	4	6
Crime	1	5
Disease/illness	2	5
Family issues (working parents, no supervision, etc.)	3	5
Social Security	1	5
<hr/> Base - Total respondents		1131

Previous years' responses are shown below for reference. Please note that the question wording differed slightly. This year's Poverty Pulse asked, "What do you feel is the single biggest social problem facing the U.S. today?" In earlier studies the question was asked, "What do you feel is the single biggest problem facing U.S. society today?"

**What do you feel is the single biggest problem
facing U.S. society today?
(Top-of-Mind)**

**What other issues or concerns do you have
with regard to society in the United States?
What other problems are you concerned about?
(Combined with top-of-mind for Total Unaided)**

SELECTED RESPONSES

	-----2000-----		-----2001-----		-----2002-----		-----2003-----		-----2004-----	
	Top Mind	Total Unaided	Top of Mind	Total Unaided	Top of Mind	Total Unaided	Top of Mind	Total Unaided	Top of Mind	Total Unaided
Economy	6	13	11	24	10	23	9	21	10	23
War	-	-	7	13	9	17	9	18	11	20
Government/politics	7	14	5	10	7	13	11	21	9	17
Immorality	9	12	6	10	7	11	8	13	10	16
Healthcare	4	10	2	6	2	7	3	10	3	12
Terrorism	-	-	15	23	14	22	7	12	8	12
Education	5	16	4	11	4	12	4	11	3	11
Violence	4	11	3	6	3	7	4	9	4	10
Crime	6	13	2	6	4	8	5	12	3	10
Racism/discrimination	3	7	2	7	2	5	2	7	2	6
Poverty	3	7	2	7	2	3	1	5	2	6
Homelessness	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	*	1
	1015		1014		1015		1008		1004	

Base – Total respondents in each group

* Less than 0.5

- ***Six out of ten (63%) of Americans in 2005 have some concern that they will be poor at some point in their lives.*** Twenty-nine percent (29%) are “very concerned” that they will be poor. Low income individuals are more concerned than those with higher incomes (see table below). Older individuals (65 and older) are less likely to be concerned – 46% as compared to 67% for those younger than 65.

How concerned are you that you might be poor at some point in your life? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned that you will ever be poor?

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very	23	24	24	30	30	29
Somewhat	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>34</u>
Total Concerned	49	51	53	56	56	63
Not Very	25	25	24	25	24	25
Not at All	<u>26</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>11</u>
Total Not Concerned	51	49	46	43	44	37
Don't know	*	*	1	1	1	-
Base - Total in each category	1015	1014	1015	1008	1004	1131

* Less than 0.5%

Individuals who have lower incomes, not surprisingly, are much more concerned about being in poverty at some point in their lives. Almost nine in ten (88%) are concerned about being poor with 68% being “very concerned.”

How concerned are you that you might be poor at some point in your life? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned that you will ever be poor?

	Low Income		NOT Low Income
	2005		2005
	%		%
Very	68	s	22
Somewhat	<u>19</u>	s	<u>37</u>
Total Concerned	88	s	59
Not Very	9	s	28
Not at All	<u>4</u>	s	<u>13</u>
Total Not Concerned	12	s	41
Base - Total in each category	179		952

s - Indicates statistically significant difference at the 95% level of confidence

- *The most significant cause of poverty is thought to be the lack of jobs that pay a living wage.* In previous Poverty Pulses, lack of education was seen as primary cause of poverty. Education is the second highest cause in this year’s survey, but the living wage issue has surpassed it. [Note: This question was asked differently in this year’s survey. It was an aided question with the response categories provided to respondents and respondents could only select one choice (the “single most significant cause of poverty”).]

What is the single most significant cause of poverty?

