

WOMEN: WORK, FAMILY AND FEMINISM

April 28-30, 2006

While half of women say it is preferable for women to work while they are raising a family, a significant majority think most women are conflicted about raising a family and working. And even though most credit the women's movement with making their lives better, few women call themselves a feminist outright.

WORK AND FAMILY

48% of women think it is preferable for women to work while they are raising children, but a third says it is not. Women under age 45 are more likely than those who are older to say it is preferable for women to work.

IS IT PREFERABLE FOR WOMEN TO WORK WHILE RAISING A FAMILY?

(Among women)

Yes	48%
No	33
Don't know	19

Among women currently working, 47% agree that it is preferable for women to work while raising a family, while 35% disagree. Opinion is more divided, however, among working women with children under 18.

Still, most women see a conflict between working full-time and raising a family. 68% of women admit that most women they know think there is a conflict; just a quarter say there is not. Women of many demographic groups, and especially working mothers, say most women they know think there is a conflict between working and raising a family.

DO MOST WOMEN SEE A CONFLICT BETWEEN WORKING AND RAISING A FAMILY?

(Among women)

Yes	68%
No	26

Three in four women say most women work today because they need to support themselves and their family; only 13% say women work because they want to. 22% of men say women work because they want to. Younger and older women agree that most women work because they need to. Women with household incomes over \$50,000 a year are just as likely as those earning less to say most women work because they need to. Among working women, 73% say most women work because they have to.

DO MOST WOMEN WORK BECAUSE THEY NEED TO OR BECAUSE THEY WANT TO?

(Among women)

Need to	75%
Want to	13

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND FEMINISM

Most women give credit to the women's movement for improving their lives. 65% say achievements by the women's movement have made their lives better. This number is similar to what it was last May, but significantly higher than it was in 1999 when barely half said the women's movement had made their lives better. A New York Times Poll conducted in 1983 found just 25% of women said the women's movement had improved their lives.

HAS WOMEN'S MOVEMENT MADE YOUR LIFE BETTER?

(Among women)

	Now	2005	1999	1997	1983*
Yes	65%	69%	48%	43%	25%
No	30	27	40	48	65

*New York Times Poll

Even though women say their lives have been made better due to the women's movement, not many consider themselves feminists. Just 27% of women call themselves a feminist; 68% do not. These views have changed little over the years.

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A FEMINIST, OR NOT?

(Among Women)

	Now	2005	1999	1997	1992*
Yes	27%	24%	20%	26%	31%
No	68	70	74	69	63

*Time/CNN Poll

39% of women who are Democrats call themselves feminists, compared to just 8% of those who are Republicans.

Although many appear to shy away from the feminist label, few women describe the word "feminist" as an insult. In this poll, 65% of women say "feminist" is a neutral term, 14% say it is an insult, and another 15% describe it as a compliment. In 1999, more women - 22% - considered calling someone a feminist an insult.

CALLING SOMEONE A FEMINIST IS ...

(Among Women)

	Now	2005	1999
A compliment	15%	12%	9%
An insult	14	17	22
Neutral	65	64	58

In a CBS News Poll conducted last May a dictionary definition of the word feminist was included in a poll question, and in that instance,

most women said they considered themselves a feminist. In that poll, a feminist was described as "someone who believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes", and 65% of women identified themselves as a feminist.

A FEMINIST IS SOMEONE WHO BELIEVES IN SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY OF THE SEXES.

DO YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS A FEMINIST OR NOT?

(Among women)

5/2005

Yes	65%
No	32

THE STATUS OF WOMEN: LOOKING AHEAD

Most women think the overall status of women in this country is better than it was 50 years ago, and many think it will improve in the future.

77% of women think the overall status of women is better than it was a half a century ago, and 75% of men agree. 81% of women working today say the status of women has improved.

Looking ahead, 47% of women think the status of women 50 years from now will be better, but many - 43% - think not much will change. Only 5% think the status of women will be worse. Younger women are more likely than those who are older to be optimistic about the future status of women.

OVERALL STATUS OF WOMEN

(Among Women)

	<u>50 YEARS AGO</u>	<u>50 YEARS FROM NOW</u>
Better	77%	47%
Worse	5	5
Same	15	43

This poll was conducted among a nationwide random sample of 719 adults, interviewed by telephone April 28-30, 2006, including 420 women. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus four percentage points. The margin of error for the sample of women could be plus or minus five percentage points.

CBS NEWS POLL
Women: Work, Family and Feminism
April 28-30 2006

q25 Compared with 50 years ago, do you think the overall status of women in this country has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **		
	*** Gender ***		
	Total	Men	Women
	%	%	%
Better	76	75	77
Worse	6	6	5
Stayed the same	14	13	15
DK/NA	4	6	3

q26 Has the women's movement achieved anything that has made your life better?

	Total	Men	Women	May05c Women %
Yes	55	44	65	69
No	36	41	30	27
DK/NA	9	15	5	4

q27 Do you consider yourself to be a feminist, or not?

Yes	24	21	27	24
No	69	71	68	70
DK/NA	7	8	5	6

q28 Do you consider calling someone a feminist to be a compliment, an insult, or a neutral description?

Compliment	10	5	15	12
Insult	18	23	14	17
Neutral	60	55	65	64
DK/NA	12	17	6	7

q29 Do you think it is preferable or not preferable for women to work while they are raising children?

Preferable	49	51	48
Not preferable	32	31	33
DK/NA	19	18	19

q30 Do you think women who work today mostly do so because they need to support themselves and their family, or do they mostly work because they want to?

Work because they need to	68	61	75
Work because they want to	17	22	13
Depends (vol.)	11	11	10
DK/NA	4	6	2

q31 Would you say most women you know think there is a conflict between raising a family and working full-time?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Gender ***

	Total	Men	Women
	%	%	%
Yes, there is a conflict	67	66	68
No, no conflict	26	26	26
DK/NA	7	8	6

q32 Fifty years from now, do you think the overall status of women in this country will be better than it is now, worse than it is now, or will it be about the same?

Better	48	48	47
Worse	6	8	5
About the same	41	38	43
DK/NA	5	6	5

	<u>UWNEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	719	
Total Men	299	345
Total Women	420	374