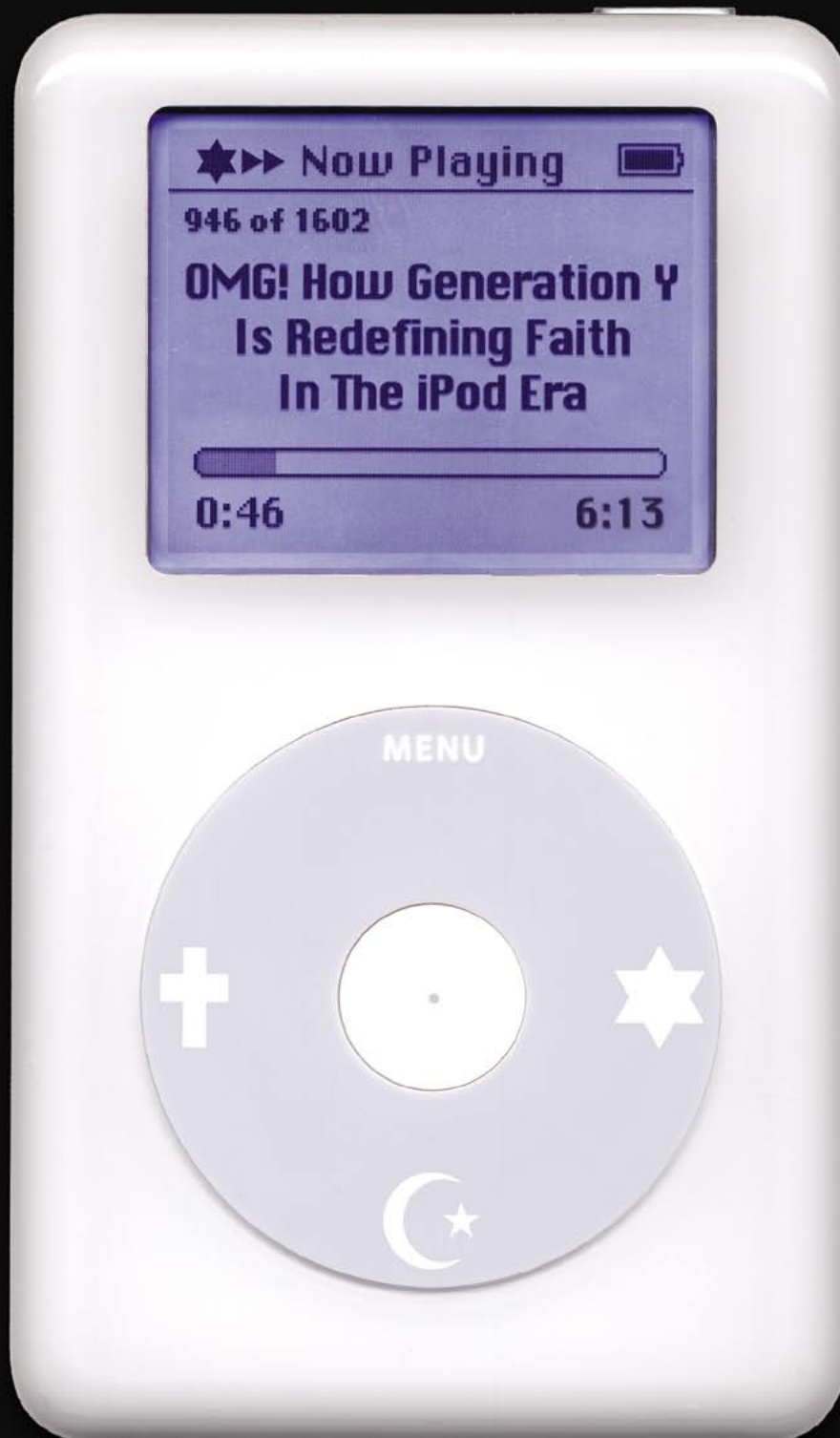


# OMG! How Generation Y Is Redefining Faith In The iPod Era



A word about the title of this survey: OMG! is one of the most popular expressions used by young people communicating by email, instant message, or cell phone text messaging. In order to minimize the number of keystrokes, writers use OMG! as shorthand for Oh My God! If you needed this explanation, or if you do not know what instant messaging is, you probably should give this report a close read.

# OMG! How Generation Y Is Redefining Faith In The iPod Era



CIRCLE  
The Center for Information & Research  
on Civic Learning & Engagement

WALTER & ELISE HAAS FUND





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# Introduction

We are living in an era of change in which the individual is sovereign. By enabling every listener to be their own DJ, the iPod has forced the record industry to rethink its business model. By circumventing traditional party structures, Moveon.org has given ordinary people a more powerful voice in the Democratic Party. Tivo, a digital technology, offers television viewers the opportunity to create personal television schedules that do away with commercials, undermining both the networks and their advertisers. Even our most hierarchical institution, the U.S. Military, tries to pass itself off as “an Army of One.”

The iPod, Moveon, and Tivo allow their users to bypass the ‘middleman’ and take control of their own experiences, whether they are creating a song list or acting politically. The question of whether religious communities are inured from this generational expectation for personalization and customization is a critical one. The continued ability of our religious institutions to organize community, and offer meaning is no small matter. (*OMG! How Generation Y is Redefining Faith in the iPod Era*) was commissioned to cast light on this issue and to spur discussion as to how religious institutions can adapt to the way life is lived today.

The report’s origins lie in a summit run by Reboot, a national network dedicated to leading a generational conversation about changes in identity, community, and meaning from a Jewish perspective. Anna Greenberg, a nationally respected academic and pollster, left the 2003 Reboot summit determined to explore these issues in a strategic fashion. Anna understood that to be successful, we would have to cut across the silos of faith and ethnicity that have defined identity and community for previous generations and examine the issues across a spread of religious identities. A host of leading institutions agreed, and with the support of CIRCLE, The Walter and Elise Haas Fund, Carnegie Corporation, Surdna Foundation, The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, The Nathan Cummings Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts’ Project, MAPS (Muslims in American Public Square), new research into this area was made possible.

The result of this partnership is a unique survey examining issues of identity, community, and meaning, from Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim youth, ages 18-25, across racial and ethnic lines. The findings while remarkable in and of themselves, also represent a snapshot of tomorrow, a glimpse of what may happen when Generation Y matures to the peak of its member’s participatory experiences.

Anecdotally, and now scientifically, we are seeing overall that members of Generation Y have individualized world views, an apparent lack of interest in traditional religious institutions, and emphasize diversity. Practically, there is a decline in the number of young faces hanging onto every word of weekend sermons, irrespective of whether the venue is a church, synagogue, or mosque.

From our perspective, the survey provides both a deeper sense of the challenges and the opportunities. This is by far the most intertwined generation ever. Respect for difference and diversity is a core value. Only 7% report that all of their friends are members of the same religion. Leaders of traditional religious institutions will be concerned to read that this age group tends to separate institutional religious attachment from spirituality, but this cuts both ways – even a plurality of those who deem themselves irreligious,

express a hunger for spiritual meaning.

The good news is that the survey paints a composite picture of a generation who are seekers far more than they are drifters – a world away from their portrayal as stereotypical automatons we so often imagine as receiving their values directly from Paris Hilton or Justin Timberlake's PR spokesperson. They are actively considering questions of identity, community, and meaning – negotiating how important their religious identities will ultimately be – but doing so with their own friends, in their own homes, and in their own ways. We are fascinated by the majority who hunger for episodic religious experiences, preferring the informal and expressive to the ritualistic and institutional.

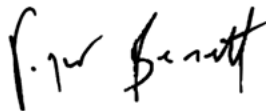
Because of this, the generation presents a remarkable opportunity for religious denominations, organizations, and projects to contemplate. The demand for ritual, learning, value, and spirituality is there. Whether this turns out to be a time of loss or a time of creative reinvention may ultimately be decided by the energies we place into providing innovative messengers, messages, and mechanisms that offer meaning and community on Generation Y's terms.

In that vein, we hope this survey is a means to an end and can serve as a call to action for all denominations across the country to inspire a culture of experimentation, trial and effort, and bold innovation that this generation desperately deserves. We look forward to collaborating with institutions, projects and networks of any denomination that share our vision and commitment. Be in touch with us at [info@rebooters.net](mailto:info@rebooters.net).

Best,



Erin Potts  
Reboot Chair



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# Executive Summary

If the Baby Boom was characterized as a “generation of seekers,” their offspring, Generation Y, is a “generation of individuals.” Their parents sowed the seeds of the triumph of individuality and their children see themselves as having the freedom to figure out who they are, to explore their relationship with God and spirituality, and to determine their place in society. This generation is characterized by open mindedness and tolerance, believing that people should do their own thing, even if it seems strange to others. For many, pursuing the American Dream simply means, “doing whatever I want.”

This generation could be - and has been – described as directionless, lacking in community ties and meaningful participation in communal life. This research builds a more nuanced understanding of this generation, revealing that Generation Y does seek community and meaningful involvements, though often in informal and non-traditional ways. Religious faith and commitment is one route by which young people find meaning, value and community, though their religious pluralism complicates what this looks like in practice. The diversity of Generation Y and the informality of much of their religious participation make it difficult to say that there is any one way that religion works in young people’s lives.

This study is informed by three goals:

- 1) To ascertain how young people are coming to understand their religious identity;
- 2) To describe what their religious practices look like in this era of customization and change; and
- 3) To explore the ways religious identity informs the civic participation of today’s youth.

Throughout, we were careful to note that religious life does not operate in a vacuum and we embed the role religion in the context of their other concerns, such as finding a job or getting good grades in school.

This report is based on a groundbreaking study conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research of youth in Generation Y ages 18-25 years old. The nation-wide survey was conducted with 1385 total respondents between August 7 and November 18, 2004. Over-samples include 125 Muslim youth, 200 Jewish youth, 99 Asian youth, 136 African American youth, and 169 Hispanic youth. (See appendix for methodological details).

**1. Religious Identity:** Religion plays a central role at a critical time in young people’s development, as they try to figure out who they are, religion helps not only to carve out the images they have of themselves, but also provides the social and political networks in which they make friends, find lovers, think about civic and political issues, and develop a political worldview. However, the relative priority of religion in young people’s lives varies and less religious youth are somewhat more directionless as they try to figure out who they are and what they should be doing with their lives.

**2. Religious Practice:** It is difficult to catalog religious practice among young people, in part, because they are at the stage of their lives where they drop off from traditional religious involvement and, in part, because informal and non-traditional forms also play an important role in young people’s lives. Here we categorize Generation Y into three groups:



- The Godly (27%) for whom religion and God are a central part of their lives and are comfortable with traditional forms of religious practice;
- The God-less (27%) for whom religion plays little role, but who may have spiritual or ideological aspects to their religious identity;
- The Undecided, in the middle, (46%) who are uncertain, yet positive, about their religious identities and lean towards informal and expressive practices over the formal and institutional involvement.

**3. Civic Participation:** There is a strong and intimate relationship between religious faith and commitment and civic life. This study confirms that even among younger people, more religious youth are more likely to volunteer in both religious and non-religious venues than the less religious. As we see a decline in traditional denominational life, young people are finding other routes to participation in civic life as well. A near majority of the God-less, for example, participate in some form of civic activity, but only 5 percent do so through religious institutions.