	Total 2005 %
Lack of work that pays a living wage	18
Lack of education	11
Lack of understanding of the importance of education	4
Poor education system	4
Lack of desire for education	3
Lack of access to education	*
Other education	1
Lack of initiative/laziness	12
Welfare/assistance is too easy to get	11
Outsourcing of jobs to other countries	9
Cost of living	8
Unfair distribution of wealth	7
Lack of job skills	6
Lack of opportunity	4
Cost of healthcare/lack of insurance	3
Poor decision-making/bad luck	2
Drugs/alcohol abuse	2
Unjust laws or social policies	2
Physical or mental disabilities	1
Racial/ethnic discrimination	1
Health/medical problems	*
Other causes	3
Base - Total respondents	1131

- *While the Federal government is still seen as having the primary responsibility to address poverty, many people feel that “everyone” should be responsible.* When asked whose responsibility it is to respond to the needs of poor people or to address issues with regard to poverty, 29% of all respondents felt that it was the responsibility of “everyone/general public.” The “Federal government” was cited by 31%. The “poor themselves” were thought to be responsible by 17% of the general public. While this question was asked differently this year than in previous years (aided, with only one choice accepted), the top three responses remain the same.

Who has the greatest responsibility to respond to the needs of poor people in the U.S. and to address other issues related to poverty?

	Total 2005 %
The Federal government	31
Everyone/general public	29
The poor themselves	17
Local and state governments	10
Corporations/businesses	3
Churches	2
Charitable organizations other than churches	1
No one/there is nothing you can do about it	4
Other	1
Base - Total respondents	1131

Low income respondents were more likely to believe that the Federal government should be responsible (45% versus 29%), and less likely to hold the poor themselves responsible (9% as compared to 19%). Low income people were also more likely to cite local and state governments (17% versus 9%) and less likely to believe that everyone is responsible (20% as compared to 31%).

- *A living wage is seen as the best way to break the cycle of poverty.* When asked, “What is the single best way to *permanently* break the cycle of poverty in the United States?” paying a living wage was selected from the list provided by 28% of respondents, followed by better education for children (20%). In previous years, education comments dominated the list. A living wage ranked behind education (children’s and adults’ education) and employment opportunities. [NOTE: The question was aided in this year’s survey and unaided in previous years.]

**What is the single best way to *permanently* break
the cycle of poverty in the United States?**

	Total 2005 %
Pay living wages to low-income workers	28
Better education for children	20
A better economy	14
Development of leadership skills among low-income people	10
More opportunities for education for adults	7
Change laws	6
Increasing access to affordable housing	3
More government aid	2
Participation in community-based organizations	1
More private aid/charitable contributions	*
Other ways	8
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Base - Total respondents	1131

- *The majority of Americans have done the same amount in 2005 as in previous years to help the poor.* Seven in ten (70%) say that they have done the same this year, while 25% claim to have done more (4% say they have done less). The numbers are virtually the same for a prediction of their future efforts with regard to helping the poor – most feel they will do the same amount.

**In the past year have you done more, done less or
done about the same as the previous year
to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor?**

	Total 2005 %
Done more	25
Done less	4
Done about the same	70
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Base - Total respondents	1131

In the coming year do you feel that you will do more, less or about the same as you did in this past year to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor?

	Total 2005 %
Will do more	26
Will do less	4
Will do about the same	70
Base - Total respondents	1131

- *In the past year more than half of adults (56%) have donated money to organizations that help the poor, while 46% have donated money for disaster relief.* When asked what they have done in the past year, only 12% indicated that they did nothing. The majority donated money (either to disaster relief or to an organization helping the poor), but 42% indicated that they prayed.

What, if anything, have you done in the past year to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor?

	Total 2005 %
Nothing	12
Gave money to an organization helping the poor	56
Gave money for disaster relief	46
Prayer	42
Gave money directly to a poor person	27
Volunteered	26
Got involved with community based organization to address poverty or injustice	13
Mentored an individual	12
Other	9
Base - Total respondents	1131

Although the question was asked differently this year than in previous years (multiple responses were accepted this year as in previous years, but this year's question was aided, while in previous years it was unaided), the following table is presented to allow for a general comparison.

