

## **Web Appendix**

**Lane Kenworthy and Lindsay A. Owens**

**"The Surprisingly Weak Effect of Recessions  
on Public Opinion"**

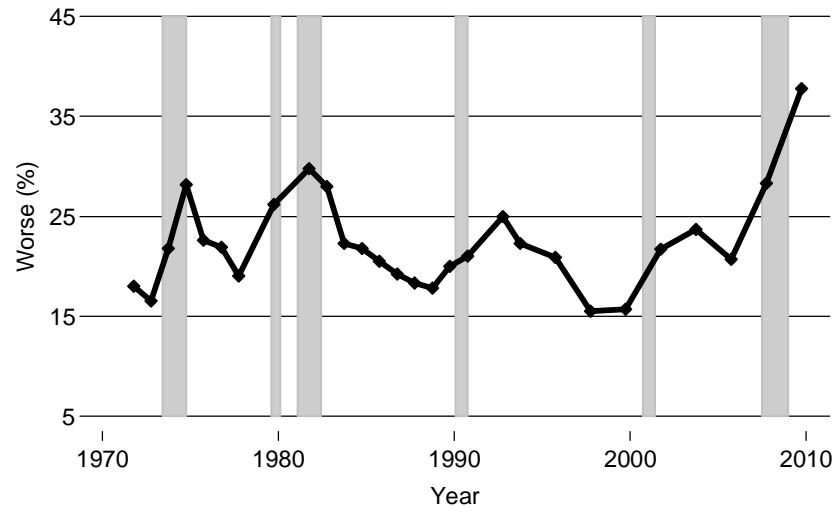
**Chapter 7 in *The Great Recession*, edited by  
David B. Grusky, Bruce Western, and  
Christopher Wimmer**

**Russell Sage Foundation, 2011**

This appendix includes figures referred to in the chapter.

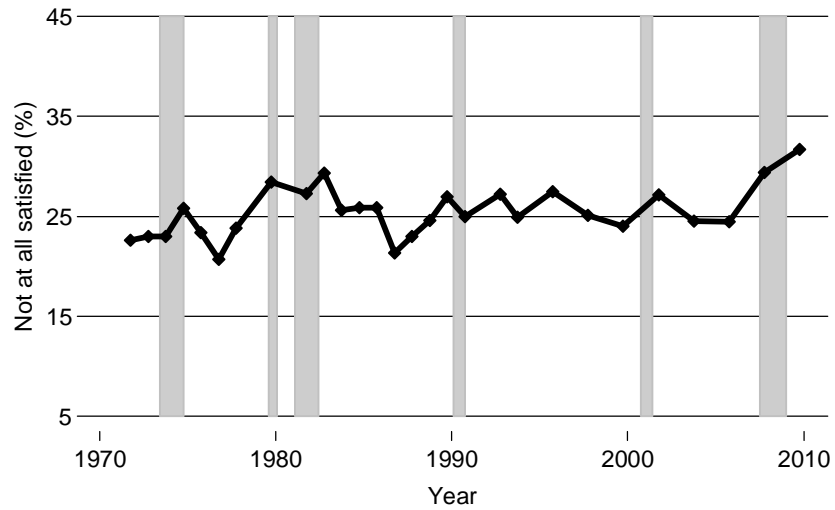
**Do Americans notice and feel adversely affected by economic downturns?**

Figure 1. Financial situation has been getting worse (GSS)



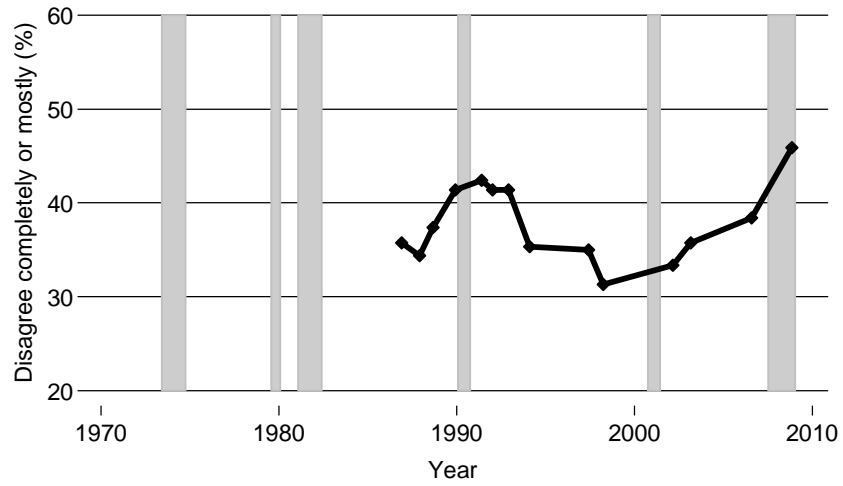
"During the last few years, has your financial situation been getting better, worse, or has it stayed the same?" (GSS finalter)

Figure 2. Not satisfied with family's present financial situation (GSS)



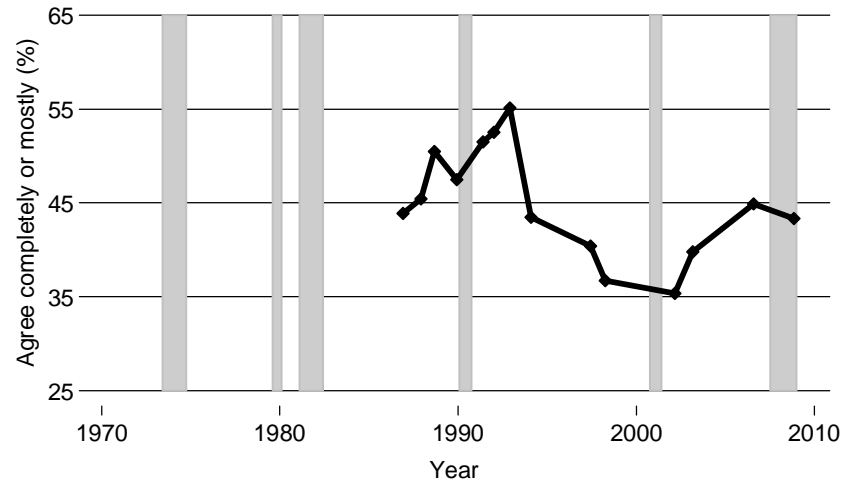
"We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are pretty well satisfied with your present financial situation, more or less satisfied, or not satisfied at all?" (GSS satfin)

Figure 3. Disagree satisfied with the way things are going for me financially (Pew)



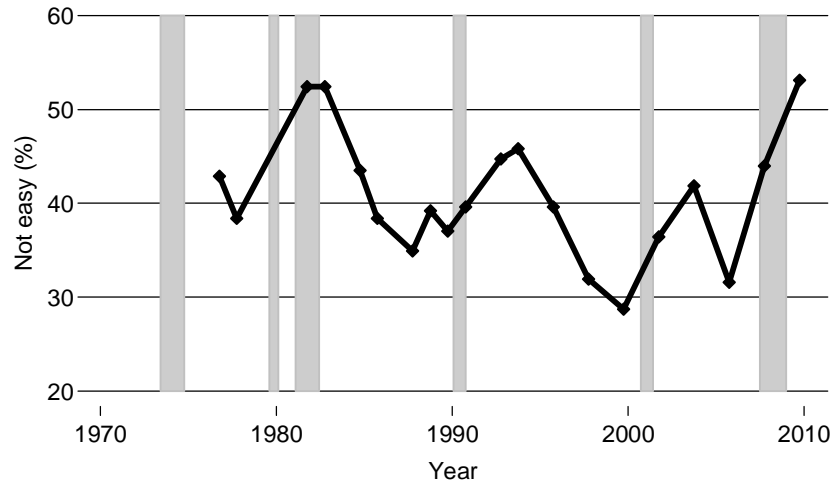
"I'm pretty well satisfied with the way things are going for me financially." (Pew Q31-v.F2)

Figure 4. Agree I often don't have enough money to make ends meet (Pew)