Particular points of note in the report:

- **Most diverse generation in history.** Generation Y is the most diverse generation in the nation – only 61 percent call themselves white compared to 84 percent among Americans older than 65 years. Fueled by waves of new immigration and birthrates in immigrant communities, this generation is on the vanguard of transforming the nation, which will be majority non-white by mid-century. (page 8)
- **Denominationalism on the decline and pluralism on the rise.** The country remains majority Christian with a plurality belonging to Protestant denominations such as the Baptists or Methodists. There are important changes afoot, traditional denominationalism is on the decline and there is a concurrent rise in the number of people unwilling to align with a denomination. In fact, many young people cannot identify what faith tradition or denomination they belong to and fully 23 percent do not identify with any denomination at all. (page 9)
- **Faith expressed in highly personal, informal ways.** While many young people continue to attend worship services on a regular basis, just as many – if not more - practice their faith informally. Young people simply believe it is possible to be “religious” or “spiritual” without belonging to a church, synagogue or mosque. On a monthly basis, 68 percent talk about religion informally with friends; 64 percent of pray before meals and 55 percent read religious books, newspapers or magazines. (page 10)
- **Social circles diverse.** Regardless of religious tradition or intensity of religious commitment, youth are fully integrated into diverse social networks. While previous generations often lived in homogeneous religious communities, among Generation Y, only 7 percent of youth report that all of their friends are the same religion as themselves. Even the most religious youth maintain diverse networks of peers with only 9 percent of the Godly saying that all of their friends are the same religion. Among the God-



less, at least half of their friends are not of the same religion. (page 12)

- **Religious teens are more self-aware.** Despite assumptions we might make about youth's disengagement from faith and community life, religion remains a core component of young people's identity. Moreover, religious youth have a distinctive worldview and approach to life; they are more connected to family and community, have higher self-esteem and a sense of self and hold more traditional views about family, sex, and marriage. (page 15)
- **But STDs, jobs, grades come before God.** Generation Y faces a distinct set of challenges as they negotiate their entry into adult life. Figuring out how to deal with sex and relationships, the changing economy and finding a good job and the desire to get a decent education, all compete with more intangible concerns. One's relationship with God is lower on the list of things to worry about and plays a subtler role except for very religious youth. (page 16)
- **Religious young people more active in politics, community.** In this study, we find a strong relationship between religiosity and a broad range of volunteer activities with 79 percent of the most religious participating in volunteer activity in the last 12 months compared to 43 percent among the least religious. Religion is less closely tied to political and cultural involvement. (page 25)
- **Generation Y is disengaged from politics.** Politics falls on the bottom of the list of issues that young people worry or think about, though certain groups such as Jewish youth and African Americans take politics more seriously. There is clearly great potential political energy to be harnessed, as we saw in the 2004 Presidential election, but politics is not seen as particularly relevant to daily life. (page 26)
- **Progressive social views dominate.** Generation Y is more liberal and progressive than older generations on social issues such as gay marriage and immigration. In fact, a majority favor gay marriage (53 percent) and women's legal right to abortion (63 percent). For a group characterized by diversity and pluralism, the political divisiveness of cultural politics seems fairly irrelevant. (page 28)



## Generation Y: The Most Diverse Generation in History

Generation Y –loosely defined as people born between 1980 and 2000- is the most diverse and largest cohort in the nation. Between 1972 and 2000, the percentage of young Americans identifying themselves as white steadily decreased from 88 percent to 65 percent.<sup>6</sup> Currently, 15 percent call themselves African American, 18 percent Hispanic, and 4 percent Asian.<sup>7</sup> This growing diversity is largely driven by immigration from Central and South American and Asian nations, and these are the fastest growing ethnic groups in the country. By 2050, demographers project that Hispanics will constitute 24 percent and Asians will constitute 8 percent of the country. These newest Americans come primarily from Mexico and China, but significant numbers also came from Japan, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba.

Generation By Race (Percent)				
	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic
Gen Y	61	15	4	17
Gen X	63	13	5	17
Baby Boomers	73	12	3	10
Silent Generation	80	9	3	7
GI Generation	86	7	2	4

U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

This increased immigration contributes to our nation's greater religious diversity, though there are other important factors driving changes to the American religious landscape as well. Generation Y –at the vanguard of change– is more religiously diverse than its progenitors; youth are less likely to identify with traditional Christian denominations and are significantly more likely to see themselves as secular and non-denominational than older Americans.<sup>8</sup>

- Nationally, a plurality of Americans identify themselves as Protestant (41 percent) while a quarter call themselves Catholic. The remaining 36 percent are either non-denominational Christians, non-Judeo Christians faiths or simply nothing.<sup>9</sup> Many fewer young people call themselves Protestant (27 percent), with many saying they are just “Christian” (13 percent). While this decrease in the number of Protestants reflects the decline of these denominations generally<sup>10</sup>, it is also likely that part of this divergence is a function of youth not knowing broadly what religious tradition they belong to. In other words, one may know that he or she belongs to the Methodist church, but does not know that he or she is Protestant.
- Nationally, 23 percent of Americans call themselves evangelical.<sup>11</sup> We clearly underestimate the number of evangelical youth in this study at 16 percent, given that 60 percent of youth call

themselves “born again.” Again, the reality is that young people simply do not know they are evangelical because they do know they are Protestant and therefore do not qualify as evangelical under our definition.<sup>12</sup>

- There is no diminishing of Catholic identification, which is not surprising given the dominance of the Catholic Church among immigrants from Central and South America.
- Despite increased immigration from countries with non-Judeo Christian traditions, the national percentage from traditions such as Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist remains rather small; nationally, 2.6 percent of the country falls into this category (which has grown from 0.8 in 1980 to 2.6 percent in 2000).<sup>13</sup> In this survey, approximately 10 percent identify as something other than a variant of Judeo-Christian tradition.
- But Generation Y is significantly more likely to say that they have no religious denominational preference or call themselves secular than their elders. The General Social Survey (GSS) reported that the number of Americans who claim no religious preference doubled from 7 percent in 1991 to 14 percent in 2000, and the National Election Study showed an increase from 8 percent to 13 percent from 1992 to 2000.<sup>14</sup> In a CUNY study, 14 percent of 18-34 year olds say they are “secular” compared to 9 percent of 35-49 year olds, 9 percent of 50-64 year olds and 7 percent of people over 65 years of age.<sup>15</sup> In this study, fully 23 percent of 18-25 year olds do not identify with a denomination at all and 18 percent describe themselves as neither spiritual nor religious.<sup>16</sup>

<b>Religious Preference by Generation</b> (Percent Responding)						
	Total	Gen Y	Gen X	Boom	Silent	GI
Protestant	41	26	32	41	56	64
Roman Catholic	23	20	20	23	21	21
Jewish	1	2	1	1	3	4
Muslim/Islam	1	2	2	0	0	-
Mormon	1	2	-	1	1	2
Orthodox Church	1	0	1	1	0	-
Other Christian	10	14	10	12	4	4
Other not Christian	7	7	8	7	4	-
No pref/Atheist/Agnostic	14	23	23	11	7	5
DK/Ref	2	1	3	2	4	-

America's Evangelicals, 2004 and OMG! 2004

### **Adapting Religious Practice: Faith Expressed in Highly Personal, Informal Ways**

Young people are clearly more religiously pluralistic and more disconnected from traditional denominations than their older counterparts. Young people are also less religious, at least when it comes to traditional measures of religious practice (e.g., attending worship services). This age disparity may rest, in part, on their place in the lifecycle; no longer living at home and for the most part not raising young

children, younger Americans are at a transitional moment when they will decide how integrated religion will be in their lives. We know that religious attendance and identification falls off as teenagers move from their freshman to senior year in high school. Weekly attendance drops 10 percent during the four years of high school, while the number of those with no religious affiliation increases by about 5 percent during the same period.<sup>17</sup> We should expect this trend to continue once they leave their home.<sup>18</sup> At this stage, young people can pick and choose their level of religious commitment and type of religious expression.

In this study, we learned that younger people favor more informal ways to practice their faith as opposed to attending services, classes or other formal activities. They find their way to religious expression by spending time with their friends in informal group settings. There is a genuine attachment to religious life and very little loss of faith, but it occurs in the context of a full life complete with competing worries about getting good grades, finding a job or getting a sexually transmitted disease. Moreover, it takes place as young people are integrated into diverse networks with people of many religious persuasions and backgrounds.

Overall, about a third (36 percent) of young people say they attend religious services weekly and 27 percent say they attend Sunday school or other classes weekly, although certainly this number is overstated.<sup>19</sup> A little over a third (35 percent) report having participated in a religious group at their local place of worship over the past 12 months. Despite these relatively low participation rates, traditional religious institutions are important to young people who are significantly more likely to participate in a religious group affiliated with their house of worship (35 percent), than a religious group not affiliated with their house of worship or with their school (17 percent).

<b>Religious Practice Frequency</b> <i>(Percent Responding)</i>		
	Weekly	Monthly
Attendance to worship services	36	18
Pray before meals	55	64
Talk about religion informally with your friends	38	68
Read religious books, newspapers, or magazines	33	55
Attend Sunday School or religion classes	27	39
Attend an informal religious or prayer group	18	35
Participate in a religious music group	10	18
Volunteer to help the disadvantaged such as working in a soup kitchen, be a big brother/sister, volunteer for habitat for humanity, etc.	8	22

OMG! 2004

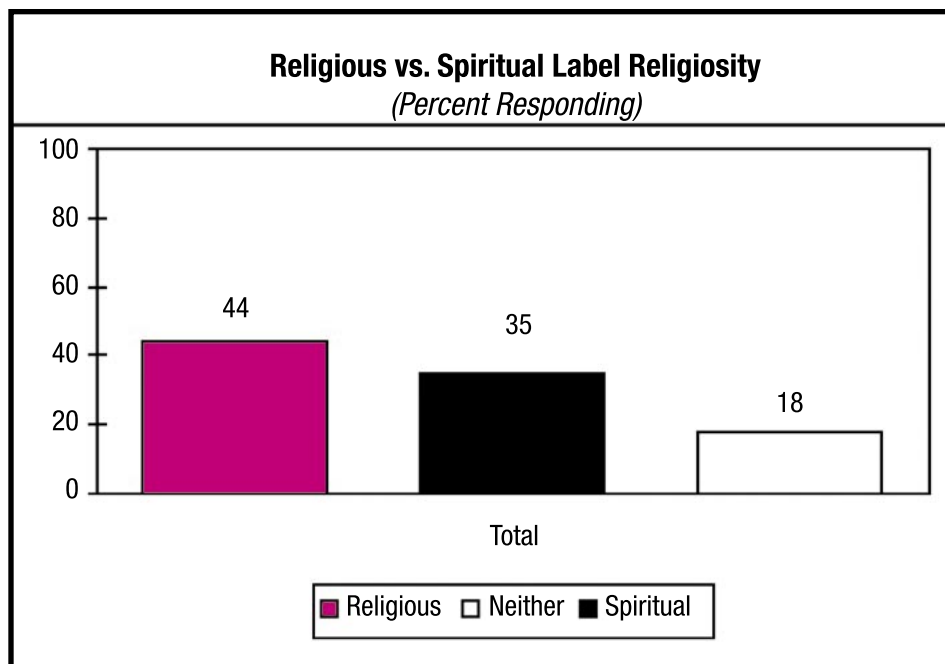
We found that overwhelming majorities say that they have informal religious attachment that is both communal and individualistic. It is communal in the sense that they interact with others outside of the institutional setting, for example talking with their friends about religion (38 percent weekly, 68 percent

monthly) and, less frequently, attending informal religious or prayer groups (18 percent weekly, 35 percent monthly). In some cases, young people would rather talk about their religious faith with their friends than participate in any formal religious activity. For example, among Jewish youth, 60 percent say that they would rather express their faith by talking to their friends than by attending synagogue.