**What, if anything, have you done in the past year
to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor?**

	2000 %	2001 %	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %
TOTAL DID SOMETHING	87	86	84	82	84
Gave money to an organization helping the poor	44	41	32	34	35
Donated food/clothing/goods	12	32	35	32	31
Gave money directly to a poor person	15	15	14	11	12
Volunteered	12	14	13	15	15
Got involved with community-based organizations that work to address poverty or injustice	16	10	8	13	14
Mentored an individual	4	4	2	3	5
Supplied shelter	2	2	2	1	1
Provided jobs	1	2	3	2	2
Prayer	1	2	2	2	1
Offered advice/wisdom/educate	-	-	2	2	5
Paid taxes	1	1	1	1	1
Miscellaneous	1	3	3	4	3
Nothing	13	14	16	18	15
Base - Total respondents in each group	1015	1014	1015	1008	1004

- *Virtually all Americans feel poverty should be decreased or eliminated.* When asked, "How important is it to decrease or eliminate poverty in the United States?" 97% responded that it was important, with 70% believing it to be "very important."

**How important do you think it is
to decrease or eliminate poverty in the United States? Is it:**

	2003 %	2004 %	2005 %
Very important	76	77	70
Somewhat important	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>26</u>
Total important	96	97	97
Not very important	2	1	2
Not at all important	1	1	1
Total not important	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Don't know	1	1	-
Base - Total respondents	1008	1004	1131

- *About half of all Americans believe that health care services are not readily available to the poor and uninsured.* When asked how often the poor and uninsured can get health care services when they need them (other than in emergencies) 50% said “rarely” and 5% said “never.” Only 9% felt that the uninsured have access to health care services “all of the time.”

When those who are poor and uninsured need health care services - other than in emergencies - how often do you think they can get them?

	Total 2005 %
All of the time	9
Some of the time	35
Rarely	50
Never	5
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Base - Total respondents	1131

- *The general public is very much in favor of health coverage for all children, including those living in poverty.* When asked if health care should be guaranteed to all children, 91% of respondents agreed that it should be.

In this country we guarantee all children, including those living in poverty, a quality education. Do you think the same should be true for health care and that all children, including those living in poverty, should have health care?

	2004 %	2005 %
Yes	96	91
No	3	9
Don't know	1	-
No answer	*	-
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Base - Total respondents	1004	1131

* Less than 0.5

- *Most people also believe that the Federal government should be responsible for ensuring that low-income people have health coverage.* Nine in ten (90%) believe that it is important for the Federal government to make sure that all low-income persons have health coverage.

How important do you think it is for the Federal government to make sure that all low-income persons have health coverage?

	2004	2005
	%	%
Very important	73	64
Somewhat important	<u>18</u>	<u>26</u>
Total Important	91	90
Not very important	5	5
Not at all important	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Total Not Important	8	10
Don't know	*	-
Base - Total respondents	1004	1131

* Less than 0.5

- *The American public is pessimistic about poverty, believing that the number of people living in poverty will grow.* Seventy one percent (71%) of respondents felt that there are more people living in poverty today than a year ago and close to the same amount (65%) felt that there will be more people in poverty a year from now.

Do you feel there are more or fewer people living in poverty today than there were a year ago?

	Total
	2005
	%
More people living in poverty	71
Fewer people living in poverty	7
About the same number living in poverty	<u>21</u>
Base - Total respondents	1131

Do you feel there will be more or fewer people living in poverty next year than there are today?

	Total 2005 %
More people living in poverty	65
Fewer people living in poverty	9
About the same number living in poverty	27
Base - Total respondents	1131

- *Americans believe that an increase in poverty will affect everyone.* When asked “If there are more people living in poverty, what will it mean for the country as a whole?” 35% responded that it would reduce the quality of life for everyone. An increase in crime was the next highest mention with 28%. Although the question was asked differently, an increase in crime was the biggest perceived impact in last year’s Poverty Pulse.

