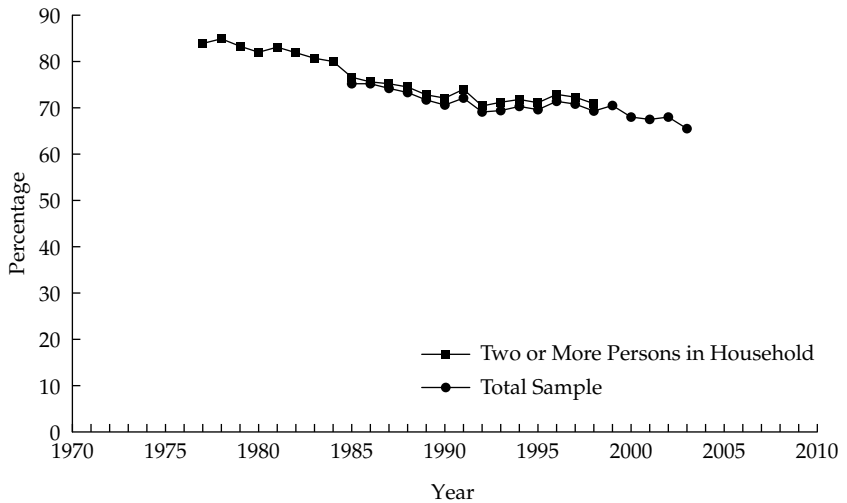


Figure 3.1 Respondents Whose Families Usually Eat Dinner Together—DDB Needham



Source: Author’s compilation based on data from DDB Needham, variable name “famdin.”

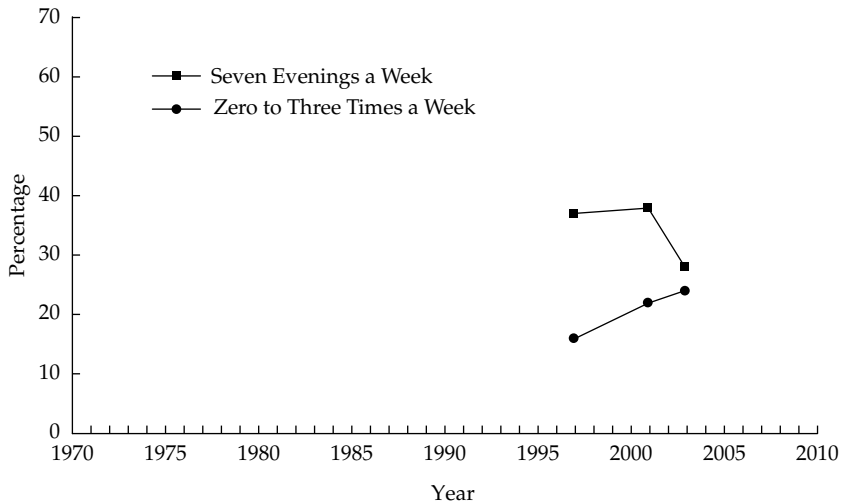
Question: “Our whole family usually eats dinner together,” with six-point response scale: (1) definitely disagree, (2) generally disagree, (3) moderately disagree, (4) moderately agree, (5) generally agree, and (6) definitely agree.

Notes: (1) I show here and elsewhere a line for the total sample, 1985 to 2003, and a line for only respondents in two-person households, 1977 to 1998, for two reasons. First, before 1985, DDB sought only married respondents. Later, starting in 1985, it sought a full sample, including the unmarried, and asked all respondents this question, even those who lived alone. Second, the two-person household series cannot be continued beyond 1998 because the microdata are not available for analysis (at least not to me) and I had to rely on published marginals. (2) From 1985 to 1998 about 52 percent of respondents in one-person households “agreed” with the statement, compared to 73 percent for other respondents. It is not clear what that answer means in a one-person household and what it implies for the answers of other respondents.

shared their households with at least one other person (that is, this set ignores respondents who lived alone), the trend is nevertheless quite clear: downward.¹⁷

Other surveys have been more precise, asking respondents how many days a week they usually eat as a family or how often they did so in the previous week. But these surveys cover many fewer years. Figure 3.2 presents the results from Gallup’s question about respondents’ usual practice—“How many nights a week out of seven does

Figure 3.2 Respondents Whose Families Eat Together at Home, by How Often—Gallup

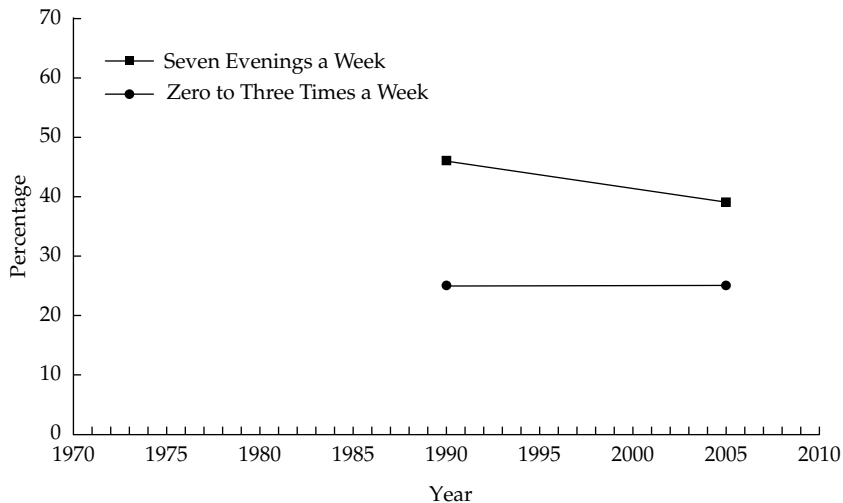


Sources: Author's compilation based on data from iPoll, USGALLUP.97FB24.R35; Kiefer (2004).

Question: "How many nights a week out of seven does your family eat dinner together at home?"

Note: This sample includes only respondents from households with children under age eighteen.