More anecdotally, we are seeing reports of alternative religious practice taking place outside traditional settings. For instance, in the evangelical Christian community, Christian rock concerts and school prayer groups abound. The New York Times Magazine reports that Jay Bakker, son of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker, has founded a ministry called Revolution, "...one of several thousand alternative ministries that have emerged in the last decade, meeting in warehouses, bars, skate parks, punk clubs, private homes, or other spaces, in a generational rumble to rebrand the faith outside of what we think of as church."<sup>20</sup>

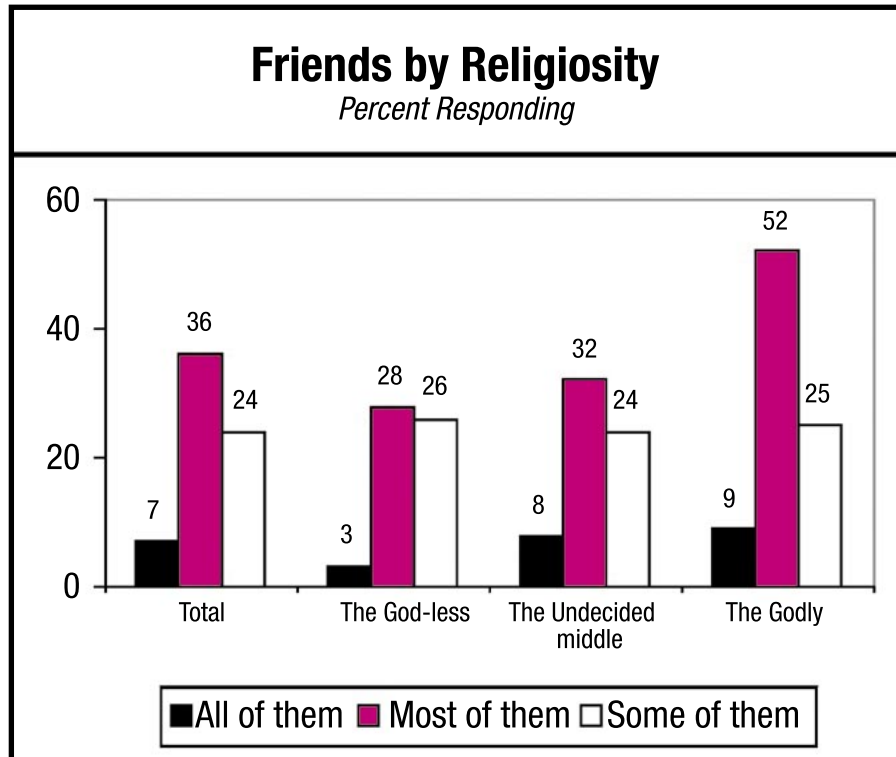
This informal practice is also individualistic as young people pray before meals (55 percent weekly, 64 percent monthly) and read religious materials (33 percent weekly, 55 percent monthly). Young people are quite comfortable, moreover, with a personal faith not particularly grounded in "religion." When forced to characterize the nature of their religious attachment, a plurality of young people call themselves "religious" (44 percent), but a majority describe themselves as either "spiritual but not religious" (35 percent) or "neither" (18 percent)<sup>21</sup>

Both informal communal and individual religious practice play a greater role in young people's religious lives than even volunteering to help the disadvantaged through their religious institution; only 8 percent say they volunteer through their house of worship weekly (22 percent monthly).



OMG! 2004

Young people, moreover, are embedded in diverse networks that are not restricted to their co-religionists. Only 7 percent say that all of their friends are members of the same religion, and a near majority says that only some or a few of their friends adhere to the same religion as themselves (47 percent). In fact, even the most religious youth maintain diverse networks of peers; only 9 percent of the Godly say that all of their friends are the same religion, though 52 percent say most of their friends are of the same faith. Among the God-less, at least half of their friends are not of the same religion.



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## Religious Identity: Shaping Young People's Worldview

We examine Generation Y at a critical time in their lives. They are figuring out who they are in the world, while also juggling a set of worries from the mundane to the fundamental. In the midst of this negotiation, religion plays a distinctive role in young people's lives, namely connecting a highly mobile group to community and family. The relationship between religiosity and civic engagement is well established, but here we find that religion intensifies and heightens all aspects of identity and connection among youth. In other words, religious youth clearly have a stronger sense of who they are and how they think of themselves than less religious youth. Their lives are patterned by their religious experiences in ways that are different from the less religious and, in a certain sense, put the less religious at a disadvantage when it comes to potential for building social capital.

While religion -even in its more pluralistic and informal form- is a fundamental part of identity for young people, it is also in competition with all other sources of "achievement" from which identity can be acquired.<sup>22</sup> The role religion plays in young people's lives is negotiated in the context of a range of concerns where religion may not be primary. The scope and shape of religion's role depends in large part on how religion is inculcated in the family growing up and how it is maintained with peers. It is also embedded in a broad set of worries young people have about sex, getting a decent education, and finding a good job. In some cases, a strong religious identity helps youth navigate these waters, but in other cases, it is simply ancillary.

This complexity also reflects the fact that this generation is characterized by diversity and fluid boundaries, with few young people finding their identity in their geographic, racial, or ethnic origin. They are building identities in relationships and in communities rather than finding them in ascribed characteristics such as gender and ethnic origin;<sup>23</sup> as Robert Wuthnow argues, identity is "increasingly achieved rather than something ascribed to us."<sup>24</sup>

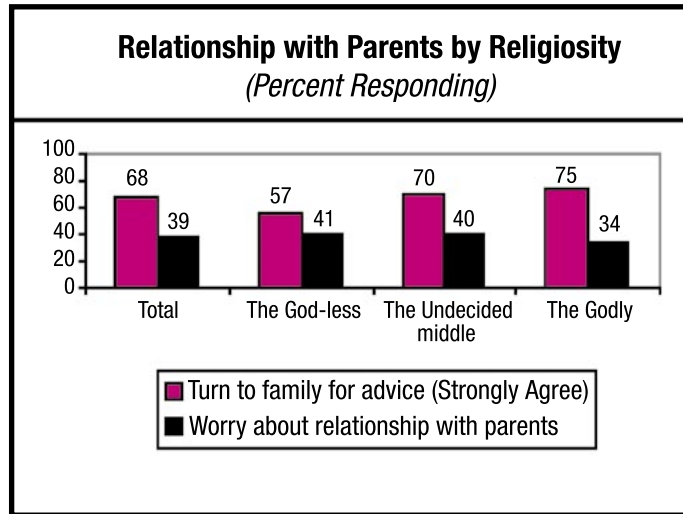
### Family Nurtures Community and Religious Commitment

Family clearly shapes a young person's entry into adulthood. Young people think of themselves -first and above all- as members of a family, and this is true across all young people regardless of religion, race, or ethnic origin. Their families nurture them, fundamentally shape them, and teach them their values and how they will connect to community. Young people report that they can turn to their parents for advice (68 percent strongly agree) and few are terribly worried about their relationships with their parents (18 percent very worried). Not surprising, this connection to family is stronger among youth with married parents (71 percent strongly agree that they can turn to for advice) than young people with unmarried parents (63 percent strongly agree they can turn to for advice), but family remains a strong touchstone regardless.

Religious youth report easier relationships with their parents and, in fact, religious attachment and family ties are mutually reinforcing. For example, 57 percent of the God-less strongly agree that they



can talk to their parents about anything, compared to 70 percent of youth in the Undecided middle and 75 percent of the Godly. Moreover, youth who grew up in homes where religion played an important role are more likely to report that they can talk to their parents about anything (71 percent strongly agree) compared to 56 percent in homes where religion was less important.



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After family, religion and sexual preference<sup>25</sup> rank second and third, respectively, as a way youth would like to describe themselves. Religious youth and youth from religious families, not surprisingly, are more likely to rank their religion as a primary identity than more secular youth. Among the Godly, 74 percent say that their religion is a very important aspect of their identity. In contrast, for youth in the Undecided middle, only 38 percent say that religion is very important and for those on the God-less end of the scale, only 6 percent say that religion is very important.

<b>Identity Groups</b> (Percent Responding "Very Important")				
	Total	The God- less	Religiosity Scale	
			The Undecided middle	The Godly
Your family	54	43	57	61
Your religion	39	6	38	74
Sexual preference	36	24	39	44
Your gender	30	23	33	34
Your job	27	23	30	24
Your generation	27	20	32	27
Political beliefs	23	18	23	27
Your school	22	13	27	22
Your ethnic origin	22	15	26	23
Where you live	21	16	25	19
Your race	19	12	23	20

OMG! 2004<sup>26</sup>

Importantly, religious youth have a stronger sense of themselves than less religious youth. In other words, among the less religious, religion is not supplanted by a stronger ascribed or achieved characteristic. In fact, less religious youth are less strongly identified with anything at all, which suggests that religious group involvement is mutually reinforcing with other identities. Or, that feeling connected to a religious community or tradition heightens all other aspects of self-understanding. Religious adherence, in other words, builds social capital not just in terms of participation in civic life (more below), but also in terms of connection with family, self-esteem, and self-understanding. As Christian Smith finds in his study of teenagers, religious youth rank higher than less religious youth on every measure of self-esteem.<sup>27</sup>

It is also important to note what young people do not consider primary aspects of their identity – race and ethnicity- which play a muted role (except among African Americans) in how young people define themselves. The diminished role of ascribed identities reflects the diversity of this cohort and the fluidity of identity particularly as we see an increasing number of “interracial” youth and marriages across racial and ethnic lines. But it also may reflect that some immigrant and minority groups are or feel more integrated –with the exception of African Americans and Muslims– into American society. Clearly, second-generation immigrants from Latin American or Asian countries are learning English, identifying with the United States, and finding that their choices about family and careers look quite similar to other Americans’. African Americans and Muslim youth have very different experiences of life in America, and continue to identify very closely with their racial and ethnic identity groups.

<b>Identity Groups</b>					
<i>(Percent Responding "Very Important")</i>					
	Jewish	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Muslim
Your family	55	54	60	60	62
Your religion	37	33	56	39	63
Sexual preference	26	33	45	38	54
Your gender	36	37	39	34	44
Your generation	27	26	41	32	38
Your job	38	20	24	36	29
Political beliefs	38	17	23	27	26
Your school	31	27	34	30	23
Your ethnic origin	21	23	50	32	44
Where you live	25	20	31	22	36
Your race	15	3	47	32	39

OMG! 2004

## How Religion Fits into Life's Worries

Young people are comfortable maintaining a positive religious identity, an informal attachment to religious life, and practicing their faith in communal or solitary settings. But they are not doing so in a vacuum; they are also figuring out their level of religious attachment and adherence in the context of a myriad of other daily concerns, most of which are of greater importance than sorting out their individual relationship with God. They have concerns about sex and relationships, they worry about their grades and what kind of job they can get in a changing economy.