**If there are more people living in poverty
what will it mean for the country as a whole?
What will be the biggest impact it will have on the country as a whole?**

	Total 2005 %
Reduced quality of life for people in general	35
More crime	28
More homelessness	20
Higher taxes	10
More alcohol/drug use	3
Other	2
None/no impact	2
Base - Total respondents	1131

- *Perceptions with regard to the income level needed to cover basic needs continue to be much higher than actual poverty levels.* Respondents were asked, “How much annual income would you say a family of four living in the United States needs to cover their basic needs?” The mean level cited is close to \$60,000, the median is \$40,000. As a point of comparison, the Federal poverty income threshold for a family of four currently is \$19,350. [NOTE: The **Cumulative** column presents a sum

of the percents for all income levels up to that line. For example, the 22% for the “\$51-\$60,000” line includes the 7% , 7% and 8% for “Over \$75,000,” “\$61-\$75,000,” and “\$51-\$60,000.”]

The median is likely a more accurate number to use since it represents the midpoint of all responses. There were a few extreme responses on both ends (less than \$1,000 and more than \$1 million). This is likely due to the self-administered nature of the online survey. Respondents simply wrote in their responses and there was no opportunity to clarify the response (e.g. if someone wrote in “30” they might have meant “30,000”). When these extremes are eliminated, the median stays the same at \$40,000, but the mean drops to \$40,169.

How much annual income would you say a family of four living in the United States needs to cover their basic needs?

	2002	2003	2004	2005	Cumulative
	%	%	%	%	%
Over \$75,000	4	6	13	7	7
\$61-\$75,000	3	4	5	7	14
\$51-\$60,000	5	7	5	8	22
\$46-\$50,000	9	13	17	15	37
\$41-\$45,000	3	3	4	4	41
\$36-\$40,000	14	12	14	16	57
\$31-\$35,000	9	7	8	10	67
\$26-\$30,000	14	16	13	13	80
\$21-\$25,000	11	9	5	10	90
\$16-\$20,000	6	6	5	4	94
\$15,000 or less	4	5	3	5	99
Don't know	17	14	9	-	-
Mean	\$ 39,400	\$41,360	\$44,460	\$59,912	
Median	\$ 35,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	
Base - Total respondents	1015	1008	1004	1131	

- *Helping the poor ranks fourth, behind health care, education, and national defense, in terms of the preferred priority for Congressional spending.* Respondents were asked, “What do you feel should be the Federal government’s highest priority in terms of spending? Where should Congress spend your tax dollars?” “Helping the needy/poor” was cited by 17%, with “health care” cited by 29%, “education” by 27%, and “national defense” by 13%. But there were related comments in each of these areas (for example, “housing/affordable housing,” “affordable health care,” “welfare” and “job training”). The following table shows some of these comments combined into unduplicated (net) categories. The question was unaided and more than one response was accepted from respondents.

What do you feel should be the federal government's highest priority in terms of spending? Where should Congress spend your tax dollars?

	Total 2005
	%
ANY MEDICAL/HEALTH (NET)	33
Health care	29
Health care for the elderly	3
Health insurance	1
Affordable healthcare	1
Other medical/health mentions	1
ANY SOCIAL PROGRAMS (NET)	17
Helping the needy/poor people	12
Social security	2
Welfare	1
Fight against drugs/alcohol	1
Seniors/Elders	1
Social programs	1
Other social program mentions	1
ANY SECURITY/DEFENSE (NET)	16
National defense	13
Fighting terrorism	2
War	1
Crime prevention	*
Other security/defense mentions	1
ANY ECONOMY (NET)	14
Creating more jobs	7
Reducing debt	2
Lower taxes	2
Economy	1
Other economy mentions	3
Education	27
Spend on the nation/not on foreign countries	10
Housing/Affordable housing	6
Improve infrastructure	4
Giving the money back to the tax-payers	1
Immigration control	1
Cut the pork barrel expenses	1
Job training	1
To improve the quality of life	1
Environment	1
Court system	1
Research and development	1
Finding fuel/alternate fuel	*
Other mentions	8
None/Nothing	2
Don't know	3
Refuse/Decline to answer	2
Base - Total respondents	1131

* Less than 0.5%

- *Americans in general were not surprised by the poverty in New Orleans.* Fifty-nine percent (59%) said that they were not surprised when asked about the news stories depicting poverty in New Orleans. But 41% claimed that they were surprised by the poverty, with 17% saying that they were “very surprised.” People who are more concerned about poverty in general were more likely to say that they were surprised by the poverty in New Orleans, perhaps because they are more attuned to the issue of poverty in general. Women were more surprised by it than were men. Those with just a high school education were also more likely to be surprised than those with higher levels of education.