Figure 3.3 Respondents Who Ate Together with Their Family Last Week, by How Often—CBS/*New York Times*

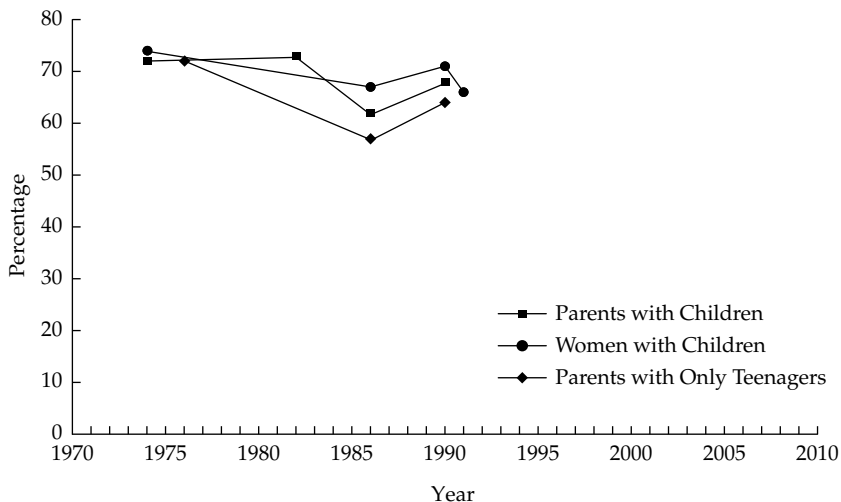


Source: Author's compilation based on data from iPoll, CBS/*New York Times* poll, USCBSNYT.NOV90.R16 and USCBS.112005.R63.

Question: "In the last seven days, how many evenings did most of your family eat dinner together?"

Note: This sample includes only respondents from households with children under age eighteen.

Figure 3.4 Respondents Who Frequently Have Weekday Meals As a Family—Roper

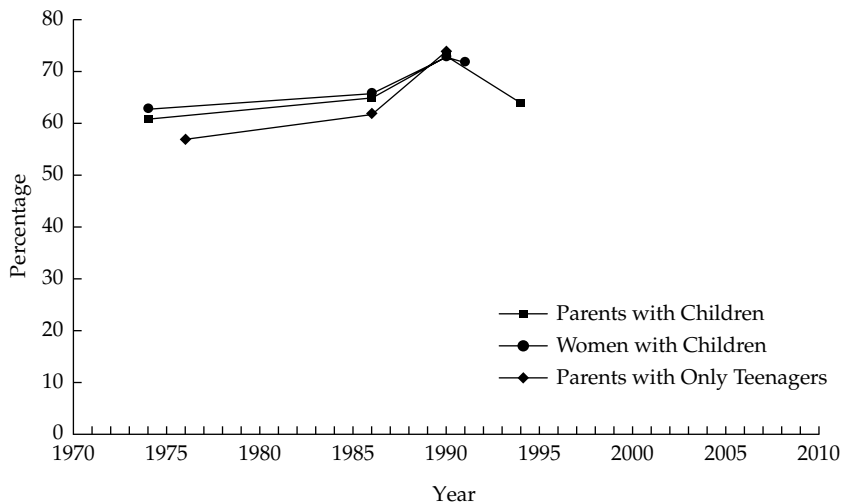


Sources: Author's compilation. Roper conducted the 1974 poll for Virginia Slims (iPoll: USROPER.74VASL.Q45B) and the 1982 poll for the Television Broadcast Authority (iPoll: USROPER.040083.R17A). The 1976, 1986, and 1990 polls came via Brady et al. (2000).

Question: "I'm going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? First, how often do you have the main meal together [stated explicitly in 1974 and 1986; 'on weekdays']—frequently, fairly often, not too often, seldom, or never?"

Notes: (1) "Weekday" is not explicitly stated in the 1982 version. (2) The results for the 1974 poll are presented in the source by gender; this figure averages the male and female percentages. (3) The sample in some polls includes only respondents with children age seven to seventeen or eighteen.

Figure 3.5 Respondents Who Frequently or Often Eat Out As a Family—Roper

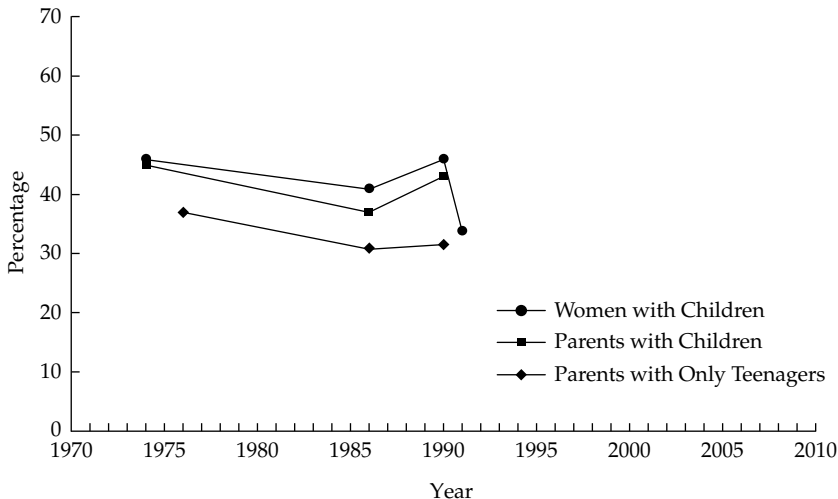


Sources: Author's compilation. Roper conducted the 1974 poll for Virginia Slims (iPoll: USROPER.74VASL.Q45B) and the 1982 poll for the Television Broadcast Authority (iPoll: USROPER.040083.R17A). The 1976, 1986, and 1990 polls came via Brady et al. (2000).

Question: "I'm going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? How often do you . . . go out to eat together . . . frequently, fairly often, not too often, seldom, or never?"

Notes: (1) The 1986 and 1990 values for "women with children" are based on the female subsample in the Brady et al. (2000) data. The 1976 point is not comparable because only parents of children seven to seventeen were included then. (2) The 1974 poll results are reported for men and women separately; the overall results represent a weighted average of the genders. (3) The 1991 survey was of women only.

Figure 3.6 Respondents Who Frequently Entertain Friends or Relatives As a Family—Roper

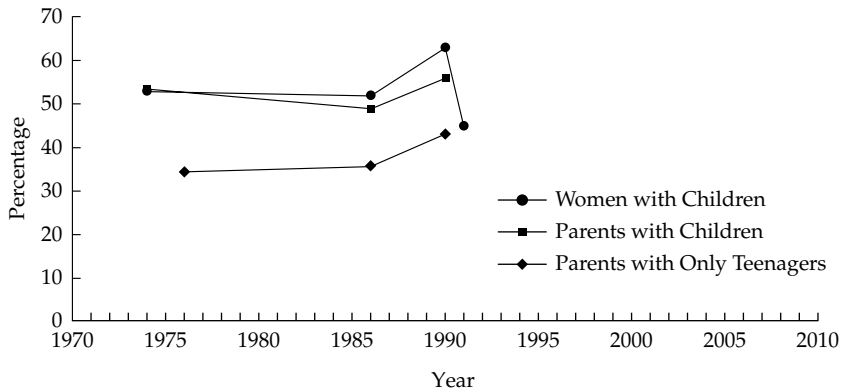


Sources: For full source information see chapter 3, note 18.