It is impossible to talk about Generation Y without exploring the role that sex plays in their lives. Rather than seeing sex as a symbol of liberation and freedom –as youth might have in the 1960s- sex can at the very least “get you in trouble” and at worst, kill you. Getting a sexually transmitted disease tops the list of concerns among young people (35 percent very worried) and is particularly acute among youth of color, less educated youth, and unmarried youth. The role that sex plays in young people’s lives is separate from relationships, with youth expressing very little worry about finding a boyfriend or girlfriend or even a spouse. There is a certain irony and even a contradiction in the fact that this generation holds fairly traditional views about sexuality with a majority (57 percent) saying that it is important to wait until marriage before having sex. In fact, according to the National Campaign to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy, most teenagers think that their peers should wait to have sex, and most sexually experienced teens wish they had waited to have sex.<sup>28</sup>

When we look at the issues that concern young people most, education and the economy (the availability of good jobs) top the lists. Not surprisingly, these two issues rank highly for young people with 33 percent saying they are very worried about finding a job (60 percent very and somewhat worried) and 26 percent saying they are very worried about getting good grades in school (51 percent very and somewhat worried). Finding a job affects the most vulnerable youth even more severely, with young women of color and unmarried women expressing deep concern about their ability to find a job.

<b>Top Concerns</b> <i>(Percent Responding "Very Worried")</i>	
Getting a sexually transmitted disease	35
Finding a job when you get out of school	23
Your grades at school	26
Maintaining good relationships with your friends	19
Getting along with your parents	18
Your relationship with God	18
Deciding who to vote for	15
Making sure you are contributing to your community	11
Finding a spouse	7
Finding a boyfriend or girlfriend	4

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Concerns about maintaining a relationship with God play a muted role relative to sex, jobs, and grades. These forces crowd out more ethereal matters except among the most religious youth, who rank their relationship with God among their most intense concerns. Given these competing demands, it only makes sense that informal forms of religious practice dominate more formal involvement. A sense of being spiritual and having faith that is enacted informally, either individually, or within a select group, can be an alternative to more traditional forms of worship, when other concerns seem more immediate or pressing.



## Demarcating the Religious Landscape: Portrait of Diversity

In this report, we put youth into three groups: the Godly, the God-less, and the Undecided middle. In the first two categories, youth clearly make a choice about the intensity of their religious attachment and faith –and therefore religious identity– much of which depends on family dynamics and the nature of a family’s religious tradition. In the middle category, we find many of the newest immigrants who are moving away from their traditional attachments and integrating into American life; we also find young adults from homes where parents have not made religious life a priority yet, who are also not explicitly or intentionally rejecting religious life. These Undecided individuals are not completely divorced from religious life, but they largely avoid formal attachment such as membership in religious organizations. Nearly half describe themselves as religious, but religious identity falls far below family and ranks even with other aspects of self-definition such as one’s job or gender.

To create this demarcation, we created a religiosity scale that encompasses both formal and informal kinds of religious engagement.<sup>29</sup> Despite the fact that formal and informal religious attachments are distinct, they are high correlated. In other words, youth who participate in formal religious practice also demonstrate high levels of informal practice. Youth who do not participate in religious practices or have no religious affiliation also do not engage in informal practice. They simply find their connection to communal life in other ways and do not place a high value on faith in their lives. The Undecided middle engages in both forms of practice, though their religious commitment clearly falls more squarely on the more informal side.

### The Godly (27 percent of Generation Y)

Young people who maintain a strong religious commitment in their early adult years grow up in religious homes. People with a strongly religious family life are much more likely to incorporate religion into their identity than those who grew up in families where religion was not all that important. They are more likely to attend worship services regularly (71 percent) and have friends who practice the same religion as them (56 percent).

Should youth decide to make religion an important part of their life, they are more likely to incorporate it into their everyday practices, which often are confirmatory statements and reinforcements of their own beliefs. Whether it involves listening to religious music, reading religious materials, or talking about their faith with friends, the Godly firmly integrate all aspects of formal and informal religious attachment into their lives.<sup>30</sup> They participate in religious activities at school (47 percent) as well as volunteer (and a majority say they do so on regular basis) through religious groups (89 percent).

<b>Religious Practice By Religiosity</b> <i>(Percent Responding "Weekly")</i>				
	Total	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
Attend worship services	36	1	26	89
Pray before meals	55	5	60	97
Talk about religion informally with your friends	38	15	31	73
Read religious books, newspapers or magazines	33	3	27	72
Attend Sunday School or religion classes	27	1	15	75
Attend an informal religious or prayer group	18	-	8	54
Participate in a religious music group	10	-	3	32
Volunteer to help the disadvantaged such as working in a soup kitchen, be a big brother or sister, volunteer for habitat for humanity, etc.	8	3	7	14

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Religious identity and an individual's relationship with God figures heavily in the worldview of Godly youth. For these young people, religion is the most important way of defining themselves –more than family or racial identity. For example, among those who attend worship services every week, 74 percent say that religion is a very important way of defining themselves– greater than the number who cite family roots (61 percent). Moreover, for the most Godly, worries about their relationship with God (29 percent very worried) are the most intense, though closely tied with concerns about getting a STD (28 percent very worried), or finding a job (28 percent very worried), and concerns about grades (25 percent very worried).

The Godly are likely to believe that religion is about personal salvation, that religious institutions are places where people can build their personal relationship with God (64 percent) and that people must believe in God in order to be moral and have good values (65 percent). They are also quite traditional in their view of sexuality, with 91 percent saying that young people should wait to have sex until they are married. Few of the Godly are worried about sexually transmitted diseases.

<b>Core Beliefs By Religiosity</b> <i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	Total	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
It is not necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values	51	75	46	34
It is necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values	47	21	52	65
Religion is about personal salvation and churches, mosques, and synagogues are the places where people can build their personal relationship with God	56	46	57	64
Religion is about helping people and churches, mosques, and synagogues have a responsibility to help the disadvantaged	34	41	35	26

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Evangelicals are the most religious group of young people in America, with 63 percent falling into the ranks of the Godly and 70 percent of the Godly describing themselves as born again. African Americans (36 percent compared to 27 percent overall) and Muslims (31 percent compared to 27 percent overall) are also more likely to fall into the ranks of the Godly. Women (31 percent) are more likely than men (23 percent) to rank high on the religiosity scale, and young women who have made more traditional choices such as younger marriage are particularly likely to score high (37 percent).



<b>Portrait Of The Godly</b> <i>(Percent Responding)</i>			
	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
Total	27	46	27
Evangelical Christians	0	37	63
African Americans	9	56	36
Muslims	8	60	31
Women	22	47	31
Men	33	44	23
Younger Women	22	47	32
Married Women	12	51	37

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### **God-less (27 percent of Generation Y)**

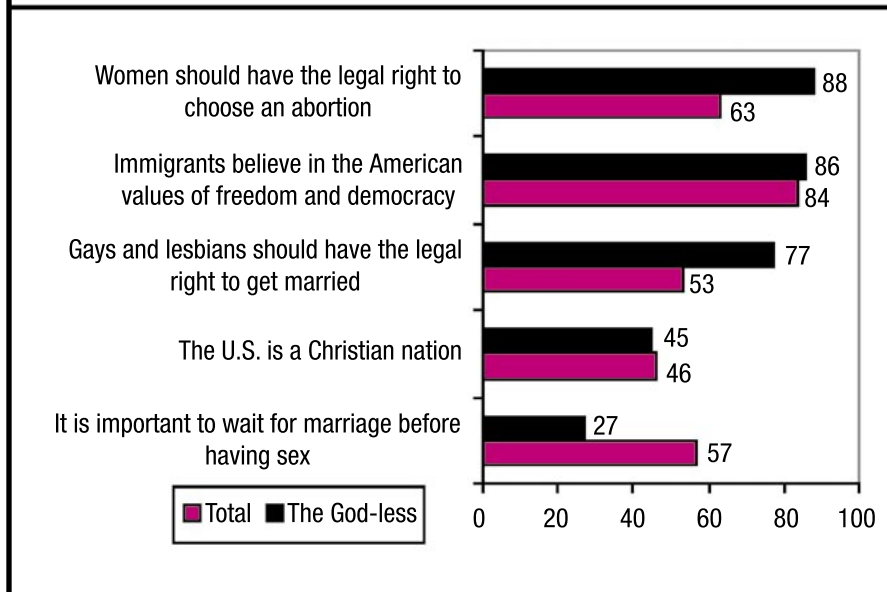
God-less youth are largely detached from religious institutions, often do not identify with any religious tradition, and place religion very low on the list of ways they would define themselves. Over half claim no religious affiliation and 70 percent say they hardly ever or never attend worship services. Religion played a very small role in their family life. God-less youth are slightly more likely to live homes where parents are divorced and there is important research that suggests that young people who come from non-conventional families; families where there is divorce, cohabitation, or single parenting - are less religious. And, as the nation moves to becoming majority unmarried, we may see an even bigger increase in the percentage of the God-less or youth who eschew denominational affiliations.

Religious identity plays almost no role in their self-understanding; only 6 percent say that religion is very important in how they would describe themselves, ranking family (43 percent very important), sexual preference (24 percent very important), gender (23 percent very important), and their job (23 percent very important) significantly higher. As we noted earlier, in all measures of identity, the God-less rank every item lower than their more religious counterparts. This group is quite resistant to calling themselves religious; 51 percent say they are spiritual, while 47 percent say they are neither spiritual nor religious. Finally, they simply do not worry about their relationship with God (3 percent very worried), expressing far greater concern about getting a STD (33 percent very worried), finding a job (33 percent very worried) and grades in school (23 percent very worried).

Not surprisingly, God-less youth do not think that people need to believe in God to be moral or have good morals (75 percent). The God-less are individualists, and strongly believe people should do their own thing, even if others think it is strange (94 percent agree). In fact, God-less youth are far more liberal than others their age and express a range of non-traditional views about marriage and other social issues. Almost half (49 percent) say they are political liberals versus 31 percent of youth their age. An overwhelming 77 percent say that gays and lesbians should be allowed to marry (compared to 53 percent overall) and 88 percent say that women should have access to legal abortion (compared to 61 percent overall).

## The God-less: Non-Traditional Views

(Percent Responding "Agree")



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Given what we know about the relationship between religious faith and attachment and volunteerism, it is not surprising that God-less youth volunteer at significantly lower rates than religious youth. A little less than half volunteer for a civic organization (44 percent), while only 5 percent volunteer through a religious organization. But when asked about the frequency of voluntary activity, only 20 percent say they do it regularly compared to 51 percent of youth who attend worship services every week. Moreover, they are less likely than their religious counterparts to participate in political activity, reinforcing an important link between religious participation and political participation.

Less religious youth are concentrated among those who simply have no denominational preference (66 percent compared to 27 percent overall) and Jews (40 percent compared to 27 percent overall). Demographically, God-less youth are not that distinct from the rest of their peers. They are more male (33 percent compared to 27 percent overall), especially college educated men (39 percent compared to 27 percent overall) and are particularly likely to be found in the Northeast (41 percent compared to 27 percent overall). A disproportionate number of Asian Americans (38 percent compared to 27 percent overall) are also found in the ranks of the God-less.

<b>Portrait Of The God-less</b> <i>(Percent Responding)</i>			
	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
Total	27	46	27
No denominational preference	66	32	2
Jewish	40	47	14
Men	33	44	23
College Educated Men	39	36	26
Northeast	41	49	10
Asian Americans	38	39	23

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### **The Undecided (46 percent of Generation Y) Middle**

A plurality of Generation Y falls in the middle, somewhere in between religious attachment and disinterest in the face of other more pressing matters. They may have had sporadic religious training or practice during their formative years and that minimal commitment continues into adulthood. They may be moving away from the traditions of their parents –especially if they are the children of immigrants and are in the process of integrating into American society. They may be dropping off from religious attachment but will re-engage when they marry and/or have children and want their families to have a religious commitment. Their religious attachment is mainly informal, more expressive than ritualistic and integration into traditional religious institutions is limited to the occasional visits during the holidays.