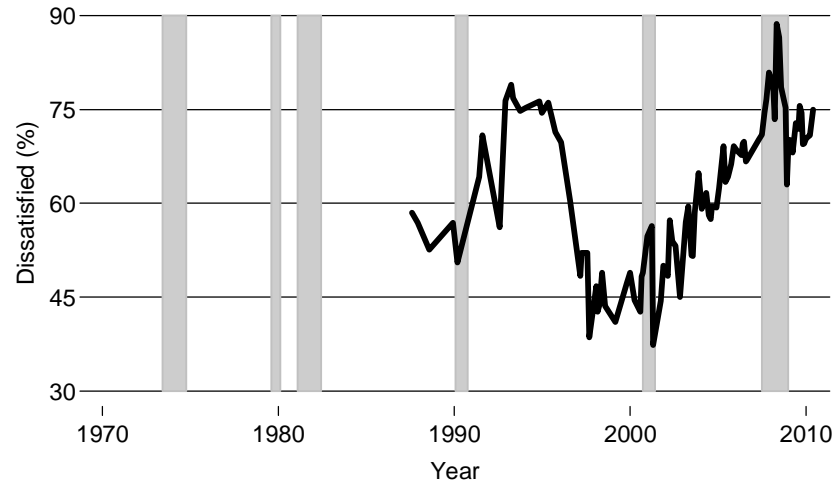
"I often don't have enough money to make ends meet." (Pew Q31-t.F2)

Figure 5. Not easy to find an equally good job with another employer (GSS)



"About how easy would it be for you to find a job with another employer with approximately the same income and fringe benefits you now have?" (GSS jobfind)

Figure 6. Dissatisfied with the way things are going in the country today (Pew)

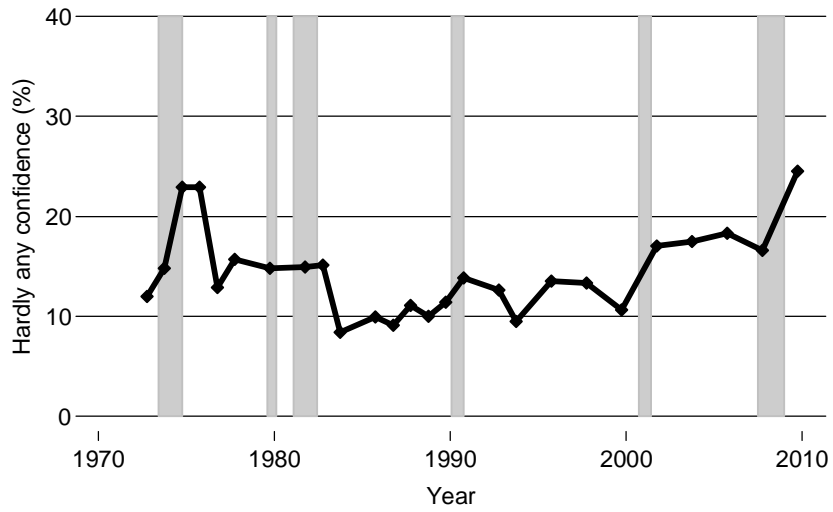


"All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?" (Pew QA2)



**Do attitudes toward business and finance  
sour?**

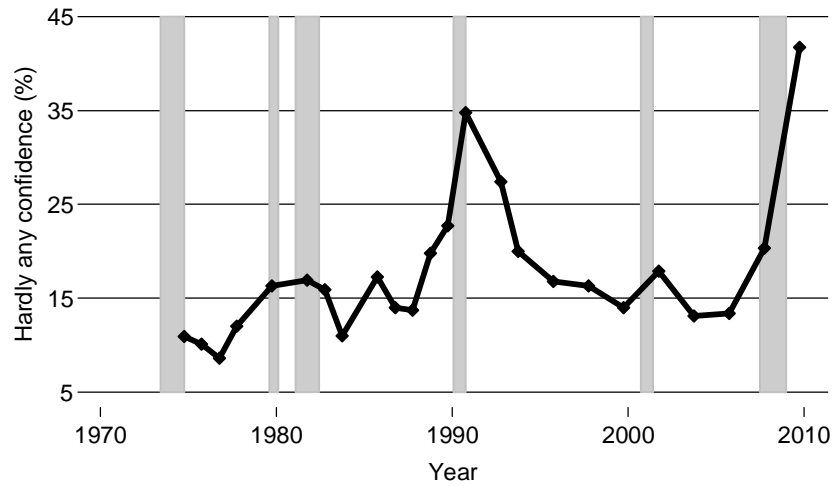
Figure 7. Hardly any confidence in major companies (GSS)



"I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence (3), only some confidence (2), or hardly any confidence at all in them (1)?"

Major companies (GSS conbus)

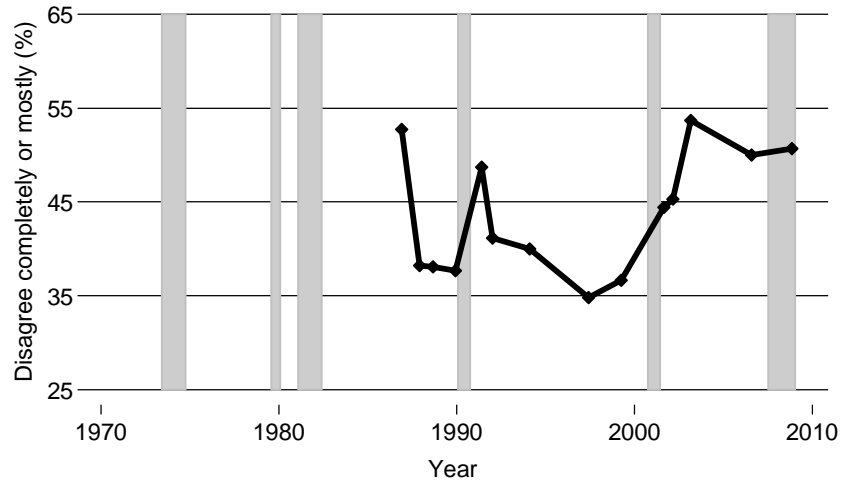
Figure 8. Hardly any confidence in banks and financial institutions (GSS)



"I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence (3), only some confidence (2), or hardly any confidence at all in them (1)?"

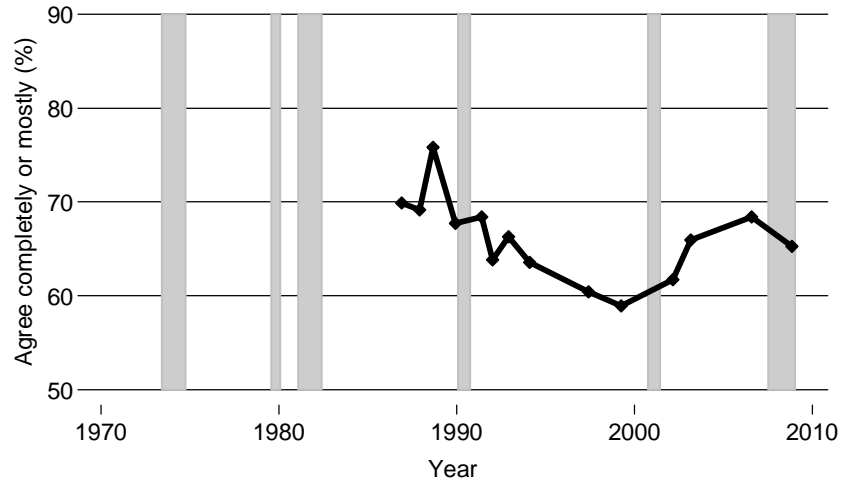
Banks and financial institutions (GSS confinan)

Figure 9. Disagree business corporations generally strike a fair balance between profits and the public interest (Pew)