Question: “(I’m going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children?) . . . How often do you entertain friends or family at home together—frequently, fairly often, not too often, seldom, or never?”

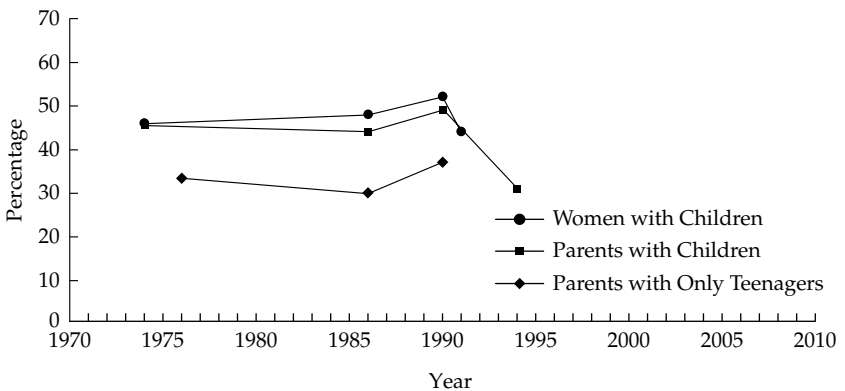
Notes: (1) The 1986 and 1990 values for “women with children” are based on the female subsample in the Brady et al. (2000) data. (2) The 1976 point is not comparable because only parents of children ages seven to seventeen were included.

Figure 3.7 Respondents Who Frequently Visit Friends or Relatives As a Family—Roper



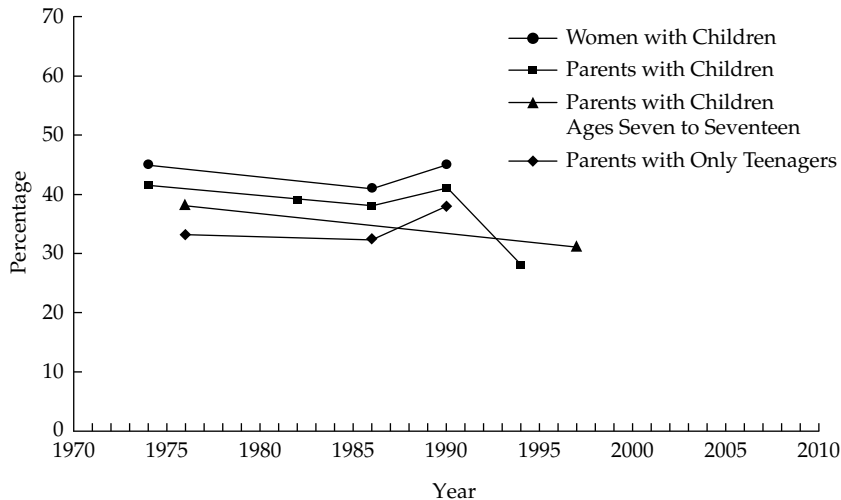
Sources: For full source information see chapter 3, note 18.
Question: “I’m going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? . . . [How often do you] visit friends or family together?”
Notes: See notes to figure 3.6.

Figure 3.8 Respondents Who Frequently Do Fun Things As a Family—Roper



Sources: For full source information see chapter 3, note 18.
Question: “I’m going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? . . . [How often do you] do things together for fun and recreation (go to movies, events, picnics, etc.)?”
Note: See notes to figure 3.6.

Figure 3.9 Respondents Who Frequently Attend Religious Services As a Family—Roper

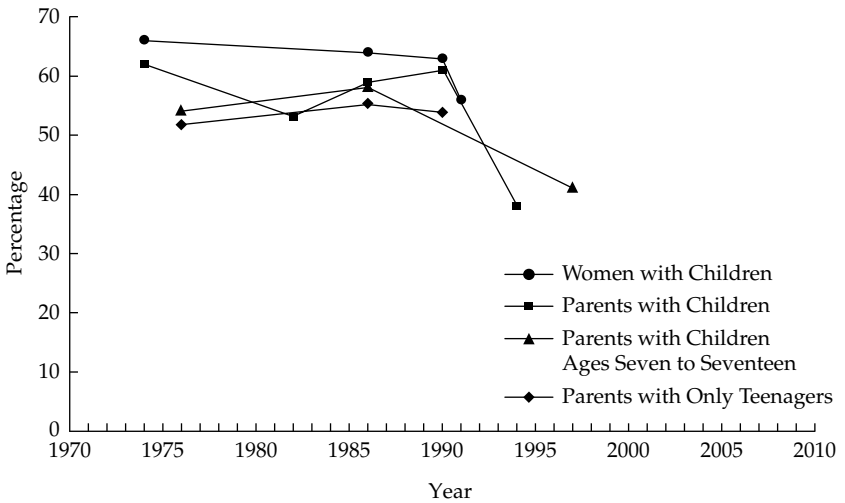


Sources: For full source information see chapter 3, note 18.

Question: "I'm going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? . . . [How often do you] attend religious services together?"

Notes: (1) See notes to figure 3.6. (2) The question was not asked in 1991.

Figure 3.10 Respondents Who Frequently Watch TV As a Family—Roper

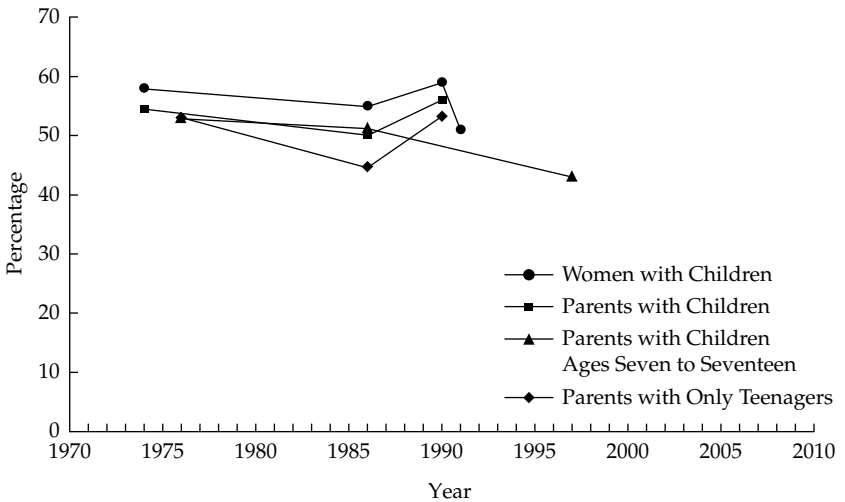


Sources: For full source information see chapter 3, note 18.