Youth in the Undecided middle do not reject religion –over half strongly agree that religion is an important part of their lives and nearly half will call themselves religious (48 percent). Most identify with a religious denomination, with only 16 percent saying they are nothing. They are almost as likely as the Godly to worry about their relationship with God (21 vs. 29 percent very worried respectively), but they are more worried about getting a STD (41 percent), finding a job (37 percent), and grades at school (29 percent). Their religion (38 percent very important) –as a way to describe themselves– is tied with sexual preference (39 percent), but somewhat higher than their gender (33 percent), their generation (32 percent), and their job (30 percent).

But they are not particularly integrated into formal religious practice –26 percent say they go to worship services every week and only 37 percent say they volunteer through a religious group (and only 22 percent say they volunteer regularly). They are somewhat more likely to say that they engage in religious practices informally –by praying before meals (41 percent daily, 60 percent weekly), talking with friends about religion (6 percent daily, 31 percent weekly) and reading religious materials (7 percent daily, 27 percent weekly). Few regularly participate in religious group activities (informal religious groups 8 percent weekly, religious music group 3 percent weekly, and volunteer 7 percent weekly).

They are religious “moderates” with only 32 percent agreeing that the Bible is the actual word of God, to be taken literally, word for word, and a majority agreeing that the Bible is the word of God but not literally true. A bare majority believe that you need to believe in God to have good morals, but a majority also favor gay marriage (34 percent) and a woman’s legal right to abortion (42 percent).

Not surprisingly, the Undecided middle is concentrated among mainline Protestants (52 percent compared to 46 percent overall), Catholics (60 percent compared to 46 percent overall) and African Americans (56 percent compared to 46 percent overall). For African Americans, we see this result, in part, because so few fall into the God-less category. A plurality of Jews falls into the Undecided middle (47 percent), as do Hispanics (48 percent) and Asian Americans (39 percent).<sup>31</sup> The Undecided middle is not particularly demographically distinctive, though large numbers of married women also fall into this category (51 percent compared to 46 percent overall). As we see with African Americans, married women are just more religious than their unmarried counterparts and very few fall into the God-less category.

<b>Undecided Middle</b> <i>(Percent Responding)</i>			
	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
Total	27	46	27
Mainline Protestant	16	52	32
Roman Catholic	24	60	16
African American	9	56	36
Jewish	40	47	14
Hispanic	29	48	23
Asian American	38	39	23
Married Women	12	51	37
Unmarried Women	24	46	30

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## Making the Connection to Civic Life and Politics

One of the most important ways younger people connect to their religious communities and civil society is through volunteerism. The relationship between religious attachment and volunteerism is well established,<sup>32</sup> though this study makes clear that religion represents only one route to civic life. Young people demonstrate a rich and complex commitment to civic life; rather than merely being checked out of communal life, they pick and choose the ways they want to engage in the world. They have activities they engage in through school, their jobs, and of course, their religious institutions. The most religious are the most connected to every aspect of civic life, the least religious find fewer ways to connect to civic life, though they are distinct in eschewing religious institutions as a way to connect with civic life.

Overall, 56 percent report participating in some kind of community service and volunteer activity in the past year: 35 percent report volunteering to help the disadvantaged through their religious community,<sup>33</sup> 40 percent volunteered in a civic or community organization devoted to health or social services, and 44 percent volunteered for a civic or community organization devoted to youth, children, or education in the last 12 months. It should be made clear, however, that a majority (62 percent) say that these volunteer activities are something they do “every once in a while” and not on a regular basis, which means that realistically, only 14 percent volunteer on a regular basis.<sup>34</sup>

It is not surprising that when asked about the motivation to volunteer, youth overwhelmingly say that they do so to “give something back to the community” and to “help the disadvantaged.” These are socially desirable responses, but it is important to note also that just over half (51 percent) say they are very or somewhat worried about making sure they are making a contribution to community. Young people are significantly less likely to say that their motive for volunteering derives from instrumental or practical concerns such as an attempt to build the resume (25 percent strongly agree) or as a way to spend time with friends (12 percent strongly agree).

Volunteering for civic or community organizations takes on a higher priority than most other forms of participation in religious, cultural, or scholastic life. Fewer participate in religious groups at their place of worship (35 percent) and many fewer participate in religious groups at school (20 percent); they are as likely to participate in cultural activities (22 percent theater or music group) or sports (28 percent) as religious groups at school. Young people are not particularly political: only 17 percent report protesting in their community or school and 12 percent have worked to elect someone to office.

The religious are far more likely to report that they volunteer on a regular basis. Among Godly youth, 59 percent say they volunteer regularly compared to 22 percent in the Undecided middle and 20 percent of the God-less. In fact, the Godly participate in every aspect of civic and communal life in greater numbers than their less religious counterparts. For example, 59 percent of the Godly report participating in a civic organization oriented towards kids in the past 12 months compared to 42 percent of the Undecided middle and 33 percent of the God-less. The only area where we do not see significant differences by level of religious attachment is politics; the religious are no more likely to work to elect someone to office than the less or non-religious.

<b>Volunteer Activities</b> (Percent Responding "Yes")				
	Total	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
Buying products that are environmentally friendly	49	47	46	56
A civic or community organization involved with youth, children, or education	44	33	41	59
A civic or community organization involved in health or social services	40	29	39	54
A religious group at your local place of worship, including choir and church youth groups	35	0	24	89
A sports team	28	23	29	33
Taking part in a theater or music group	22	16	17	34
A religious group at your school or college	20	3	14	47
Participating in an online community or discussion forum that shares your cultural, religious, or ethnic background	19	19	15	27
Protesting in your community or school	17	16	15	21
A community organization associated with religion or ethnicity, but not affiliated with your local place of worship or your school	17	3	14	37
Working to get someone elected to public office	12	13	11	15

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Less religious youth are less likely to volunteer, and they are very unlikely to connect to civic life through religious institutions and organizations. These less religious youth explicitly reject religious life as a way of connecting to community with only 24 percent of the Undecided middle and none of the God-less reporting volunteering through a religious organization in the past 12 months. When less religious youth volunteer, they do so through non-religious civic groups, though still in lower numbers than their religious counterparts.

Despite their relatively high levels of civic volunteerism, young people are less likely to participate in politics than their elders and this generation is distinct in its disengagement from political life.<sup>35</sup> Clearly the 2004 presidential election witnessed a significant increase in turnout among young people with 1.8 million more youth voting than in the 2000 presidential election, an increase from 36 to 42 percent.<sup>36</sup> This upswing suggests that when campaigns and organizations speak directly to young people –in the places where they generally receive information– they can increase interest and participation.

But this research speaks to the challenge facing organizations interested in increasing political interest and participation among young people.<sup>37</sup> Politics ranks at the bottom of things that young people

care about –only 32 percent strongly agree that politics is important to their lives and only 15 percent are very worried about deciding who to vote for. As the chart above shows, political activity ranks at the bottom, with only 17 percent saying they protested in their community and 12 percent saying they worked to elect someone to office in the past 12 months. Unlike volunteering, religious youth are no more likely to say that they participate in communal political activity than less or non-religious youth.

However, religious youth are slightly more likely to say they are registered to vote and that they intended to vote in 2004. We know that, generally, people overstate their intention to vote, so these numbers below should be taken with a grain of salt. It is important to examine the relative likelihood of voting. The most religious youth are somewhat more likely to say they are registered to vote and to say they would vote in the 2004 presidential election. It is interesting, however, to note that the gap between the religious and non-religious is much smaller in the political arena than in the area of civic volunteerism. Clearly, religious institutions and involvement exert a different impact on civic and political participation. Furthermore, two groups most likely to say they participate in politics -African American and Jewish youth- are on opposite ends of the religiosity scale.

<b>Voter Registration/Likely To Voter</b> <i>(Percent Responding)</i>				
	Total	The God-less	The Undecided middle	The Godly
Registered to vote	81	80	79	85
Almost certain to vote	71	70	68	77
Will probably vote	10	8	11	10
50-50 chance will vote	9	10	9	7
Will not vote	10	12	11	5

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## Progressive World View on Difference and Social Issues

Generation Y is characterized by a fairly serious and thoughtful religious commitment; while this religious commitment is often informal and takes place at the individual rather than group level, it nevertheless is quite important to many young people. We know that among older generations, a strong religious commitment is associated with a set of views about political issues that are quite traditional. But Generation Y is also a generation that expresses a high degree of tolerance of differences, and an openness to diversity and to the choices people make about how to live their lives. As some argue, the growth of religious pluralism leads to a greater level of tolerance and acceptance of difference. With Generation Y at the vanguard of religious pluralism, it is not surprising that their views are more progressive and less conservative than older generations. Clearly there are important internal differences among young people, with some religiously conservative groups expressing more traditional views about issues such as gay marriage and sexuality, but as a whole, this is a remarkably progressive cohort. Generation Y is simply more comfortable than their elders calling themselves liberal, permitting gay marriage, supporting a woman's legal right to choose, and the like.

Overall, Generation Y is significantly more likely to call itself liberal (31 percent) than older Americans, though a plurality prefers to identify as political moderate (34 percent) and 30 percent call themselves conservative. Generation Y is also more likely to identify with the Democrats (39 percent) than the Republicans (28 percent), with a significant number calling themselves politically independent (31 percent). Generation Y is distinct from older generations not so much because they are more Democratic, but by their political independence.<sup>38</sup> While Generation Y is the least likely to register and vote, a majority of young voters said they intended to vote for John Kerry in the presidential election (52 percent).<sup>39</sup> In fact, 54 percent of voters less than 30 years of age supported John Kerry on Election Day. This was the only age group the Democratic candidate won, while only 47 percent of voters over 30 voted for John Kerry.<sup>40</sup>

<b>Political Party Identification</b> (Percent Responding)						
	Total	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby Boom	Silent	G.I.
Democrat	37	39	40	31	40	47
Republican	34	28	31	40	34	35
Independent	28	31	28	28	26	16

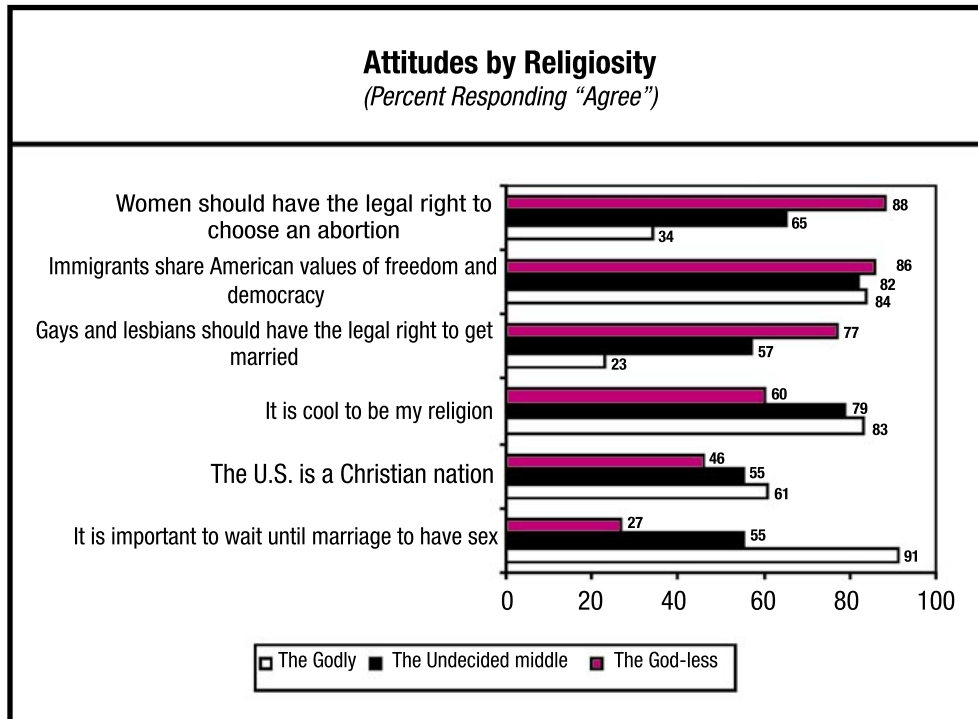
OMG! 2004 and America's Evangelicals, 2004

