

# Planning & Progress 2013

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“Optimism and The American Dream”



# Objectives and Methodology

## Objectives

- To evaluate the state of financial planning in America, and people's ability to stay on course over the long-term to meet their goals.
- To assess how Americans are responding to the pace of society, as well as the current economic and political climate.
- To understand whether or not Americans feel they are 'moving in the right direction' in areas such as debt, saving, spending, health, and finances.

## Methodology

- Online survey of 1,546 Americans (via web panel) conducted between January 9-23, 2013.
  - Qualified participants were those at least 25 years of age.
  - Data is weighted to be representative of the U.S. population (age 25+) by age, gender, income, region, household size, and marital status.

# Key Findings

## **More than one-quarter view themselves as pessimists (glass half empty).**

- The most optimistic subgroups include Gen Y, men, marrieds and those with high assets.
- Americans are most optimistic about their health; least optimistic about the government (perhaps they don't realize that many Americans are forced into early retirement because of health problems).

## **While most are not optimistic about America in the short-term, they have hope for the long-term.**

## **3 in 10 say the American Dream won't be alive for their children and grandchildren.**

- While Gen X and Gen Y have faith in the American Dream, the Mature Generation is more likely to say it's dead (both now and for their children/grandchildren).

## **Half of Americans are either "informal" financial planners or have no plans/goals at all.**

- Only one-third are "disciplined" and very few (16%) say they are "highly disciplined".
- Men are more likely than women to say they are "disciplined" financial planners.
- Gen Y (especially the youngest Gen Y), men, and those with the highest assets are more likely than their counterparts to consider themselves disciplined.
- Compared to 2012 there are now more non-planners and fewer disciplined planners.

# More than one-quarter view themselves as pessimists (“glass half empty”).



AGE

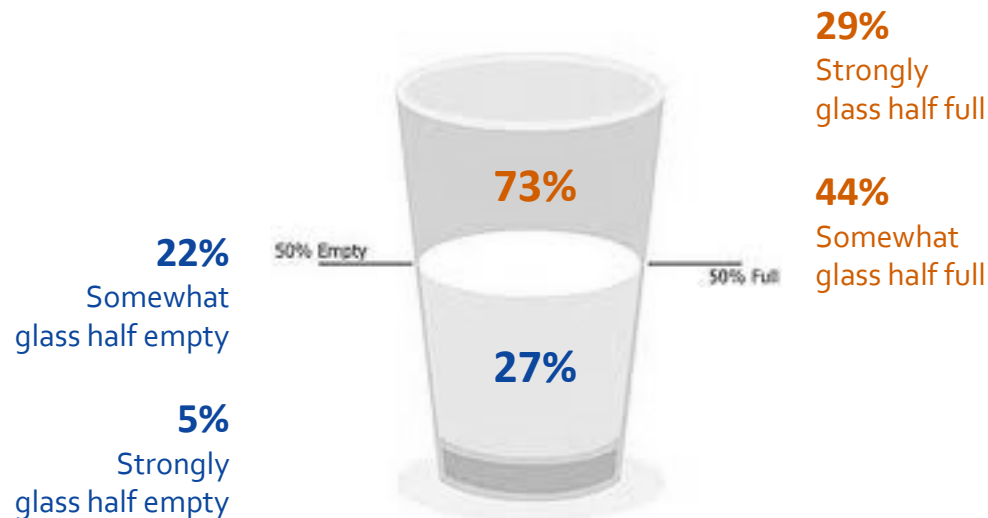
% Optimists (“Glass Half Full”):  
Gen Y – 67%  
Gen X – 68%  
Boomers – 77%  
Mature Gen – 79%



MARITAL  
STATUS

Married Americans are more optimistic (“Glass Half Full”) than single Americans (78% vs. 67%).