Question: "I'm going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? . . . [How often do you] watch TV together?"

Note: See notes to figure 3.6.

Figure 3.11 Respondents Who Frequently Sit and Talk As a Family—Roper

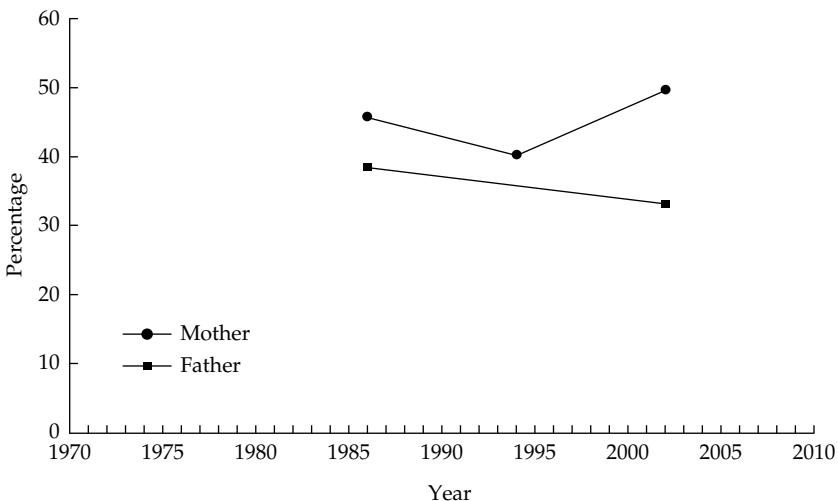


Sources: For full source information see chapter 3, note 18.

Question: "I'm going to name some different kinds of things, and for each one, would you tell me how often you do it as a family unit—that is, parents and some or all of the children? . . . [How often do you] sit and talk together?"

Note: See notes to figure 3.6.

Figure 3.12 Respondents Who See Parents Weekly or More Often, by Which Parent—GSS

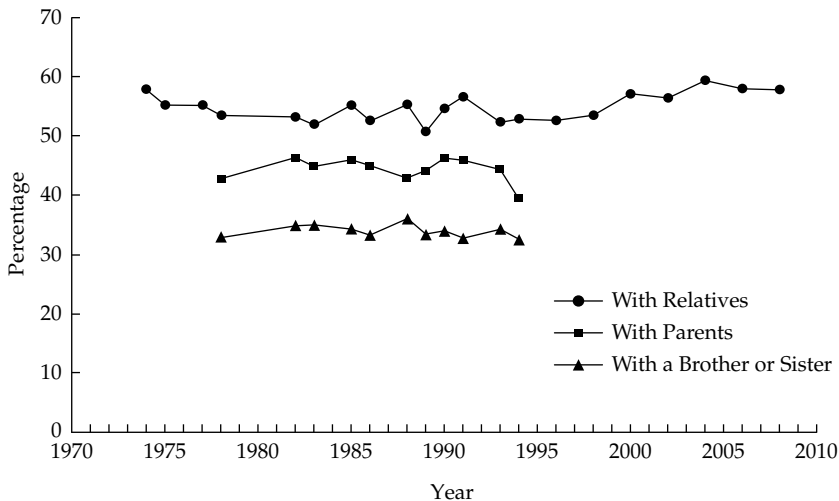


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "mavisit," "mavisit1," "pavisit," "pavisit1."

Questions: Mothers, 1986 and 1994, for respondents who report that their mothers are alive: "How often do you see or visit your mother?" Mothers, 2002, after questions about other relatives: "And what about your mother? How often do you see or visit her?" (Mother not being alive is one answer.) Father questions were similar in 1986 and 2002, but the 1994 survey did not ask about fathers.

Notes: (1) Respondents who lived with the parent are excluded. (2) For the 1986 to 2002 comparisons, note that the sequence of relatives asked about differs, with parents coming toward the end in 2002. (3) In 1986 the questions were preceded by a question asking if the parent was alive, but not in 2002. (4) The 1986 questions were asked face-to-face, while the 1994 and 2002 questions were on self-administered questionnaires (SAQs). (5) The 1994 survey asked only the mother question.

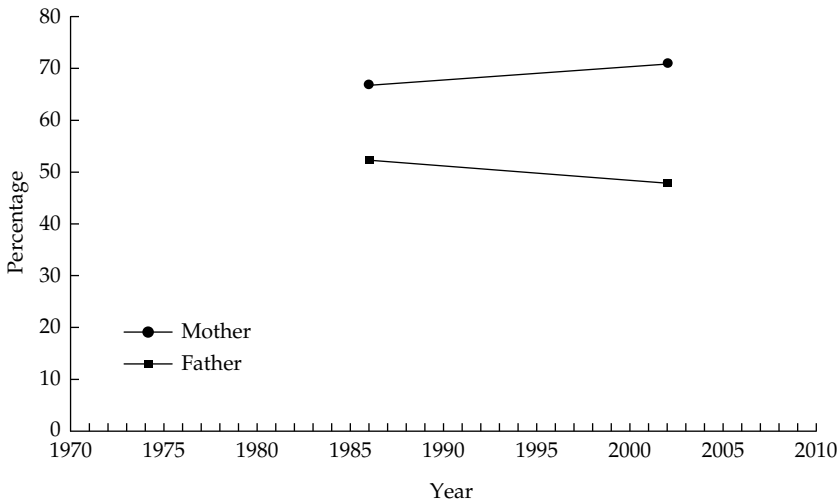
Figure 3.13 Respondents Who Spent Social Evenings Several Times a Month or More with Relatives, Parents, or Siblings—GSS



Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "socrel," "socpars," "socsibs."

Questions: "Would you use this card and tell me which answer comes closest to how often you do the following things: (a) Spend a social evening with relatives; . . . (e) your parents; (f) a brother or sister?"

Figure 3.14 Respondents Who Have Contact with Parents Weekly or More Often, by Which Parent—GSS

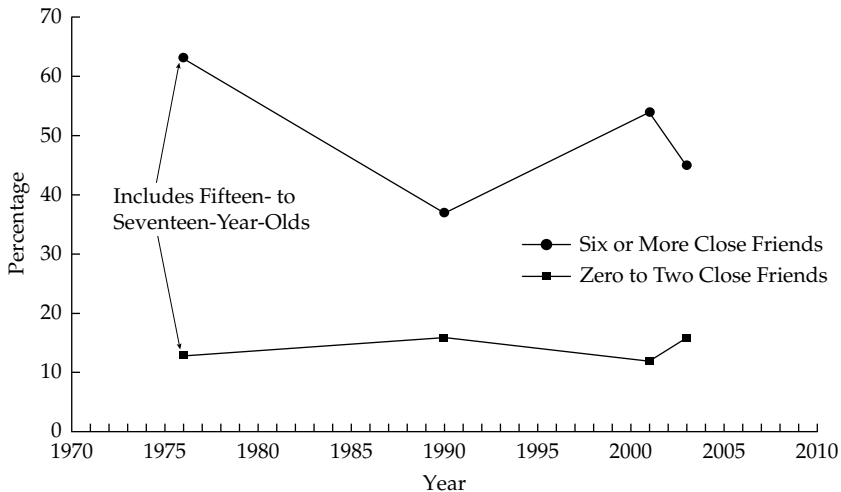


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "macall," "macall1," "pacall," "pacall1."