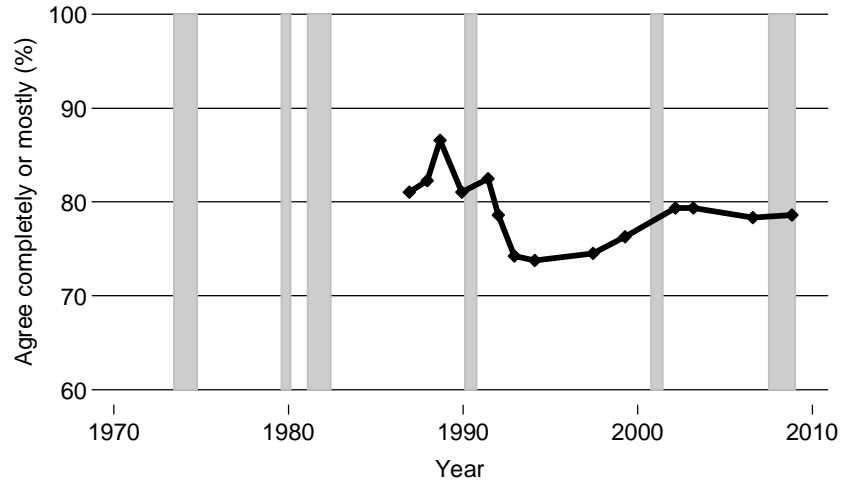
"Business corporations generally strike a fair balance between making profits and serving the public interest." (Pew Q20-n.F2)

Figure 10. Agree business corporations make too much profit (Pew)



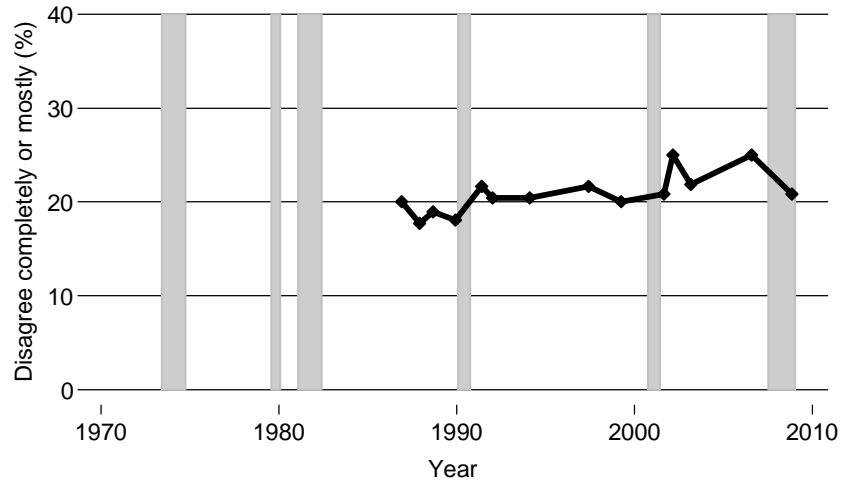
"Business corporations make too much profit." (Pew Q20-p.F2)

Figure 11. Agree there is too much power concentrated in the hands of a few big companies (Pew)



"There is too much power concentrated in the hands of a few big companies."  
(Pew Q20-o.F2)

Figure 12. Disagree the country's strength is mostly based on the success of American business (Pew)

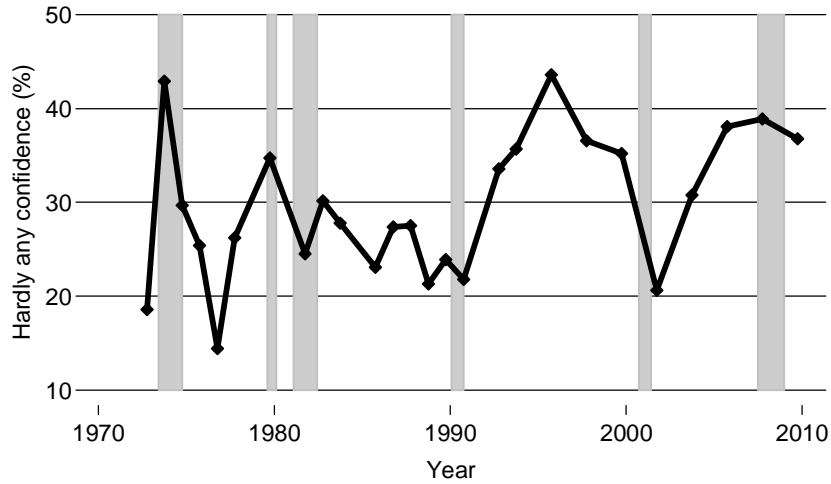


"The strength of this country today is mostly based on the success of American business." (Pew Q20-h.F1)

**Do attitudes toward government sour?**



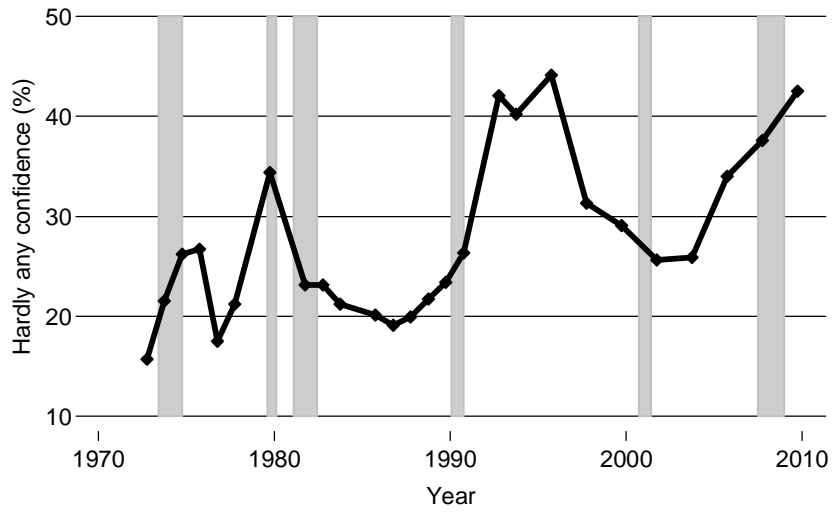
Figure 13. Hardly any confidence in the executive branch of the federal government (GSS)



"I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence (3), only some confidence (2), or hardly any confidence at all in them (1)"

Executive branch of the federal government (GSS confed)

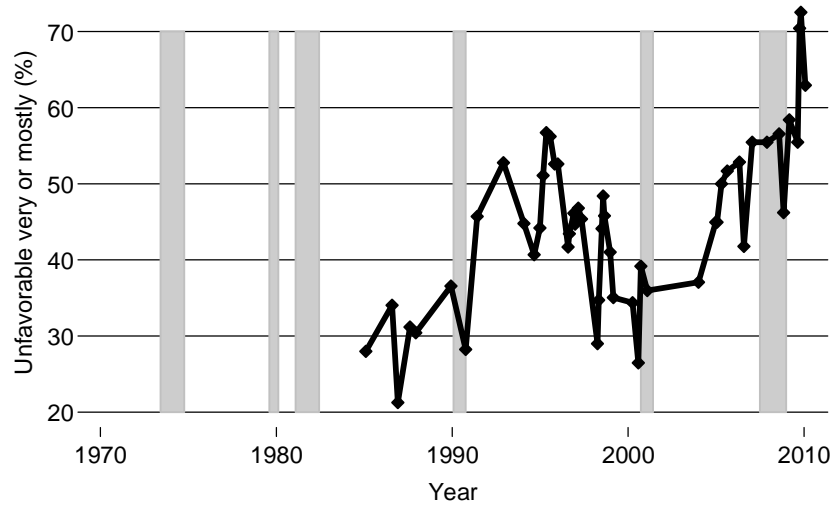
Figure 14. Hardly any confidence in Congress (GSS)



"I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence (3), only some confidence (2), or hardly any confidence at all in them (1)"

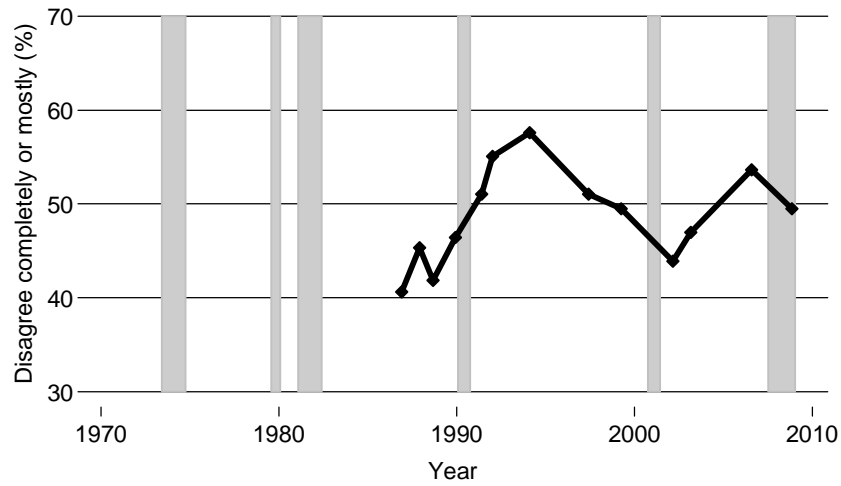
Congress (GSS conlegis)