<b>Political Ideology</b> (Percent Responding)						
	Total	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby Boom	Silent	G.I.
Liberal	19	31	25	17	13	19
Moderate	36	34	39	36	33	39
Conservative	38	30	33	42	47	35

OMG! 2004 and America's Evangelicals, 2004

On a number of so-called social or moral issues, Generation Y demonstrates progressive attitudes. Over half (54 percent) agree that gays and lesbians should have the legal right to get married<sup>41</sup> and nearly two thirds (64 percent) agree that women should have the legal right to choose an abortion.<sup>42</sup> A near majority (49 percent) say that they buy environmentally friendly products. Other surveys of youth show that younger Americans are more progressive when it comes to racial attitudes and more supportive than older Americans of affirmative action.<sup>43</sup>

This is not to imply that Generation Y is monolithic in their views. On issues of sexuality in particular, there are dramatic religious differences. Youth from certain religious traditions (evangelical Protestantism, Islam), as well as the devout youth in general, continue to hold fairly traditional views about sexual preference and sexuality, while less religious and God-less youth are more progressive. For instance, 79 percent of evangelical Protestants and 87 percent of Muslim youth oppose gay marriage compared to 47 percent of mainline Protestants, 36 percent of Catholics, and 27 percent of Jews. There is a direct linear relationship between level of religious attachment and social attitudes, with Godly youth opposing gay marriage and abortion, and the Undecided middle and God-less youth supporting the legal right to both.



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Outside of questions of sexuality, this generation embraces its diversity with 84 percent agreeing that immigrants share American values of democracy and freedom. In fact, the newest Americans in this survey generally do not feel like outsiders, though they are clearly more likely to have experienced discrimination than white youth. Overall, 46 percent of Asian youth and 33 percent of Hispanic youth say they have experienced discrimination because of their racial or ethnic background. But fewer say they often feel like outsiders in American society –28 percent of Asian youth say they feel like outsiders very

often (4 percent) or somewhat often (24 percent) and 22 percent of Hispanic youth say like the feel like outsiders very often (4 percent) or somewhat often (18 percent).<sup>44</sup>

And despite the fact that 62 percent of youth identify with some variant of Christianity, only 54 percent agree that the United States is a Christian nation. While this number is higher among the most religious, it is certainly not universal -even among evangelical Protestants (62 percent say the United States is a Christian nation). African Americans (41 percent) and Jewish youth (45 percent) are the least likely to agree that the country is fundamentally Christian.

Overall, these results suggest that the American political landscape could change fundamentally as this generation becomes a greater proportion of society. The cultural divisions in our politics may become less powerful as issues of sexual preference and racial and ethnic diversity become less salient wedges in our political discussion. Certainly these issues will not be settled, but all the trends point to greater religious pluralism and greater ethnic and racial diversity that will alter the dimensions of our political debates.



## Conclusion

The goal of this survey was to gain a more nuanced understanding of a generation and its relationship to faith, identity, and community. Any such report is inevitably going to raise more questions than answer. Indeed, those answers may not be known for several decades. However, through our own organizing, and in building a coalition of active partners while working on this report, we have had our eyes opened to some remarkable projects that may just offer a glimmer of the changes that need to occur to offer this generation -- especially members of the “Undecided middle” -- meaning and community on its own terms. We present them here as Five action steps we have derived from OMG! How Generation Y is Redefining Faith in the iPod Era:

1. **There are no silver bullets:** The world around us is changing exponentially, and our audiences have complex needs. There are no quick fixes that can solve all of our challenges in one try. Building an approach that offers a range of offerings incorporating a mix of content and formats will be most effective. The post-evangelical Emerging Church movement is a model example. They use a slew of materials to trigger grassroots conversations that cast the net of renewal as widely as possible. For more information, visit [www.emergentvillage.org](http://www.emergentvillage.org).
2. **Support experimentation:** New social and cultural conditions demand new approaches and new paradigms that are often the very opposite of the tried and true. Create opportunities for funders to learn about and actively support new models and the innovators behind them. Grand Street is one such example – a growing network of young family foundation board members examining issues of Jewish identity and communal change. For more information, visit [www.2164.net](http://www.2164.net).
3. **The Power of Culture:** Do not underestimate the power of culture – music, DVD’s, the written word – as a mechanism to distribute and convey meaning through personal networks as opposed to institutional membership. Just ask Mel Gibson about the power of film, the followers of the Hassidic Jewish Reggae crossover act Mattisyahu, the founders of Skate Street in Ventura California about the ability of a skate board park to act as a ministry, or examine the extended reach books, journals and publications that have provided for cultural and political enterprises like McSweeney’s and Moveon.org.

4. **Respect intelligence:** Don't expect the audience to be enticed by a party line. There is strength in debate. Play to the defining generational traits of individuality and non-conformity by encouraging this audience to debate compelling questions about meaning, value, life and death. There can be little coincidence that book clubs are thriving for our target audience, even though young people have traditionally been at the bottom of the book buying public. Generation Y now forms the second largest age group of book clubbers, drawn in by the flexibility, the lack of talking heads, the self organized format, and the opportunity to create connections around questions of meaning. Check out [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) for example of self-organizing mechanism and <http://www.theooze.com/forums/index.cfm> for critical conversation online.
  
5. **Loose your fear:** Our reality is loaded with possibility. It is unclear where the youth who make up the Undecided middle will ultimately find their religious home. As you read this report, it is hard not to start thinking of ways to experiment in the face of this challenge. If religious denominations are bold, innovative, and self-confident enough, we can construct the meaningful communities that young Americans crave, and deliver the action and values the world beyond ourselves so badly needs.



## Appendix A: Methodology

Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, Inc. designed and administered this telephone survey conducted by professional interviewers. The survey reached 1385 young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 years. The survey was conducted August 7-November 18, 2004. The data were weighted by race, education, region and religion to ensure an accurate reflection of the population. The sample size with these weights applied is 971.

The nationally representative sample of 821 young people was supplemented with oversamples of 200 Jewish respondents, 97 African American respondents, 93 Hispanic respondents, 75 Asian respondents, and 125 Muslims. Telephone numbers were generated by a list-assisted sample with an age predictor that a person of appropriate age resided in the household. The sample was stratified by county within state. Race oversamples were drawn from areas of high race densities, overlapped by surname samples for the Asian and Hispanic groups. The Jewish oversample used a multi-tiered methodology. We drew sample from areas of high household ethnic density, and it was supplemented by both a surname sample and sample drawn from zipcodes of universities with high Jewish enrollment. The Muslim oversample was drawn from a multi-tier methodology: volunteer participants from Muslim Student Associations were invited to complete the survey by phone or over the Internet, and we conducted survey intercepts of Muslim youth in universities, community centers and malls in the Detroit Metropolitan area.

### Reaching American Youth

At 12.3 percent, young adults age 18-24 are a fairly small portion of the American population. This is a difficult group to reach in any case, with large proportions away at college, or constantly on the move with friends, jobs, and school. Conducting a survey that oversamples race and ethnic subpopulations is an added challenge. According the best data available, African American, Hispanic, Asian, Jewish and Muslim populations are a fraction of the American population. Table 1 outlines the percentage of the 2000 population that these youth represent. While youth between the ages of 18-24 represent 12.3 percent of the adult American population, the percentage of Americans with the targeted racial or ethnic characteristics is far smaller. Two percent of the general population is African American or Hispanic youth between 18 and 24. Roughly half a percent of the general population are Asians in this age range. American Jews 18-24 are only 0.2 percent of the general population. For many reasons, we have few good estimates of how many Muslims there are in the general population. Census and INS estimates suggest that American Muslim adults are approximately 0.5 to 1.2 percent of the general population.<sup>45</sup> Survey estimates from Zogby place youth 18-24 as approximately 13 percent of Muslim adults, which suggests that American Muslims 18-24 are less than 0.1 percent of the general population.<sup>46</sup>

<b>Table 1: Population of 18-24 year olds, by race and ethnicity, 2000</b>		
	<b>Population (in thousands)</b>	<b>Percentage of adults 18 and over</b>
Total 18-24 <sup>1</sup>	27,143	12.3
African-American	3,944	1.9
Asian	1,178	0.6
Hispanic	4,744	2.3
Jewish <sup>2</sup>	500	0.2
Muslim <sup>3</sup>	~143 to 344	<0.1

Source: <sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

<sup>2</sup>National Jewish Population Survey, 2000-1

<sup>3</sup>Smith 2002; Zogby 2004

SSI maintains a database of U.S. households that is compiled from white-pages directories and supplemented by a number of secondary resources, which include auto registration, voter registration, and driver's license data from those states that supply it. The database represents 86 percent of American households. Because only households with listed telephone numbers are included in the sample frames, this methodology will have a tendency to underestimate Black, Hispanic or Asian telephone households with lower incomes and less education. SSI maintains that minority households (particularly those with lower incomes and less education) are more likely to have unlisted telephone numbers than the population as a whole. To access hard-to-reach populations, Survey Sampling, Inc. (SSI), makes available samples that begin with these phone banks and appends additional information to them, such as information from Census, to inform the likelihood of reaching a household with the target demographic.

### **African-American Oversample**

To their national database, SSI coded Census tract density information for African Americans. From Census tract information, they correlate the probability that an individual household will be African American. Then, a density code is assigned to each U.S., directory-listed telephone household. The density code reflects the probability of African American households for the Census tract in which the household resides. The Black Ethnic Tract Density methodology relies on the identification of those areas where African American households tend to be clustered; African Americans living in predominantly non-African American neighborhoods will be excluded. Furthermore, the higher the density threshold selected introduces geographic biases, since places of higher density tend to be urban areas. In our study, for example, we selected a 50 percent density. Table 2 demonstrates that selecting African Americans at this threshold captures about 51 percent of African American households and that 79 percent of the time a call reaches a household with African Americans.