Questions: "How often do you have any other contact with your mother (father) besides visiting, either by telephone [or] letter [2002: 'fax or email']?"

Note: See notes for figure 3.12.

Figure 4.1 Respondents Claiming Fewer Than Three or More Than Six “Close Friends”—Gallup

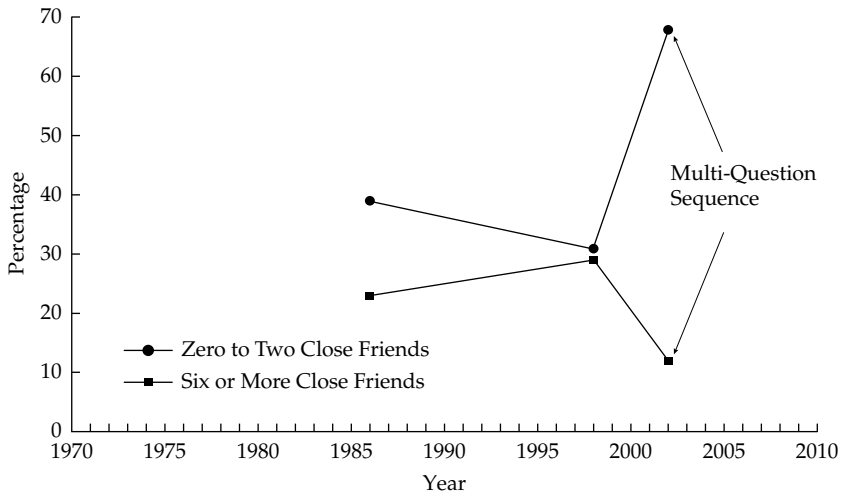


Sources: Author’s compilation based on data from iPoll, Gallup Brain.

Question: “Not counting your relatives, about how many close friends would you say you have?”

Notes: (1) Respondents could nominate as many friends as they wished. The iPoll summaries provided collapsed categories. (2) The 1976 poll was conducted by Gallup for the Kettering Foundation with a sample age of fifteen and older. (3) We can expect, from other data, that the youngest respondents gave the highest numbers. (4) This poll seems unavailable for further analysis.

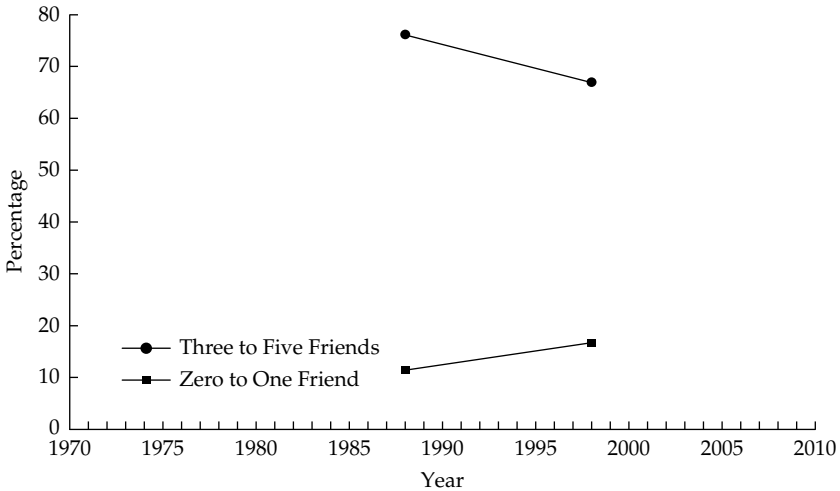
Figure 4.2 Respondents Claiming Fewer Than Three or More Than Six “Close Friends”—GSS



Sources: Author’s compilation based on data from GSS items “frinun,” “friends,” “numfrend,” “cowrkfnd,” “neifrd,” “othfrd.” Analyzed online via SDA, University of California–Berkeley, weight = “compwt.”

Questions: (A) 1986, “frinun”: “Thinking now of close friends—not your husband or wife or partner or family members, but people you feel fairly close to—how many close friends would you say you have?” (B) 1998, “friends” and “numfrend”: “Do you have any good friends that you feel close to?”; [if yes:] “About how many good friends do you have?” (C) The 2002 measure was added up from a three-question sequence: (1) “cowrkfnd”: “Now we would like to ask you about people you know, other than your family and relatives. The first question is about people at your workplace. Thinking about people at your workplace, how many of them are close friends of yours?” (recoded to zero for those not working) (2) “neifrd”: “Thinking now of people who live near you, in your neighborhood or district, how many of these people are close friends of yours?” (3) “othfrd”: “How many other close friends do you have—apart from those at work, in your neighborhood, or family members? Think, for instance, of friends at clubs, church, or the like.”

Figure 4.3 Respondents Naming Three to Five or Fewer Than Two “Good Friends” They Are “Close To”—GSS

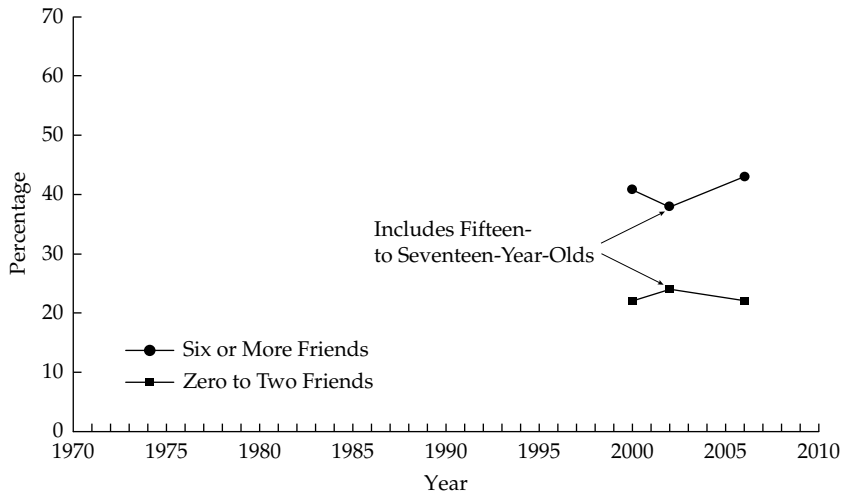


Sources: Author’s compilation based on data from GSS items “frndcon1” to “frndcon5.” Analyzed online via SDA, University of California–Berkeley, weight = “compwt.”