Figure 15. Unfavorable opinion of Congress (Pew)



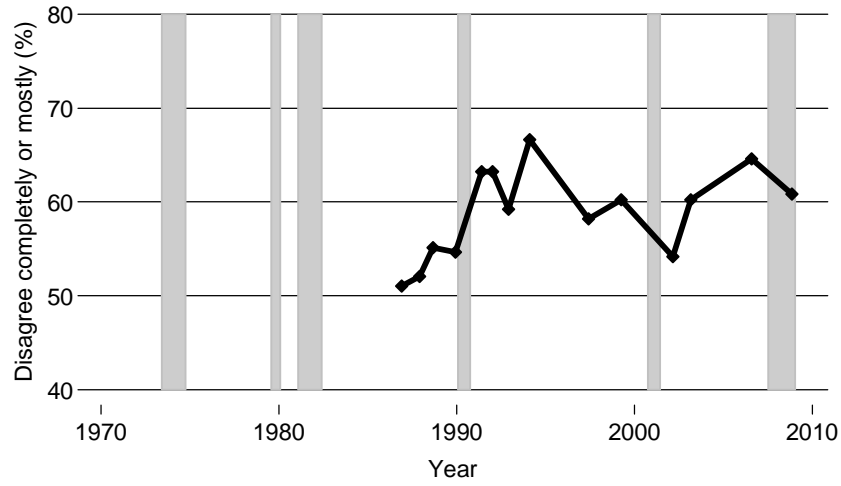
How about [next item]? Would you say your overall opinion of [item] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?  
Congress (Pew QA21)

Figure 16. Disagree the government is really run for the benefit of all the people (Pew)



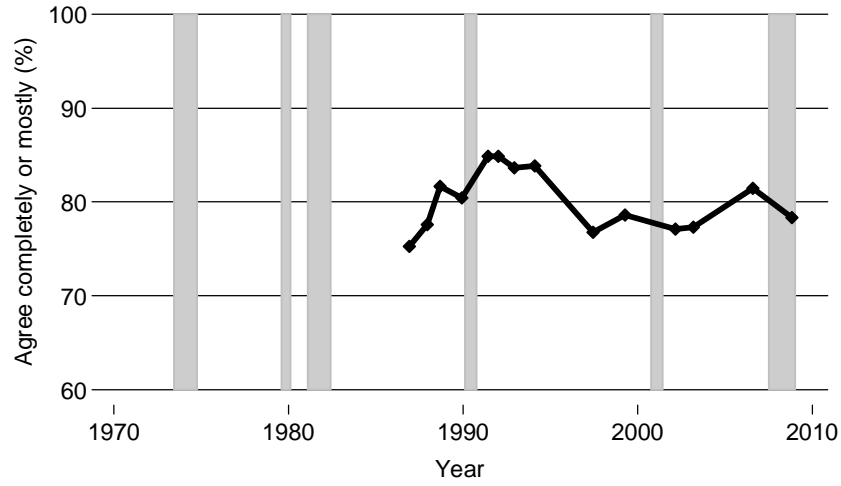
"The government is really run for the benefit of all the people." (Pew Q20-m)

Figure 17. Disagree most elected officials care about what people like me think (Pew)



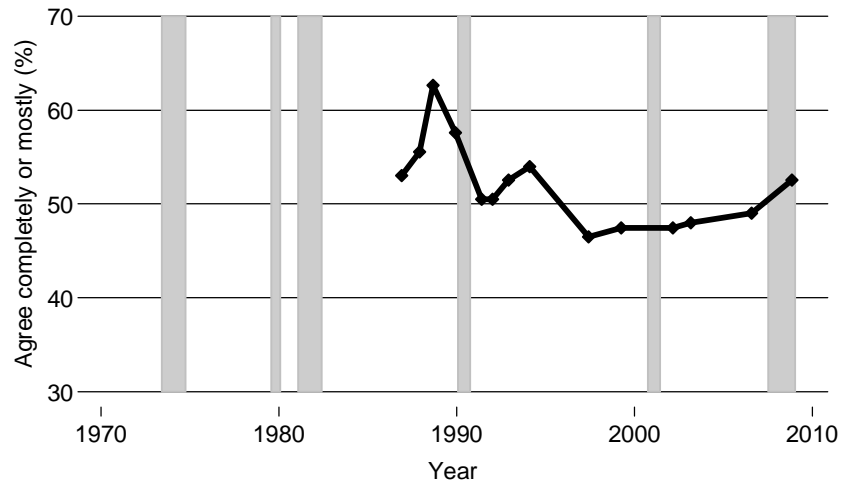
"Most elected officials care what people like me think." (Pew Q20-c)

Figure 18. Agree elected officials lose touch with the people pretty quickly (Pew)



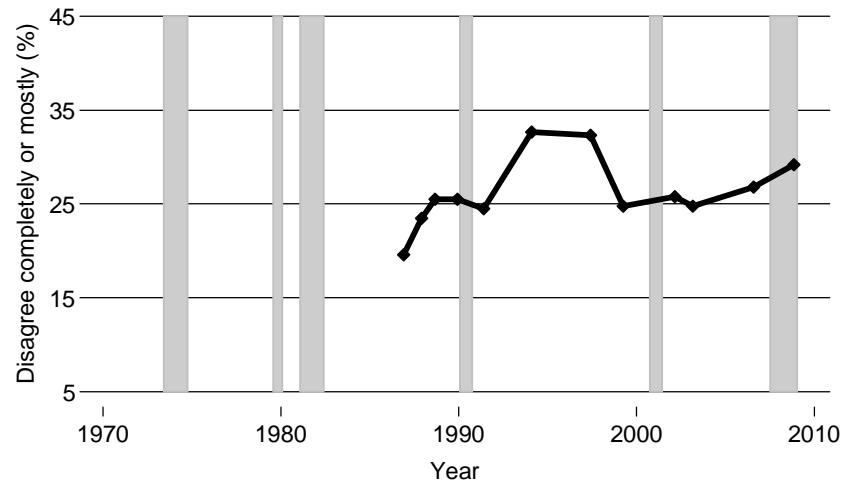
"Generally speaking, elected officials in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly." (Pew Q20-b)

Figure 19. Agree people like me don't have any say about what the government does (Pew)



"People like me don't have any say about what the government does." (Pew Q20-a)

Figure 20. Disagree voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things (Pew)

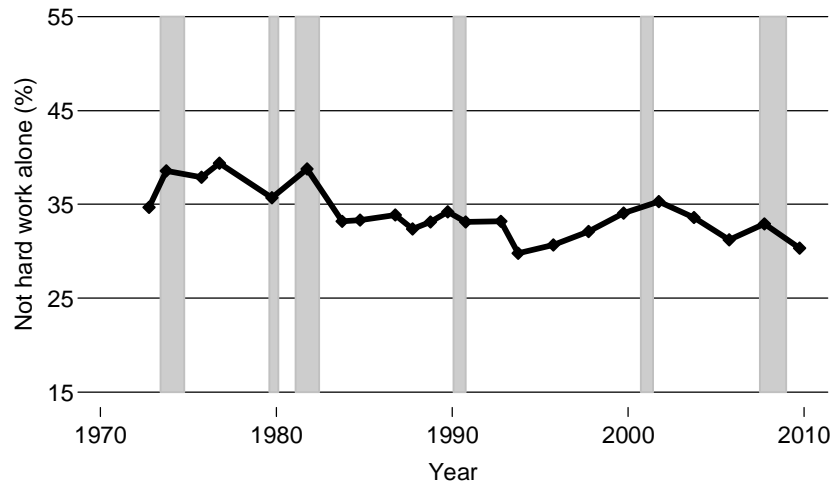


"Voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things."  
(Pew Q20-d)