**Our next few questions are about the hurricanes
that hit the Gulf States earlier this year.**

**Many news stories about the recent hurricanes hitting
the Gulf States focused on the effect they had on people living in poverty.
How surprised were you by the number of people
living in poverty in New Orleans?**

	Total 2005 %
Very surprised	17
Somewhat surprised	24
Total surprised	41
Not very surprised	37
Not at all surprised	22
Total not surprised	59
<hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/>	
Base - Total respondents	1131

- *Most Americans feel that New Orleans has more poverty than they have in their own areas.* They recognize that poverty exists in their areas, but they do not see it as pervasive as what was depicted in New Orleans. Older people (those 65 or older) were more likely to believe that their area has less poverty than New Orleans.

**Do you think there is as much poverty in your area
as was in New Orleans?**

	Total 2005 %
More poverty in my area	4
About the same	26
Not as much but we still have poverty	66
Poverty is not a problem in my area	3
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Base - Total respondents	1131

- *Many saw an opportunity to bring attention to poverty through the devastation in New Orleans.* Seventy-five percent (75%) felt that the disaster should be used to further educate people about poverty in the United States, while only 23% felt that there has already been too much focus on the situation.

**Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:
The scope of poverty revealed in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina
should be used to further bring attention to poverty throughout the U.S.**

	Total 2005 %
Strongly agree (5)	40
Agree (4)	<u>35</u>
Total Agree	75
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	17
Disagree (2)	6
Strongly disagree (1)	<u>3</u>
Total Disagree	8
Mean	4.0
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Base - Total respondents	1131

**Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:
 The scope of poverty revealed in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina
 has received too much attention already.**

	Total 2005 %
Strongly agree (5)	8
Agree (4)	<u>15</u>
Total Agree	23
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	32
Disagree (2)	30
Strongly disagree (1)	<u>15</u>
Total Disagree	45
Mean	<u>2.7</u>
Base - Total respondents	1131

- *Most people did not feel that racism played a role in the response in New Orleans, but 27% did.* Twelve percent (12%) strongly agreed with the statement “Racism played a role in the slow response to victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans,” while 32% strongly disagreed with the statement.

**Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:
Racism played a role in the slow response to victims
of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.**

	Total 2005 %
Strongly agree (5)	12
Agree (4)	<u>15</u>
Total Agree	27
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	21
Disagree (2)	20
Strongly disagree (1)	<u>32</u>
Total Disagree	52
Mean	2.6
<hr/>	
Base - Total respondents	1131

Questionnaire

1. What do you feel is the single biggest social problem facing the U.S. today?
(OPEN ENDED - TOP OF MIND. RESPONSE CATEGORIES WILL NOT BE PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS.)

2. What other social issues or problems in the U.S. are you concerned about?
(OPEN ENDED - TOTAL UNAIDED, WHEN COMBINED WITH QUESTION 1. RESPONSE CATEGORIES WILL NOT BE PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS.)

3. How concerned would you say that you are about each of the following? Would you say that you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned with this problem? Think just in terms of the problem here in the United States.

	Very	Somewhat	Not Very	Not at All
Poverty	[]	[]	[]	[]
Health care	[]	[]	[]	[]
Access to Education	[]	[]	[]	[]
Affordable Housing	[]	[]	[]	[]

4. What is the single most significant cause of poverty? ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE – CLOSED ENDED (LIST WILL BE PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS)

- Unjust laws or social policies
- Lack of work that pays a living wage
- Lack of education -- CLARIFY:

- Lack of access to education
- Lack of understanding of the importance of education
- Lack of desire for education
- Poor education system

- Lack of opportunity
- Lack of initiative/laziness
- Outsourcing of jobs to other countries
- Welfare/assistance is too easy to get
- Cost of living
- Cost of healthcare/lack of insurance