Question: “Many people have some good friends they feel close to. Who are your good friends (other than your spouse)?”

Note: No explicit variable for the number of friends that respondents named in 1988 and 1998 appears in the GSS archives, because the question displayed in the figure was used only as a lead-in to questions about whether the named friends were members of the respondents’ congregations. So, I had to reconstruct the number as follows: Interviewers wrote down the names respondents gave—up to 3 names in 1988 and up to 5 in 1998—and then asked, for each one, “Is [NAME] a member of your congregation?” The variable “frndcon1” codes whether the first named was or was not in the respondent’s congregation, whether the respondent did not know the answer, or whether the respondent was not a member of the congregation. The missing-data code “IAP” (inappropriate) presumably indicates that the respondent had not given any names in answer to the lead-in question, “Who are your good friends?” The percentage coded “IAP” mounts from the first to the last name, from variable “frndcon1” to variable “frndcon5.” (Another missing data code, NA, not applicable, does not seem a plausible indicator that the respondent gave no name because the number of respondents coded NA remained constant across the frndcon1–5 measures. NA may really indicate a refusal to address the question at all.) I interpret the percentage of respondents (excluding the NA respondents from the base N) who were coded IAP on “frndcon1” as those who said, explicitly or implicitly, that they had no close friends. Those who had a valid code on “frndcon1” but were IAP on “frndcon2” are assumed to have named only one close friend, and so forth through the third name in 1988 and the fifth name in 1998. This yields an estimate of respondents’ close friends from zero through three or more in 1988 and from zero to five or more in 1998. I consulted Tom Smith of NORC on these questions (personal communication, November 27, 2009).

Figure 4.4 Respondents Claiming Fewer Than Three or Six or More Close Friends—Saguaro

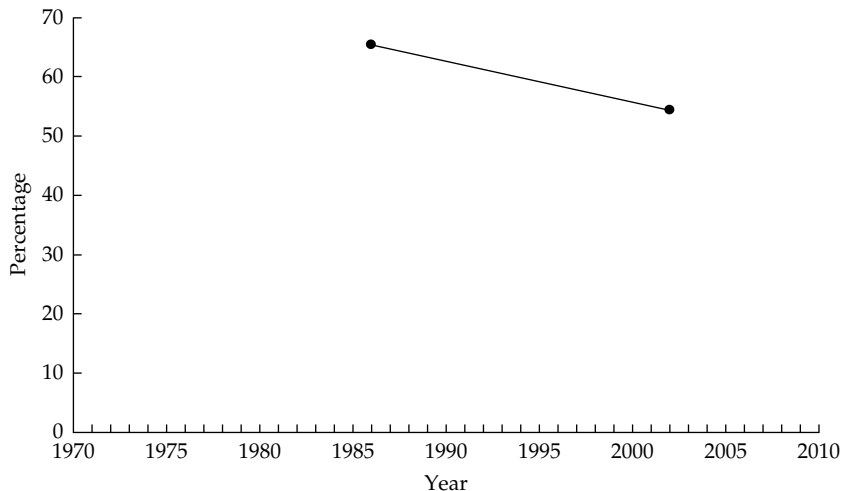


Sources: Social Capital Benchmark Community Surveys, obtained from Roper Center iPoll.

Question: "Now, how about friends? About how many close friends do you have these days? These are people you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, or call on for help. Would you say that you have no close friends, one or two, three to five, six to ten, or more than that?"

Note: The 2002 survey includes fifteen- to seventeen-year-olds.

Figure 4.5 Respondents Who Visit a Best Friend at Least Weekly—GSS

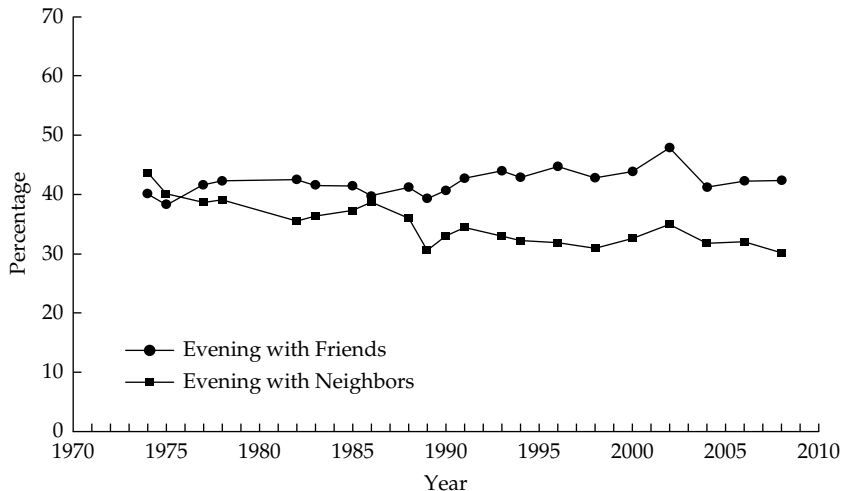


Sources: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "frivisit," "bstvisit."

Question: "Now thinking of your best friend, or the friend you feel closest to . . . how often do you see or visit with your friend (the friend you feel closest to)?"

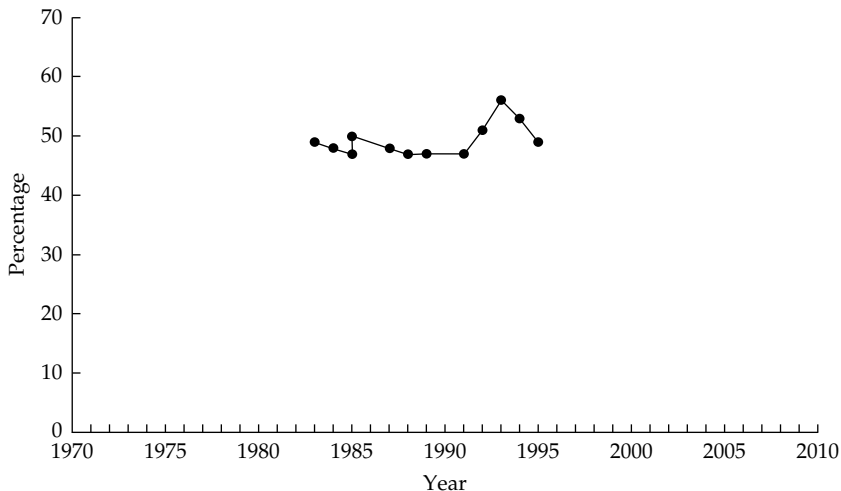
Note: The 1986 version was administered in person, and the 2002 version was part of a self-administered questionnaire.