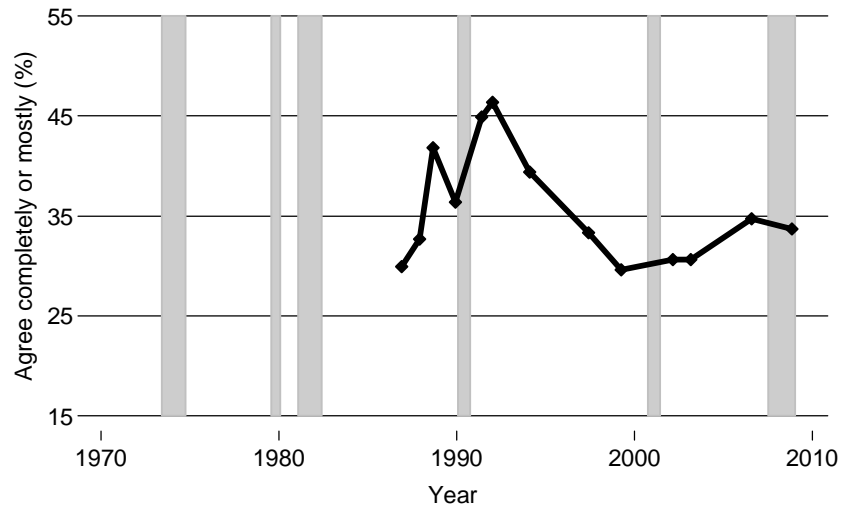
**Do people perceive less fairness, less opportunity, more inequality?**

Figure 21. People get ahead by lucky breaks or help from others as much or more than by hard work (GSS)



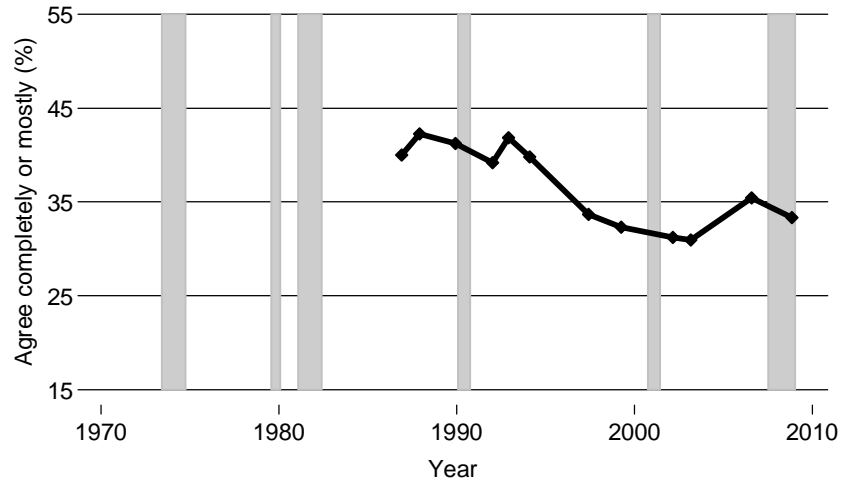
"Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?" (GSS getahead)

Figure 22. Agree hard work offers little guarantee of success (Pew)



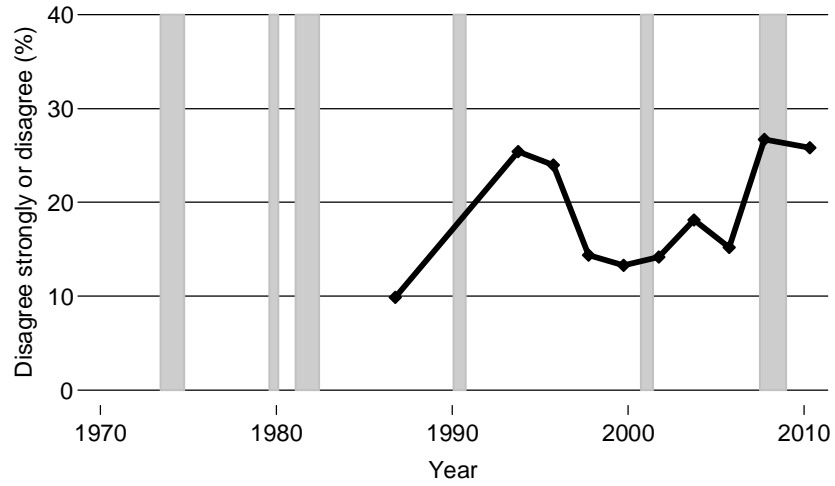
"Hard work offers little guarantee of success." (Pew Q20-f)

Figure 23. Agree that success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control (Pew)



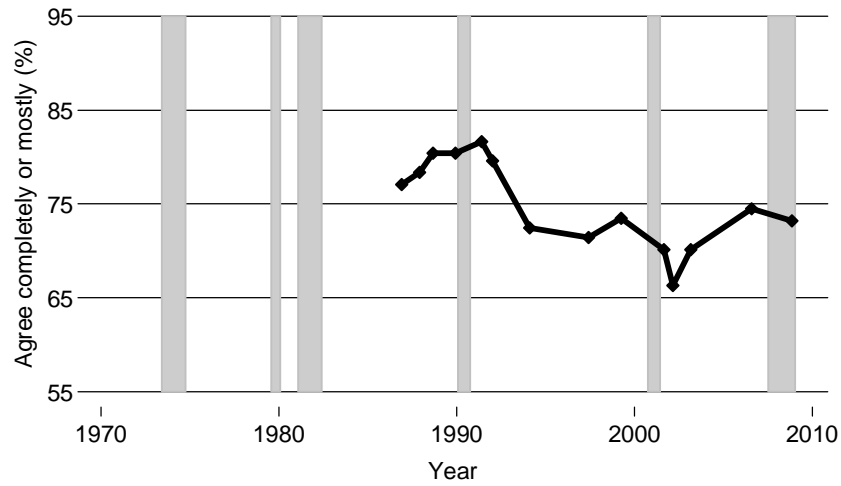
"Success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control." (Pew Q20-e)

Figure 24. Disagree people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living (GSS)



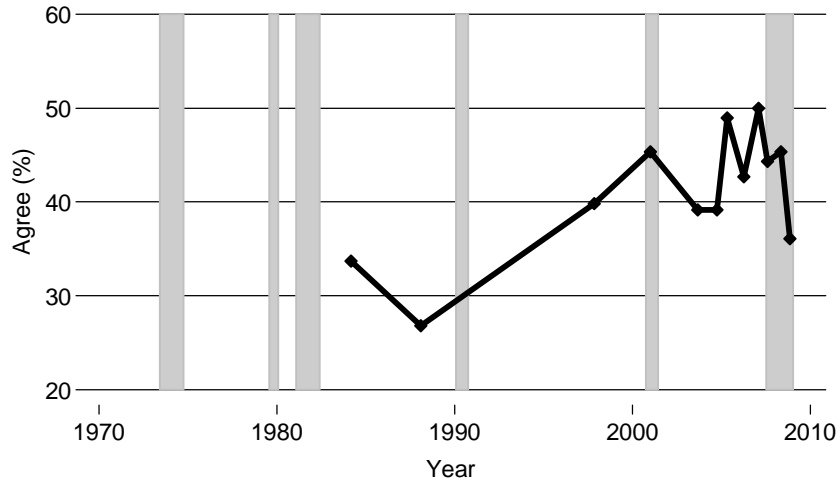
"The way things are in America, people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living. Do you agree or disagree?" (GSS goodlife)

Figure 25. Today the rich just get richer while the poor get poorer  
(Pew)



"Today it's really true that the rich just get richer while the poor get poorer."  
(Pew Q31-qF2)

Figure 26. American society is divided into the haves and the have-nots (Pew)