- Poor decision-making/bad luck
- Drugs/alcohol abuse
- Unfair distribution of wealth
- Physical or mental disabilities
- Health/medical problems
- Racial/ethnic discrimination
- Lack of job skills

Other causes SPECIFY _____

5. How concerned are you that you might be poor at some point in your life?

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not very concerned
- Not at all concerned

6. Who has the greatest responsibility to respond to the needs of poor people in the U.S. and to address other issues related to poverty? (CLOSED-ENDED – RESPONSES WILL BE SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS) ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE

- The poor themselves
- The Federal government
- Local and state governments
- Churches
- Charitable organizations other than churches

- Everyone/general public
- Corporations/businesses
- No one/there is nothing you can do about it
- Other _____

7. What is the single best way to *permanently* break the cycle of poverty in the United States? (CLOSED-ENDED - RESPONSES WILL BE SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS)
ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE

- Better education for children
- More opportunities for education for adults
- More government aid
- More private aid/charitable contributions
- Change laws
- A better economy
- Increasing access to affordable housing
- Development of leadership skills among low-income people
- Participation in community-based organizations
- Pay living wages to low-income workers
- Other ways _____

8. In the past year have you done more, done less or done about the same as the previous year to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor?

- Done more
- Done less
- Done about the same

9. What, if anything, have you done in the past year to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor? (CLOSED-ENDED - RESPONSES WILL BE SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS) ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES

- Nothing
- Gave money directly to a poor person
- Gave money for disaster relief
- Gave money to an organization helping the poor
- Volunteered
- Mentored an individual
- Got involved with community based organization to address poverty or injustice
- Prayer
- Other _____

10. In the coming year do you feel that you will do more, less or about the same as you did in this past year to help alleviate poverty or to help someone who is poor?

- Will do more
- Will do less
- Will do about the same

11. How important do you think it is to decrease or eliminate poverty in the United States? Is it:

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

12. Of the 297 million individuals living in the United States, about how many would you say are currently living in poverty? WRITE IN A NUMBER; INDICATE WHETHER IT IS MILLION OR THOUSAND

13. Do you feel there are more or fewer people living in poverty today than there were a year ago?

- More people living in poverty
- Fewer people living in poverty
- About the same number living in poverty

14. Do you feel there will be more or fewer people living in poverty next year than there are today?

- More people living in poverty
- Fewer people living in poverty
- About the same number living in poverty

15. If there are more people living in poverty what will it mean for the country as a whole? What will be the biggest impact it will have on the country as a whole?
(CLOSED-ENDED - RESPONSES WILL BE SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS)
ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE

- None/no impact
- More crime
- Higher taxes
- More alcohol/drug use
- More homelessness
- Reduced quality of life for people in general
- Other _____

16. How much annual income would you say a family of four living in the United States needs to cover their basic needs? RECORD AMOUNT IN THOUSANDS

17. When those who are poor and uninsured need health care services - other than in emergencies - how often do you think they can get them?

- all of the time
- some of the time
- rarely
- never

18. In this country, we guarantee all children, including those living in poverty, a quality education. Do you think the same should be true for health care and that all children, including those living in poverty, should have health care?

- Yes
- No

19. How important do you think it is for the federal government to make sure all low-income persons have health care coverage? Would you say that it is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important for the federal government to make sure all low-income persons have health care coverage?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

20. Our next few questions are about the hurricanes that hit the Gulf States earlier this year. Many news stories about the recent hurricanes hitting the Gulf States focused on the effect they had on people living in poverty. How surprised were you by the number of people living in poverty in New Orleans?

- Very surprised
- Somewhat surprised
- Not very surprised
- Not at all surprised

21. Do you think there is as much poverty in your area as was in New Orleans?

- More poverty
- About the same
- Not as much but we still have poverty
- Poverty is not a problem in my area

22. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

a. The scope of poverty revealed in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina should be used to further bring attention to poverty throughout the U.S.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

b. The scope of poverty revealed in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina has received too much attention already.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

c. Racism played a role in the slow response to victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

23. We have just a few more questions. What do you feel should be the federal government's highest priority in terms of spending? Where should Congress spend your tax dollars? (OPEN-ENDED)