Figure 4.6 Respondents Who Spend a Social Evening at Least Several Times a Month with Neighbors or with Friends Outside the Neighborhood—GSS



Sources: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "socommun," "socfrend."
Questions: "Would you use this card and tell me which answer comes closest to how often you do the following things? . . . (1) Spend a social evening with someone who lives in your neighborhood." (2) ". . . Spend a social evening with friends who live outside the neighborhood."

Figure 4.7 Respondents Who Socialize Twice a Week with Friends, Relatives, or Neighbors—Harris, Princeton Associates

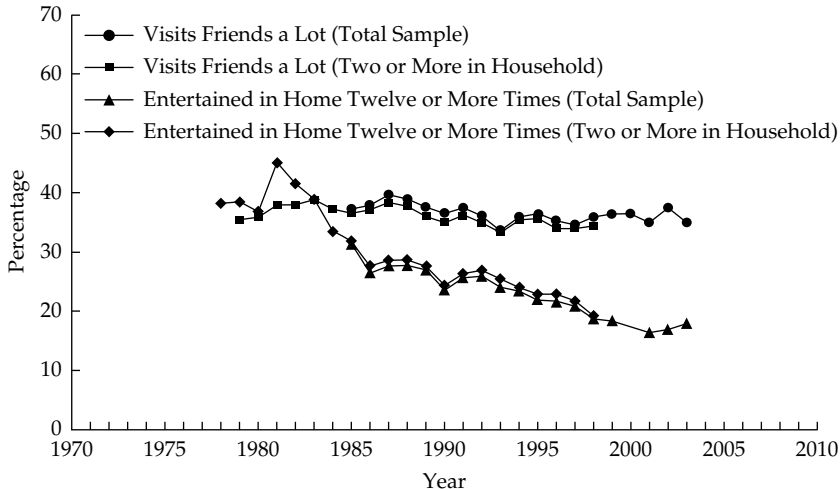


Sources: Author's compilation. Surveys conducted by Louis Harris Associates and later by Princeton Survey Research Associates (PSRA) for *Prevention* magazine, starting with iPoll, USHARRIS.834011.R25, in 1983 and iPoll, USPSRA.92PR10.R14, in 1992.

Question: "About how often do you socialize with close friends, relatives, or neighbors?" Response categories: more than twice a week, twice a week, once a week, two to three times a month, once a month, less than once a month, and never.

Notes: (1) Between 1991 and 1992, the "house" changed from Harris to PSRA. (2) In 1995, PSRA experimented with alternative wording—"About how often do you visit or spend time with close friends, relatives, or neighbors?" The shift from "socialize" to "visit or spend time" raised the percentage of "twice-weekly or more" answers from 53 to 75 percent. The 1995 point in the figure draws from the poll with the original wording ("socialize").

Figure 4.8 Respondents Who Say They Entertained Twelve or More Times a Year and Who Say They Visit Friends a Lot—DDB Needham

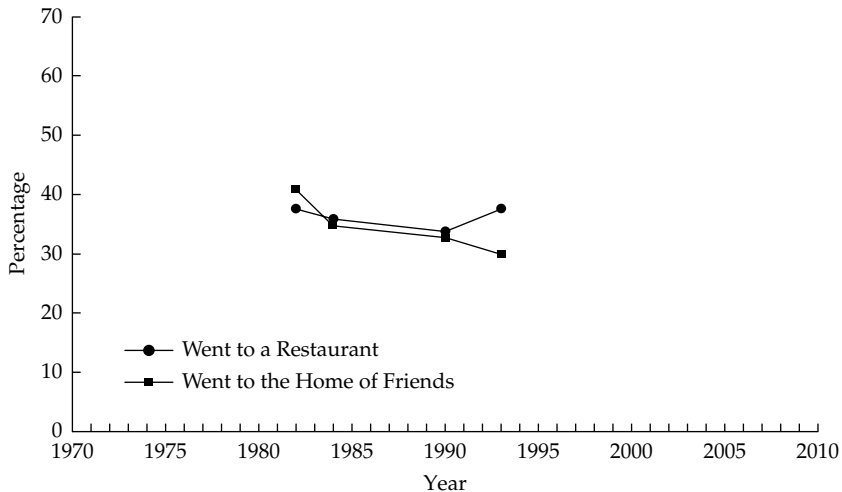


Source: Author's compilation based on data from DDB Needham items "enthome," "visfrd."

Questions: (1) "enthome": Respondents were asked how often they had done various activities in the previous twelve months, including "entertained people in my home," with seven response categories ranging from none, one to four times, up to fifty-two or more times. (2) "visfrd": "I spend a lot of time visiting friends," with six response categories ranging from definitely disagree to definitely agree.

Note: See notes to figure 3.1 for an explanation of the dual lines and discussion of the unusual nature of the sample.

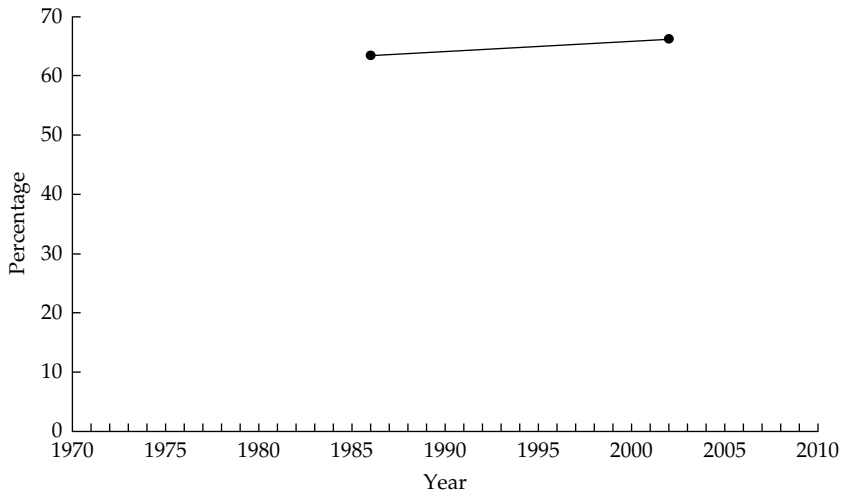
Figure 4.9 Respondents Who Went to the Home of Friends and Who Went to a Restaurant in the Previous Week—Roper



Source: Author's compilation based on data from Roper polls collected by Brady et al. (2000).