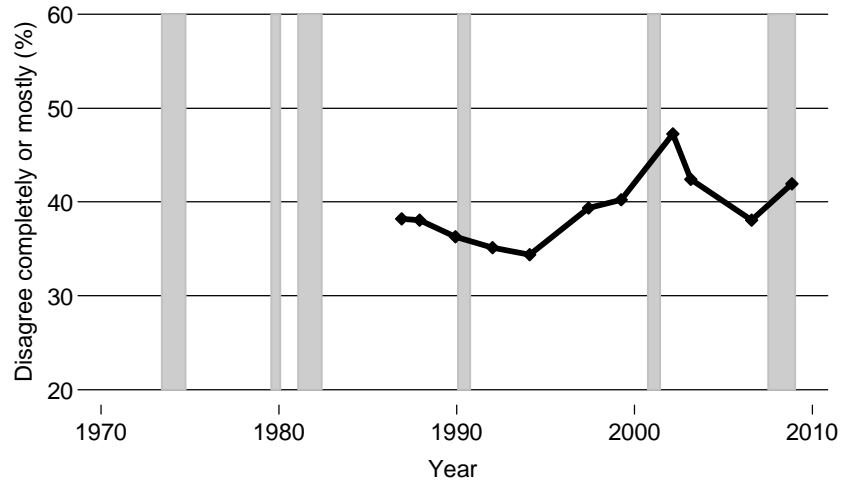


"Some people think of American society as divided into two groups, the "haves" and the "have-nots," while others think it's incorrect to think of America that way. Do you, yourself, think of America as divided into haves and have-nots, or don't you think of America that way?" (Pew QB28)

**What do Americans think government can do  
and should do?**

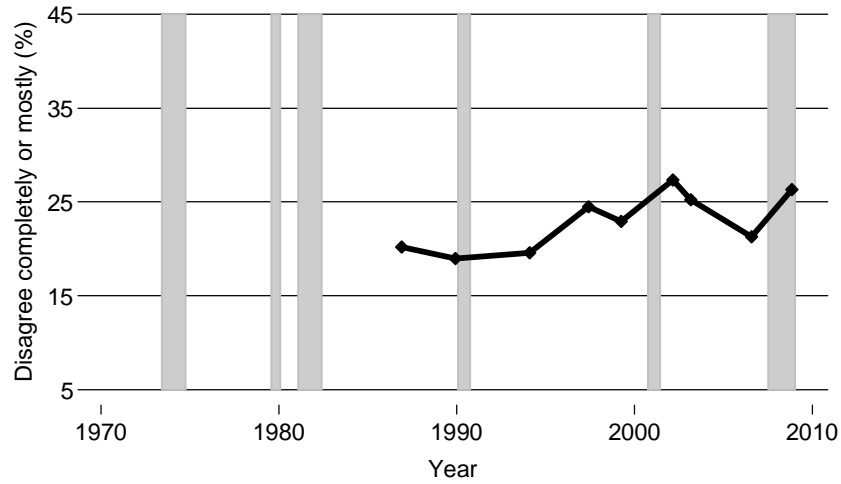


Figure 27. Disagree government regulation of business usually does more harm than good (Pew)



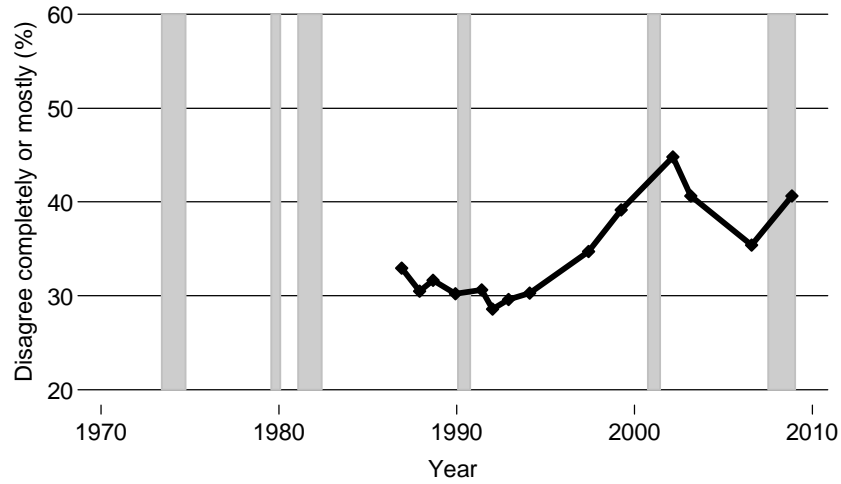
"Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good." (Pew Q20-i.F1)

Figure 28. Disagree the federal government should run only those things that cannot be run at the local level (Pew)



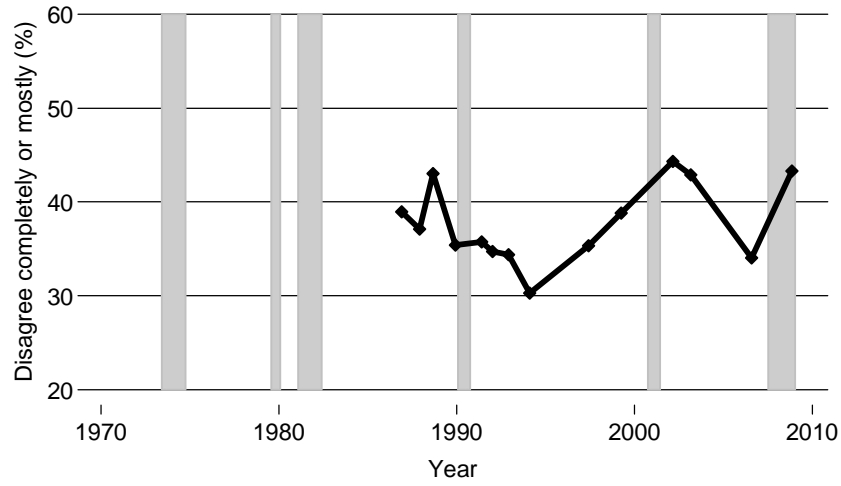
"The federal government should run only those things that cannot be run at the local level." (Pew Q20-i.F1)

Figure 29. Disagree when something is run by the government it is usually inefficient and wasteful (Pew)



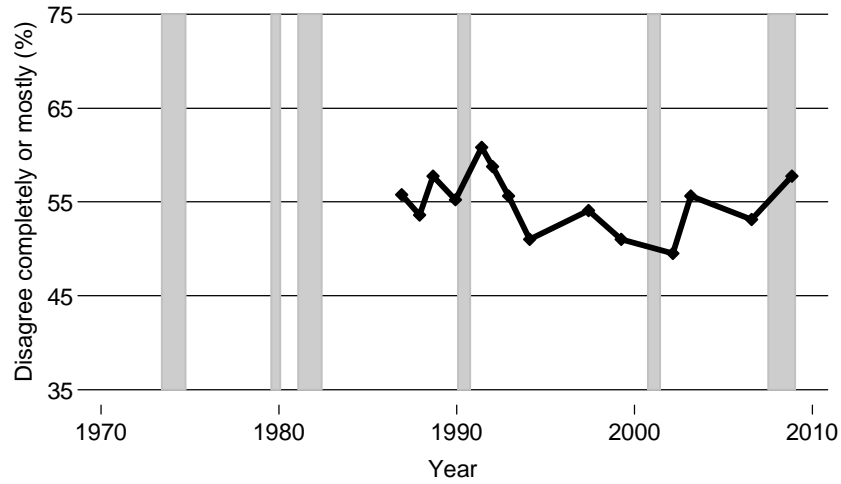
"When something is run by the government, it is usually inefficient and wasteful." (Pew Q20-k.F1)

Figure 30. Disagree the federal government controls too much of our daily lives (Pew)



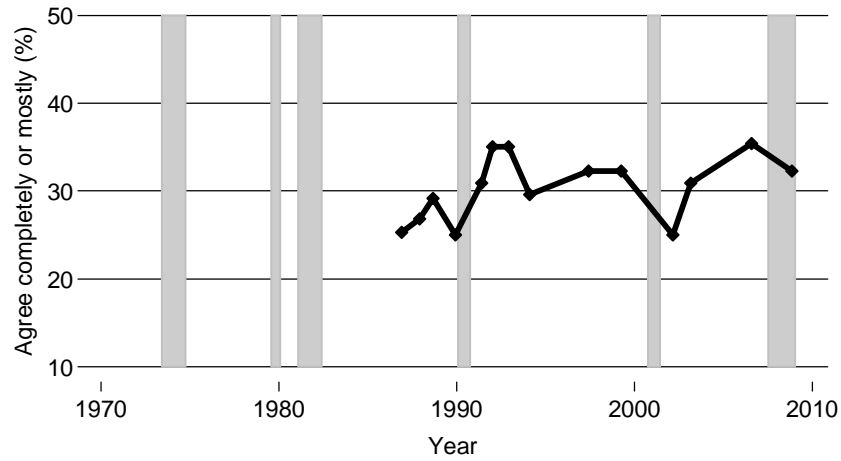
"The federal government controls too much of our daily lives." (Pew Q20-1.F1)