*Table 2: Continental U.S. Black Census Tract Density Distribution*

<b>Percent Density</b>	<b>Cumulative Count</b>	<b>Cumulative Total</b>	<b>HH: Cumulative Black</b>	<b>HH: Percent Total</b>	<b>HH: Percent Black</b>	<b>HH: Hit Rate</b>
100	44	5056	5056	0.01%	0.05%	100.00%
95	1569	1651766	1616642	1.81%	16.23%	97.87%
90	2242	2436740	2343539	2.67%	23.53%	96.18%
85	2674	2930647	2775779	3.21%	27.87%	94.72%
80	3078	3425994	3184260	3.75%	31.97%	92.94%
75	3416	3830932	3498380	4.19%	35.12%	91.32%
70	3757	4254878	3805439	4.66%	38.20%	89.44%
65	4121	4704512	4109455	5.15%	41.25%	87.35%
60	4514	5184509	4408287	5.67%	44.25%	85.03%
55	4942	5730222	4721749	6.27%	47.40%	82.40%
50	5431	6369682	5056332	6.97%	50.76%	79.38%
45	5945	7059745	5383007	7.72%	54.04%	76.25%
40	6594	7961496	5766226	8.71%	57.89%	72.43%
35	7323	8983632	6149056	9.83%	61.73%	68.45%
30	8116	10129558	6520857	11.08%	65.46%	64.37%
0	60803	91402228	9961447	100.00%	100.00%	10.90%

## Hispanic Oversample

To reach young Hispanics, we created a sample of youth living in areas which, according to the Census, have high density of Hispanic households and overlapped this list with a surname sample. We therefore reached youth with Hispanic surnames living in high density areas.

To their national database, SSI coded Census tract density information for Hispanics. From Census tract information, they correlate the probability that an individual household will be Hispanic. Then, a density code is assigned to each U.S., directory-listed telephone household. The density code reflects the probability of Hispanic households for the Census tract in which the household resides. The Hispanic Ethnic Tract Density methodology relies on the identification of those areas where Hispanic households tend to be clustered; those living in predominantly non-Hispanic will be excluded. Furthermore, the higher the density threshold selected introduces geographic biases, since places of higher density tend to be urban areas. In our study, for example, we selected a 50 percent density. Table 3 shows that selecting Hispanics at this threshold captures about 30 percent of Hispanic households and that 71 percent of the time a call reaches a household with Hispanics.



*Table 3: Continental U.S. Hispanic Tract Density Distribution*

<b>Percent Density</b>	<b>Cumulative Count</b>	<b>Cumulative Total</b>	<b>HH: Cumulative Hispanic</b>	<b>HH: Percent Total</b>	<b>HH: Percent Hispanic</b>	<b>HH: Hit Rate</b>
100	14	18	18	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
95	97	118026	114266	0.13%	1.91%	96.81%
90	228	319844	301139	0.35%	5.04%	94.15%
85	383	548095	500569	0.60%	8.38%	91.33%
80	525	762314	677234	0.83%	11.33%	88.84%
75	678	980797	846808	1.07%	14.17%	86.34%
70	837	1196765	1003224	1.31%	16.79%	83.83%
65	1059	1521885	1222763	1.67%	20.46%	80.35%
60	1288	1813855	1404605	1.98%	23.50%	77.44%
55	1510	2116758	1578179	2.32%	26.40%	74.56%
50	1818	2529566	1794286	2.77%	30.02%	70.93%
45	2111	2975038	2005499	3.25%	33.55%	67.41%
40	2477	3544520	2247731	3.88%	37.61%	63.41%
35	2919	4219896	2500745	4.62%	41.84%	59.26%
30	3529	5124970	2793573	5.61%	46.74%	54.51%
0	60803	91402228	5976871	100.00%	100.00%	6.54%

Although not everyone with a Hispanic surname is actually Hispanic, and not all Hispanics have Hispanic surnames, the likelihood of reaching a Hispanic household is increased by supplemental and ethnic density sample with a surname sample. To assure broader representation in geographic areas known to have lower densities of Hispanics, SSI accesses a list of approximately 13,000 different possible surnames. This list was originally compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau and modified over time by SSI to reflect Hispanic surnames, Filipino surnames, and surnames common to both groups. SSI matches these surnames to the largest available national database of U.S. households to produce Hispanic Surname Samples.

According to the 2000 Census, the overall incidence of Hispanic households is 6.5% (about six million households) nationwide. But a telephone study, based on an SSI Hispanic Surname Sample, covering five metropolitan areas across the U.S., showed an overall contact incidence of over 70%, compared to 6.5% nationally.

## Asian Oversample

To reach young Asians, we created a sample of youth living in areas which, according to the Census, have high density of Asian households and overlapped this list with a surname sample. We therefore reached youth with Asian surnames living in high density areas.

To their national database, SSI coded Census tract density information for Asians. From Census tract information, they correlate the probability that an individual household will be Asian. Then, a density code is assigned to each U.S. directory-listed telephone household. The density code reflects the probability of Asian households for the Census tract in which the household resides. The Asian Ethnic Tract Density methodology relies on the identification of those areas where Asian households tend to be clustered; Asians living in predominantly non-Asian neighborhoods will be excluded. Furthermore, the higher the density threshold selected introduces geographic biases, since places of higher density tend to be urban areas. In our study, for example, we selected a 50 percent density. Table 4 shows that selecting Asians at this threshold captures about 2.5 percent of Asian households and that 65 percent of the time a call reaches a household with Asians.

Although not everyone with an Asian surname is actually Asian, and not all Asians have Asian surnames, the likelihood of reaching an Asian household is increased by supplemental and ethnic density sample with a surname sample. For the Asian surname sample, SSI accesses a list of approximately 9,600 different possible surnames, which enables them to assure broader representation in geographic areas known to have lower densities of Asians. This list was originally compiled from native origin sources and Asian Consulates, then coded by SSI into six subgroups: Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Only one ethnicity code, based on the dominant country of origin, is assigned to an individual surname. However, in some cases, assignment was impossible because of name duplication across Asian groups. To compensate, SSI created two “overlap” subgroups: Chinese/Korean/Vietnamese and Filipino/Hispanic. Each of these subgroups was assigned one ethnicity code. Because we were testing incidence across the four groups, in our pretest we did not include the Filipino/Hispanic group.

*Table 4: Continental U.S. Asian Tract Density Distribution*

<b>Percent Density</b>	<b>Cumulative Count</b>	<b>Cumulative Total</b>	<b>HH: Cumulative Asian</b>	<b>HH: Percent Total</b>	<b>HH: Percent Asian</b>	<b>HH: Hit Rate</b>
100	3	16	16	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
95	4	1473	1459	0.00%	0.08%	99.05%
90	6	1930	1878	0.00%	0.10%	97.31%
85	12	10675	9483	0.01%	0.52%	88.83%
80	13	12156	10674	0.01%	0.59%	87.81%
75	15	14158	12253	0.02%	0.68%	86.54%
70	19	17770	14901	0.02%	0.82%	83.85%
65	24	29109	22451	0.03%	1.24%	77.13%
60	34	38837	28559	0.04%	1.58%	73.54%
55	43	47562	33520	0.05%	1.86%	70.48%
50	58	69816	45195	0.08%	2.50%	64.73%
45	77	96010	57620	0.11%	3.19%	60.01%
40	129	173844	90129	0.19%	4.99%	51.84%
35	203	301914	137965	0.33%	7.64%	45.70%
30	317	475348	194287	0.52%	10.75%	40.87%
0	60803	91402228	1806543	100.00%	100.00%	1.98%

## **Jewish Oversample**

We used multiple approaches to reach a diverse selection of young Jews in the oversample. First, we called into areas with known high Jewish population density. Because the U.S. Census bureau does not ask questions of religion, other information like Census tract density is not available. However, the American Jewish Yearbook maintains information on Jewish population, so we were able to identify the Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) with the largest Jewish populations. We then drew an age-listed sample of cases within these MSAs.

Second, we attempted to locate youth away at school. According to the 2000-1 National Jewish Population Survey, over half (53 percent) of Jewish youth 18-24 is at university and away from home. To compensate for this large population of students, we created a list of universities that have high Jewish populations. Hillel maintains a list of universities with the estimated Jewish populations. We selected universities where at least 20 percent of the student population was Jewish, located the zipcodes for these universities, and then sampled randomly among these zipcodes.

Finally, we used surname samples to locate study participants. Although not everyone with a Jewish surname is actually Jewish, and not all Jews have Jewish surnames, the likelihood of reaching a Jewish household is increased by a surname sample. The Jewish surname sample, maintained by SSI, is a list of 2,070,394 listed telephone records that have a Jewish surname.

## Muslim Oversample

Unlike the Jewish, Asian, and Hispanic populations, we could not use surname samples to assist us in locating Muslims. And at less than 1 percent of the population, we found that we could not obtain a critical mass of completes using a list-assisted telephone sampling methodology, even when targeting the areas most likely to have high Muslim populations.

Instead, we turned to a multi-tier methodology that, while functional, was not optimal to creating a sample comparable to the other race and ethnicity oversamples in this study. We sampled young Muslims in two ways: by calling from a list of survey volunteers and from person-to-person intercepts. The sample is divided among these two samples, roughly 40 percent from the former, and 60 percent from the latter. First, our list of volunteers was recruited from Muslim Student Associations in universities across the country. Volunteers had the option of completing the survey online or over the telephone. While nationally distributed, this sample was more likely than average to be college-educated, attend mosque regularly, and strongly identify with being Muslim.

Second, we conducted person-to-person interviews with Muslim youth in the Detroit Metropolitan area. Trained interviewers located Muslim youth at several different locations throughout the Detroit Metropolitan area, including Fairlane Town Center, Michigan State University, Wayne County Community College, University of Michigan at Dearborn, and Access Cultural Center. While locally distributed, this sample was younger, less likely to identify as strongly with being Muslim, and less likely to attend church regularly. When the two samples were considered together, the attitudinal and demographic estimates were acceptably similar to the benchmarks provided by other surveys of Muslim youth, such as the American Muslim Poll 2004 and the Detroit Arab American Study.



## Appendix B: Religiosity Scale Components

This scale was constructed to give us a more general view of a respondent's religiosity, which we divided into three categories – the Godly, the Undecided Middle, and the God-less. We began analysis with a total of 22 variables and subjected the data to a factor analysis using a Varimax rotation. This initially yielded 6 factors, cumulatively explaining 56.7 percent of the variance. Subsequent analysis eliminated 14 variables, which yielded one component that explained 53.4 percent of the variance. The final scale consists of eight items with a total reported reliability of Cronbach's alpha = 0.86, indicating a high internal consistency of the scale. The scale was then broken into 11 categories, ranging from 0 to 10. Frequencies on the variable show even distribution across categories.