## Glass Half Empty or Glass Half Full Self Described Optimism



# 3 in 10 say the American Dream won't be alive for their children and grandchildren.

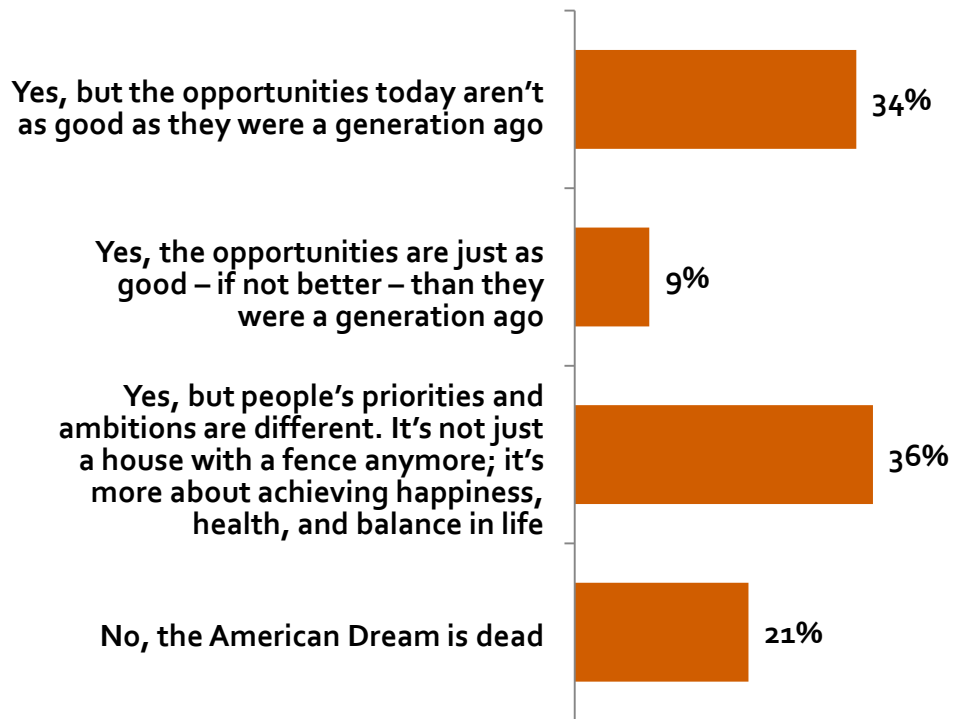
- Gen X and Gen Y have faith in the American Dream, while the Mature Generation says it's dead (both now and for their children/grandchildren).



AGE

% say American Dream is dead:  
 Gen Y – 11%  
 Gen X – 17%  
 Boomers – 23%  
 Mature Gen – 31%