Figure 31. Disagree we have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country (Pew)



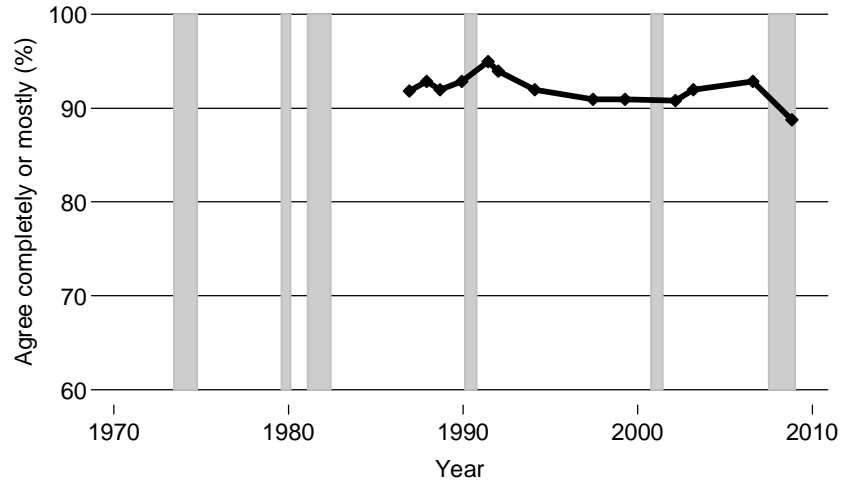
"We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country." (Pew Q30-d.F1)

Figure 32. Agree we should make every possible effort to improve the position of blacks and other minorities, even if it means giving them preferential treatment (Pew)



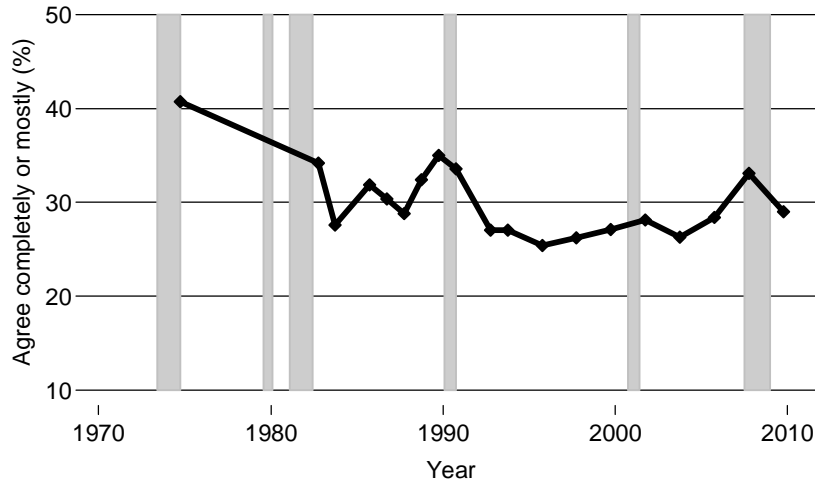
"We should make every possible effort to improve the position of blacks and other minorities, even if it means giving them preferential treatment." (Pew Q30-1.F1)

Figure 33. Agree our society should do what is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed (Pew)



"Our society should do what is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed." (Pew Q30-c.F1)

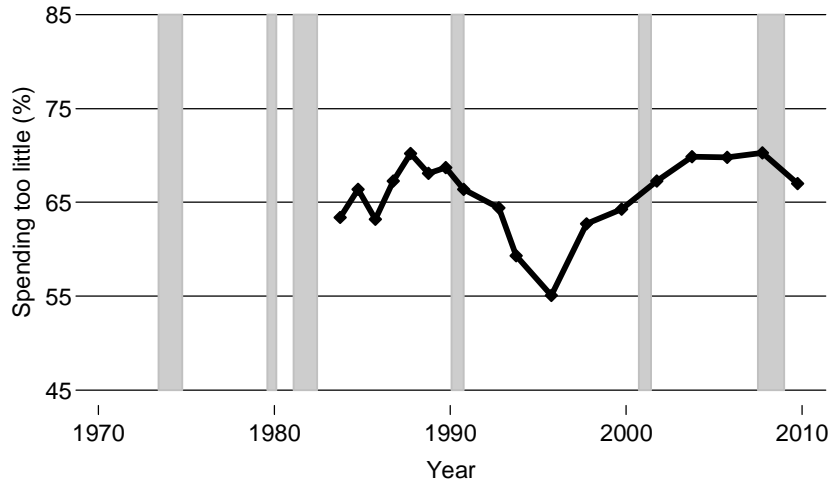
Figure 34. Agree the government should do everything to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans (GSS)



"Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans (they are at point 5 on this card). Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself (they are at point 1). Where are you placing yourself in this scale?" (GSS helpoor)



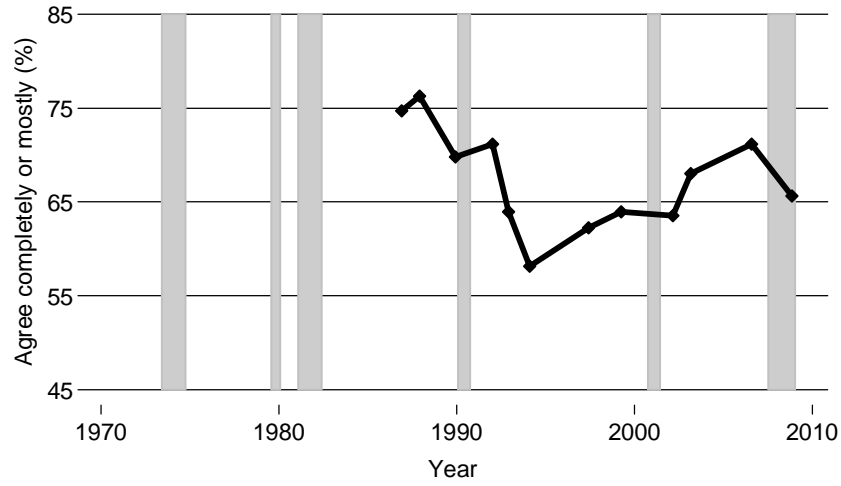
Figure 35. We're spending too little money on assistance to the poor (GSS)



"We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount."

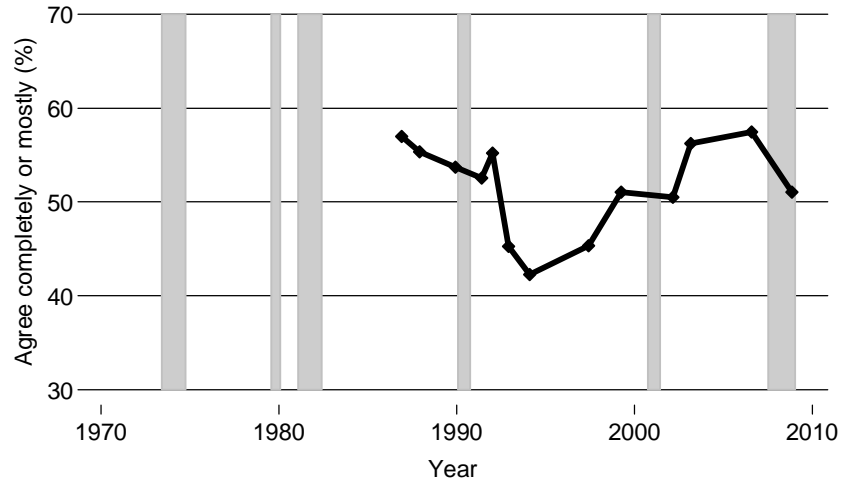
k. Assistance to the poor. (GSS natfarey)

Figure 36. Agree it is the responsibility of government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves (Pew)