**Table 5: Variables Included in Religiosity Scale**

VOLOR_2	Volunteers at a religious group at your local place of worship, including choir and church youth groups
SPIRIT	Describes beliefs as religious
RELC01	Attends informal religious or prayer group
RELC011	Attends Sunday school or religion classes
RELC013	Prays before meals
RELC014	Reads religious books, newspapers, or magazines
RELC015	Participates in a religious music group
ATTEND	Church attendance



## Notes

1. Roof, Wade Clark. 1993. *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of The Baby Boom Generation*. San Francisco: Harper Collins.
2. Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research and American Viewpoint conducted six focus groups for the New Voter Project, four in Albuquerque, New Mexico (among Hispanics and Anglos) and two in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (among Anglos) on February 18, 19 and 23. The groups were further divided among connectors (likely voters and peer leaders) and on the verge (politically aware, but not likely voters) voters. The focus groups were limited to participants ages 18-25 and excluded full-time students at four-year universities.
3. Peter Berger argues that a pattern of religious participation facilitates the development of a coherent interpretative framework with which individuals identify their place in and relation to their communities; See Berger, Peter. 1976. *The Sacred Canopy*. New York: Anchor.
4. Alienation from organized religion is not an uncommon experience for American youth. The New York Times reports on the movement of subculture churches developed primarily by and for young people as an alternative to the more orthodox religious experiences. See Leland, John. 2005. "The Punk-Christian Son of a Preacher Man." *The New York Times Magazine*, Section 6 , Page 22, 23 January.
5. U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000. "Summary File 1"; generated by Anna Greenberg using American FactFinder. (Accessed: 17 March 2005) <http://factfinder.census.gov> .
6. These results were reported in "The National Youth Survey 2002," conducted by CIRCLE in collaboration with the Center for Democracy and Citizenship and the Partnership for Trust in Government at the Council for Excellence in Government. The survey of 1,500 Americans between the ages of 15 and 25 was released on March 4, 2002.
7. U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000. "Summary File 1"; generated by Anna Greenberg using American FactFinder. (Accessed: 17 March 2005) <http://factfinder.census.gov> .
8. Those who were born after 1980 are significantly more likely to have no religious attachment (27 percent), than any those born earlier and also are significantly more likely (8.7 percent) to have been raised in a non-Christian religious tradition. See Smith, Tom, and Kim Seokho. 2004. "The Vanishing Protestant Majority." *GSS Social Change Report No. 49*. NORC/University of Chicago. (July) 1-22.
9. "America's Evangelicals" was a survey done by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research and was commissioned by Religion and Ethics Newsweekly. The survey used a base sample of 900, plus oversamples of 401 white evangelicals, 160 African Americans, and 149 Hispanics. Data was

collected March 16-April 4, 2004. The margin of error was +/-2.44 percentage points..

10. Smith, Tom and Seokho Kim. "The Vanishing Protestant Majority".
11. "America's Evangelicals." Religion and Ethics Newsweekly. 2004
12. We define evangelical as someone who is Protestant, considers him or herself born again and believes the Bible is the actual word of God, taken literally word for word.
13. Smith, Tom. 2002. "Religious Diversity in America: The Emergence of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Others." The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 41 577 – 585.
14. Davis, James A., Tom W. Smith, Peter V. Marsden. 2003. The General Social Surveys, 1972 – 2002: Cumulative Codebook. Chicago: NORC, The National Election Studies, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan. 2000. "The NES Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior." Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Center for Political Studies. <http://www.umich.edu/~nes/nesguide/nesguide.htm> .
15. These figures are based on findings from The American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS) 2001, conducted by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). The survey was based on a random digit-dialed telephone survey of 50,281 American residential households in the continental U.S.A (48 states). The methodology largely replicates the widely reported and pioneering 1990 National Survey of Religious Identification (NSRI) carried out at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The data were collected over a 17-week period, from February to June 2001 at the rate of about 3,000 completed interviews a week by ICR/CENTRIS Survey Research Group of Media.
16. Smith, Christian, Melinda Lundquist Denton, and Robert Faris. 2004. "Are American Youth Alienated From Organized Religion?" A Research Report of the National Study of Youth & Religion No. 6. <http://www.youthandreligion.org/publications/docs/Alienation.pdf> .
17. Smith, Christian, Denton, Melinda Lundquist Denton, Robert Faris, and Mark Regnerus. 2002. "Mapping American Adolescent Religious Participation." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. 41: 597-612.
18. However, religiosity increases in early twenties as young adults start getting married and raising families of their own.
19. Hadaway et. al found that traditional estimates of church attendance among Protestants and Catholics were inflated due to consistent over-reporting. Approximately 40 percent of Americans report attending church on a weekly basis, a figure that has been extraordinarily stable over time and across surveys. Hadaway et. al. estimate that church attendance is closer to 25 percent; approximately half of the generally accepted levels. See Hadaway, C. K., P. L. Marler, and M. Chaves. 1993. "What the polls don't show: A closer look at US church attendance." American Sociological



Review 56: 741-52.

20. Leland, John. "Punk Christian Son".
21. Robert Bellah astutely observed this trend towards individualized expressions of faith and spirituality in Bellah, Robert N. 1986. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. New York: Harper & Row.
22. Wuthnow, Robert, Martin E. Marty, Philip Gleason, and Deborah Dash Moore. 1992. "Forum: Sources of Personal Identity: Religion, Ethnicity, and the American Cultural Situation." *Religion and American Culture* 2: 1 – 22.
23. In some sense, it is artificial to talk about identity among young people as if they are undergoing an active process of evaluating the relative weight of their "identities" and choosing the most appropriate label. Moreover, identity construction is not a process that takes place independent from an array of socializing influences, in particular the family but also other institutions such as school, the workplace, and religious organizations. That being said, young people can clearly evaluate how meaningful different labels are to them and rank them according to their appropriateness.
24. Wuthnow, et. al. (1992).
25. Sexual preference plays an important role in young people's identity -not as an indicator of progressive values- but as a defensive posture against cultural change. In other words, it is the most religious –and religiously conservative– youth who rank sexual preference as an important moniker. For example, 44 percent of evangelical youth and 45 percent of African Americans – groups who are known for holding traditional views about gay issues– say sexual preference is a very important way to describe themselves.
26. The exact question wording is as follows: There are many ways people could describe themselves including what they do for a living, their religion, and where they are from. For each of these phrases please tell me, if it is very important, important, somewhat important, or not important at all to how you describe yourself? (2004 Study of Youth, Faith and Civic Life).
27. Christian Smith and Robert Faris found that religious identification and attendance was positively associated with self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. Eighty-two percent of high school seniors who regularly attended religious services had positive attitudes about themselves, compared to just 68 percent of non-attendees. Smith, Christian, and Robert Faris. 2002. "Religion and the Life Attitudes and Self-Images of American Adolescents." A Research Report of the National Study of Youth and Religion No. 2.
28. Almost two thirds (63 percent) of teens aged 12 – 19 who had sex wished they had waited. See National Campaign to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy. 2003. "The Case for the Cautious Generation," A Project of the National Campaign to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy No. 2 (June).



29. See appendix for the scale components.
30. The exception to this pattern is the devout Catholics, who do not engage informally in religious behaviors in the same way. Much of this probably has to do with the structure of practice, and the disconnect young Catholics make between their personal faith and the church. For young Catholics, the church is a formal construction and it does not impede on their informal lives.
31. However, nearly equal number of Jewish youth and Asian youth fall into the God-less category.
32. Putnam (2000) estimates that “nearly half of all associational membership in America is church related, half of all personal philanthropy is religious in character, and half of all volunteering occurs in a religious context.” Putnam, R. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of the American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster. See also: Verba, S., K.L. Schlozman, and H.E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.; Wuthnow, R.1999. “Mobilizing Civic Engagement: The Changing Impact of Religious Involvement.” In *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, ed. M. Fiorina and T. Skocpol. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution.; Wilson, J. and T. Janoski. 1995. “The Contribution of Religion to Volunteer Work.” *The Sociology of Religion* 56: 137 – 152.; Park, J.Z. and C. Smith. 2000. “‘To Whom Much Has Been Given...’: Religious Capital and Community Voluntarism Among Churchgoing Protestants.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39: 272 – 286.
33. It should be noted that it matters whether or not a religious institution such as a church or synagogue sponsors volunteer activity. Only 17 percent report that they participate in a community organization associated with their religion but not affiliated with their local place of worship.
34. Fewer than half of American adults (46 percent) reported participating in volunteer work in the last twelve months, and less than a quarter (20 percent) reported participating regularly (at least once a month). Pace University Poll on Volunteerism, conducted Nov. 18 to Dec. 12, 2004.
35. DeCourcy Hinds, Michael. 2001. “Youth Vote 2000: They’d Rather Volunteer.” *The Carnegie Reporter* Vol. 1 No. 2 (Spring).
36. These figures were taken from the National Election Pool (NEP) Exit Poll 2004, conducted by Edison Media Research and Mitofsky International on November 2, 2004. The survey utilized stratified probability sampling. Respondents were weighted based on three factors: the probability of selection of the precinct; a non-response adjustment based upon completion rates by age, race gender; the size and distribution of the best estimate of the vote within geographic region of a state. Also see the work by CIRCLE on youth turnout: Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. 2005. “Youth Turnout 2004.” University of Maryland School of Public Policy. [http://www.civicyouth.org/quick/youth\\_voting.htm](http://www.civicyouth.org/quick/youth_voting.htm).
37. For an excellent example of work related to detailing the problem of engaging youth politically, see Fields (2003). Fields, Alison Byrne. 2003. “The Youth Challenge: Participating in Democracy.” Carnegie Corporation of New York. <http://www.carnegie.org/youthchallenge.pdf>.

38. In last year's presidential contest, John Kerry lost every voter over 30 years of age, winning under 30 voters by 9 points, 54 to 45 percent.
39. Voters under 30 are 17 percent of the electorate.
40. These figures come from the National Election Pool (NEP) Exit Poll 2004, conducted by Edison Media Research and Mitofsky International on November 2, 2004.
41. In contrast, among all adults, 66 percent oppose gay marriage. The Harris Poll conducted between March 18 to 29, 2004 found that while only 27 percent of American adults support gay marriage, a majority (58 percent) support civil unions.
42. These views do not mean that young people sanction "irresponsible" sexual behavior. In fact, a significant number (48 percent very or somewhat) worry about getting a STD and 57 percent believe that it is important to wait until you are married before having sex. Young people clearly can and do make a distinction between accepting difference, diversity and people's choices and condoning any kind of sexual behavior in themselves or their friends.
43. Olander, Michael. 2005. "Attitudes of Young People Toward Diversity: Fact Sheet." Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. <http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/Attitudes%202.25.pdf>
44. African American youth are the most likely to say they have experienced discrimination (55 percent) and are more likely to say that their race makes them feel like an outsider very (10 percent) or somewhat often (24 percent). As many Jews (56 percent) say they have experienced anti-Semitism.
45. Smith, Tom W. 2002. "The Muslim Population of the United States: the Methodology of Estimates." Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 66 (Summer) 404-417.
46. These results were reported in a survey done by Zogby International and Project MAPS called "The New American Muslim Poll". The survey was comprised of a telephone survey of 1,700 Muslims throughout the United States and used an oversample of face-to-face interviews with 146 African American Muslims. The survey was conducted between August 5 and September 15, 2004. The margin of error is +/- 2.3 percentage points.



# Acknowledgements

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Anna Greenberg, Vice President of Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, advises U.S. political campaigns, issue campaigns, non-profits, and foundations. She has worked closely with the organizations involved in the presidential campaign including MoveOn.Org, The Media Fund, the Human Rights Campaign, NARAL Pro-Choice America, Women's Voice Women's Vote, and the League of Conservation Voters, helping them develop message, advertising and targeting strategies.

She has extensive experience polling for non-profits and charitable foundations focusing on women's health, rural issues and education.

Prior to joining GQR, Greenberg taught at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. In the spring of 2000, Greenberg received an invitation from the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press where she worked as a visiting scholar. She is an adjunct professor at the Public Affairs and Advocacy Institute in the School of Public Affairs at American University.

A frequently quoted source on the topic of American politics, Greenberg has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, NBC, CNBC, NPR and the BBC. Her work has been published in a variety of publications, including Political Science Quarterly, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Women and Politics, The American Prospect, The Nation, Blueprint, The Public Perspective and The Responsive Community.

Greenberg earned a Bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago.

## Advisory Committee

This survey has been a collaborative project driven by a multi-disciplinary advisory committee who adopted a hands-on approach from the outset, refining the report's focus from their very different vantage points at every stage of the project. We're indebted to the team members for their support, counsel, creativity, and patience.

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