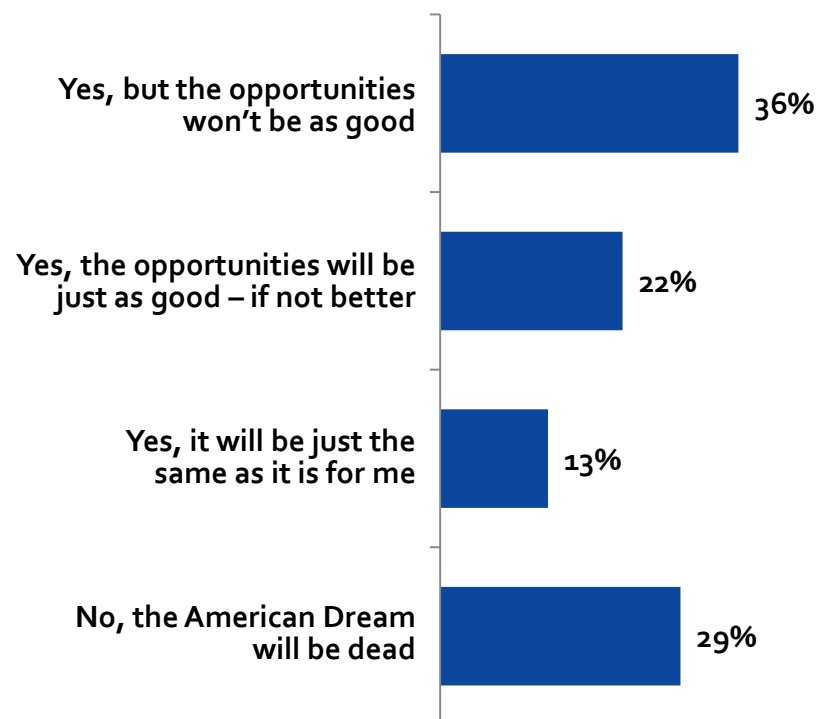
## Think American Dream Is Still Alive



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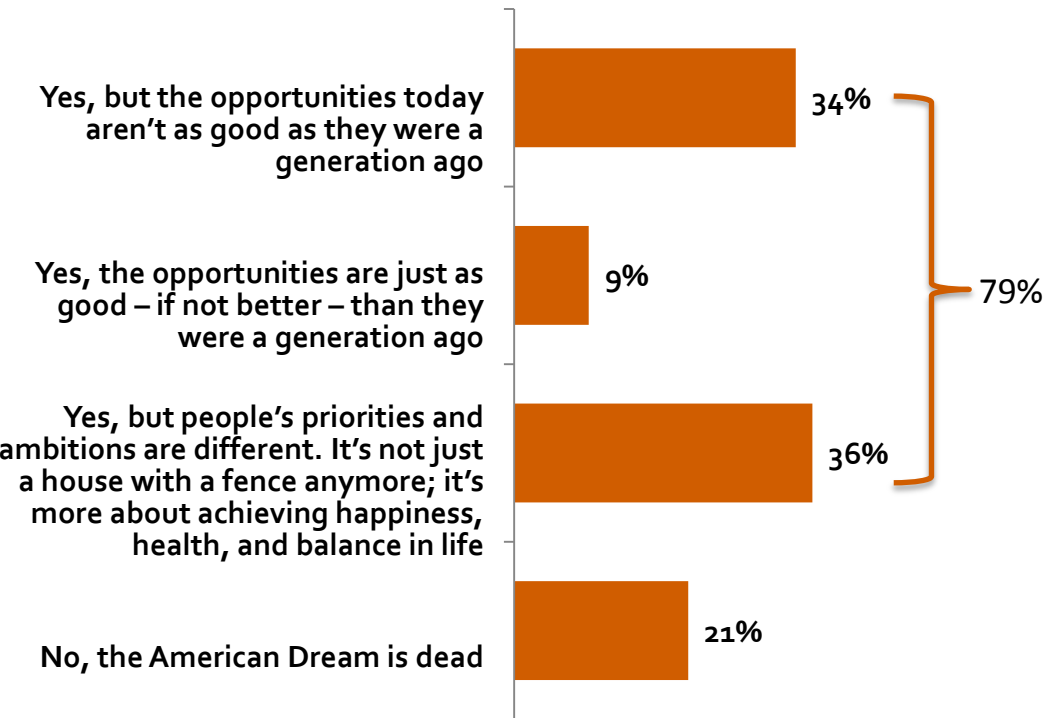
% say the American Dream is dead:  
 Gen Y – 24%  
 Gen X – 26%  
 Boomers – 29%  
 Mature Gen – 37%

## Think the American Dream Will Be Alive for Children and Grandchildren

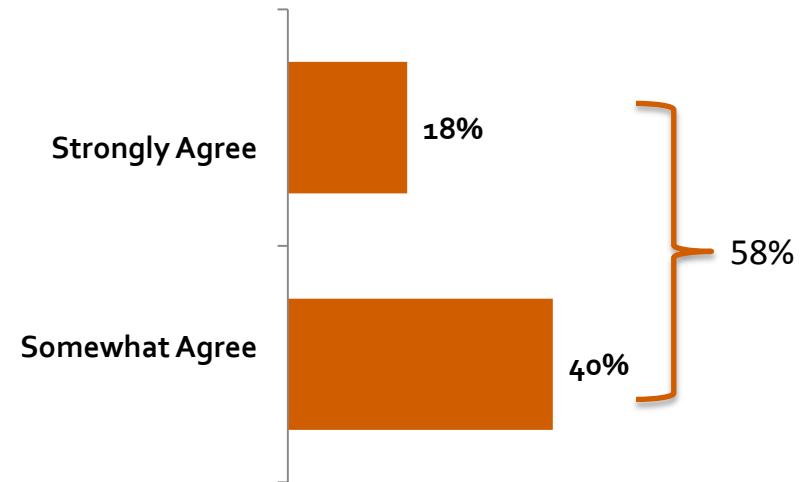


# Americans are more optimistic in 2013 about the American dream being alive/still attainable.

Think American Dream Is Still Alive  
2013 (n=1,546)



Think American Dream Is Still Attainable  
2009 (N=1,009)



# Half of Americans say they are either “informal” financial planners or have no plan or goals at all.

- Only one-third are “disciplined” and very few (16%) say they are “highly disciplined”.
- Gen Y, especially the youngest Gen Y, men, and those with the highest assets tend to be more disciplined while their counterparts are less disciplined.