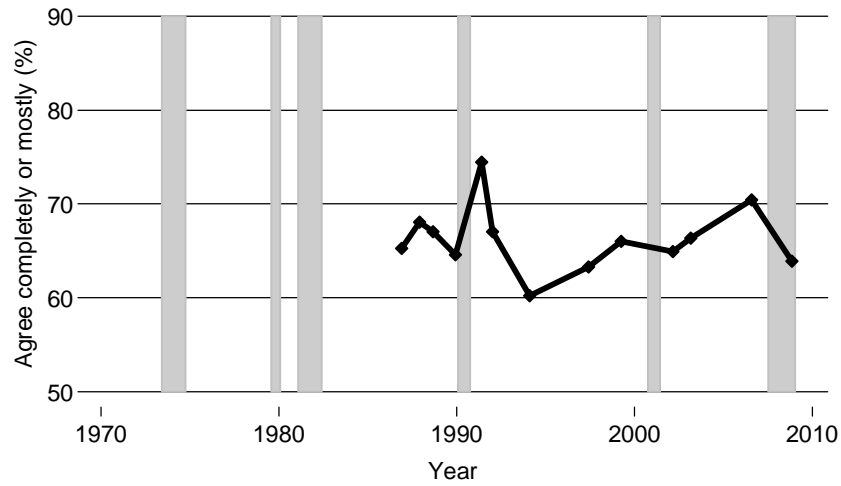
"It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves." (Pew Q30-e.F1)

Figure 37. Agree the government should help more needy people even if it means going deeper into debt (Pew)



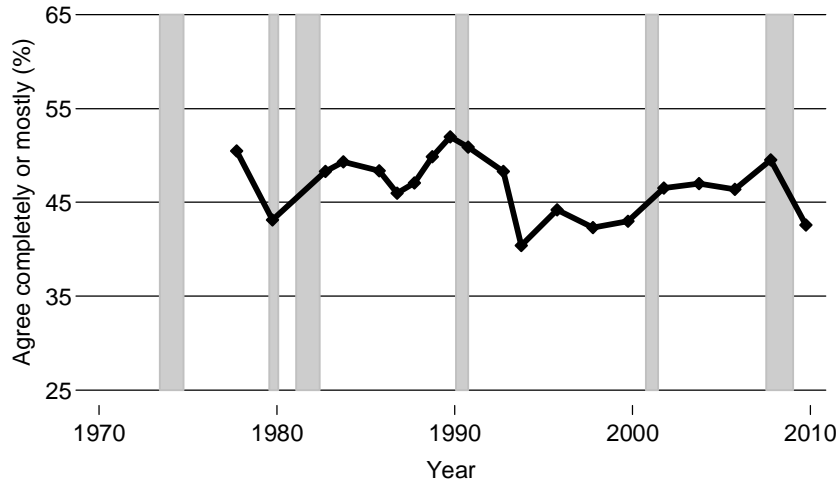
"The government should help more needy people even if it means going deeper in debt." (Pew Q30-f.F1)

Figure 38. Agree the government should guarantee every citizen enough to eat and a place to sleep (Pew)



"The government should guarantee every citizen enough to eat and a place to sleep." (Pew Q30-g.F1)

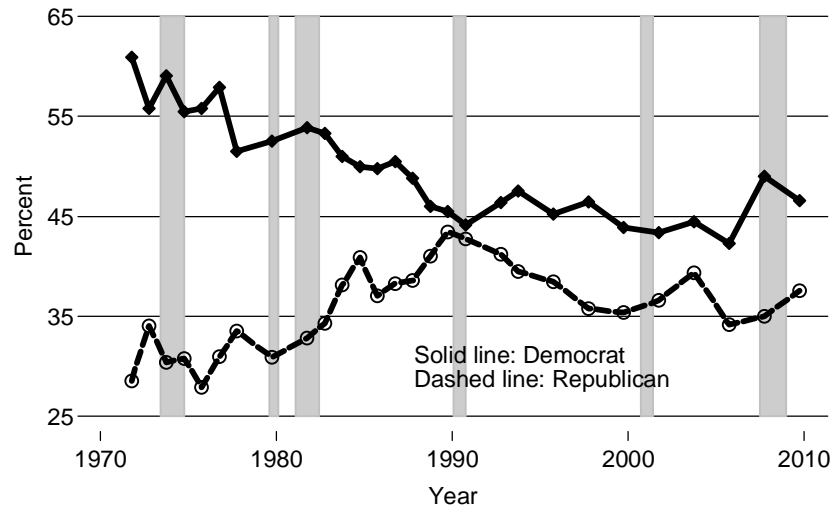
Figure 39. Agree the government ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor (GSS)



"Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor (they are at point 7 on this card). Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing these income differences between the rich and the poor (they are at point 1 on this card). What score between 1 and 7 comes closest to the way you feel?" (GSS eqwlth)

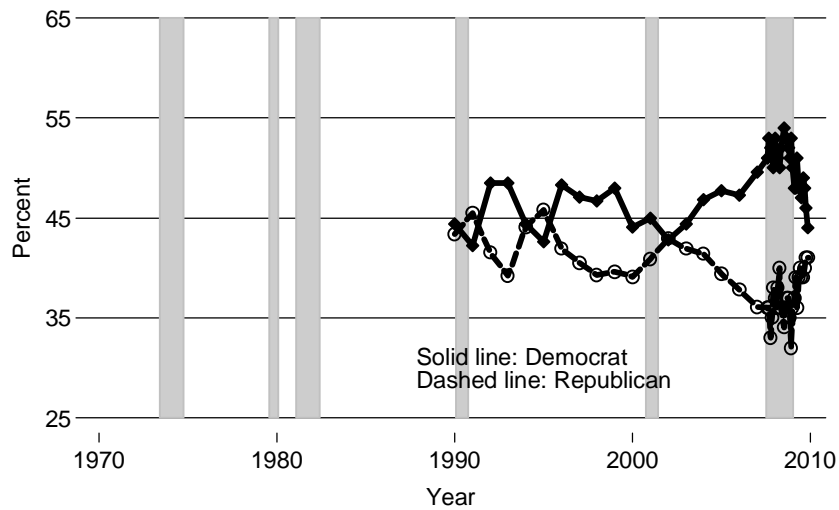
**Do party allegiances and political orientations shift?**

Figure 40. Party identification (GSS)



"Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?" (GSS partyid)

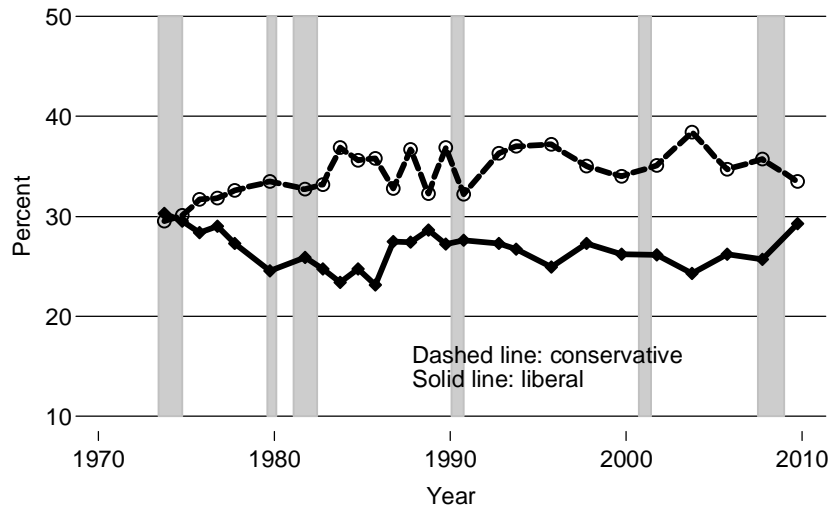
Figure 41. Party identification (Pew)



"In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?" (Pew party). Note: Both the GSS and Pew surveys offer seven choices to respondents (though the two surveys do so in different ways). Those who respond independent are allowed to reclassify themselves as "weak" or "lean" identifiers with one of the two parties. We classify these as Democrat or Republican, rather than as independent (Keith et al. 1992; Sides 2009).



Figure 42. Political views (GSS)



"We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal - point 1 - to extremely conservative - point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale?" (GSS polviews)