Questions: Respondents were asked how often they had gone out for entertainment in the past week. If respondents gave any number more than "once," they were then asked: "Which of these things, if any, have you done during the past week when you went out for entertainment? (1) went to the home of friends for dinner, to play cards, to visit, etc. (2) went to a restaurant for dinner."

Figure 4.10 Respondents in Contact with Best Friend at Least Weekly—GSS

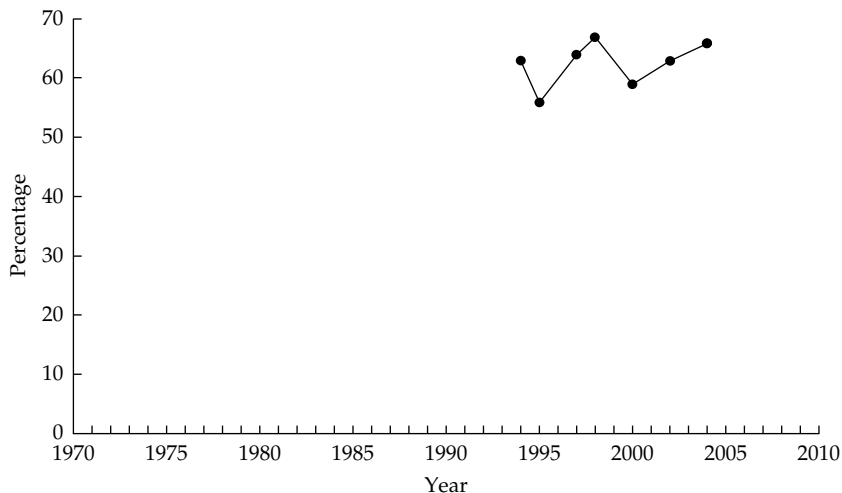


Sources: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "fricall," "bstcall."

Questions: 1986: "And how often do you have any other contact with this [best] friend besides visiting, either by telephone or letter? [2002: '. . . either by telephone, letter, fax, or email?']

Note: The 1986 version was administered in person, and the 2002 version was part of a self-administered questionnaire.

Figure 4.11 Respondents Who Called a Friend or Relative the Day Before—PSRA

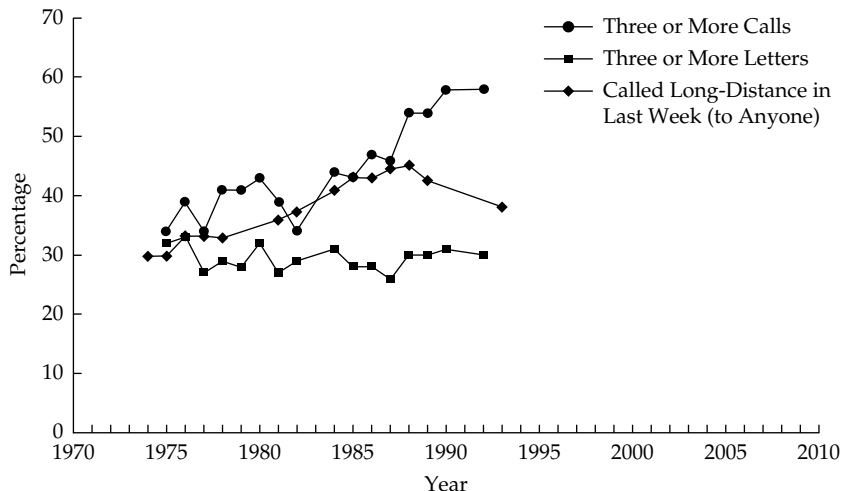


Source: Author's compilation based on data from surveys conducted by PSRA for the Times Mirror Company in 1994 and 1995 and for Pew Research Center for the People and the Press afterwards. Accessed through iPoll, USPSRA.052494.R11G to USPSRA.060804. R20HF1.

Questions: "Yesterday did you: . . . call a friend or relative just to talk?"

Notes: (1) In 2001 respondents to the 2000 survey were reinterviewed; 61 percent said "yes," but that data point is not included in the figure. (2) Notes to the 1998 survey specifically say that respondents interviewed on Sunday were asked about Friday. It is not clear if similar instructions were given in other years. (3) In 1997, PSRA conducted two waves, one being a special, "rigorous" survey that raised response rates from 42 to 71 percent. The result for the "standard" survey is shown in the figure; the result for the "rigorous" survey was one point higher.

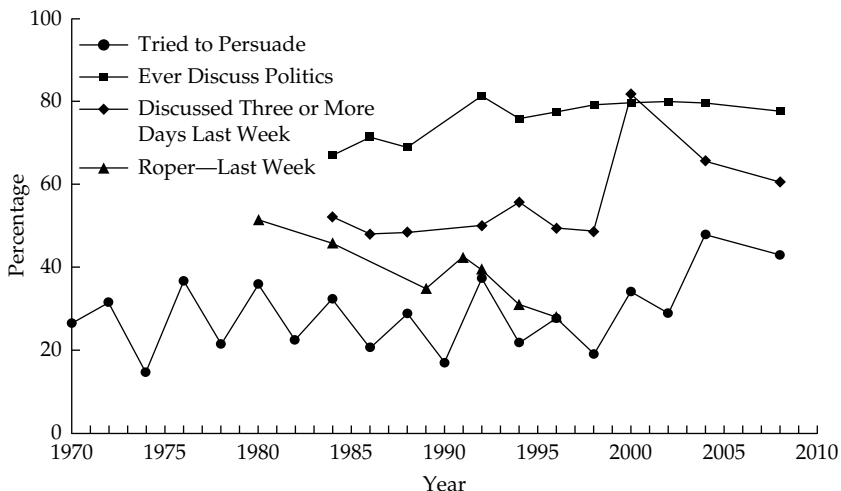
Figure 4.12 Respondents Who Called or Wrote Distant Friends or Relatives Three or More Times in Previous Month (and Who Called Long-Distance Last Week to Anyone)—Roper



Source: Author's compilation based on data from polls as reported in Roper Reports and archived at iPoll service; data set compiled by Brady et al. (2000).

Questions: (1) "And how many phone calls to friends and relatives over one hundred miles away have you made in the past month?" (2) "Thinking of the mail you send out, aside from bills and things like that, about how many personal letters have you written to friends or relatives in the past month?" (3) "Would you read down that list and call off each one you personally have done in the last week, either at home or at work? . . . made a long-distance phone call (more than one hundred miles) at home or work."

Figure 4.13 Respondents Who Discussed Politics—ANES and Roper

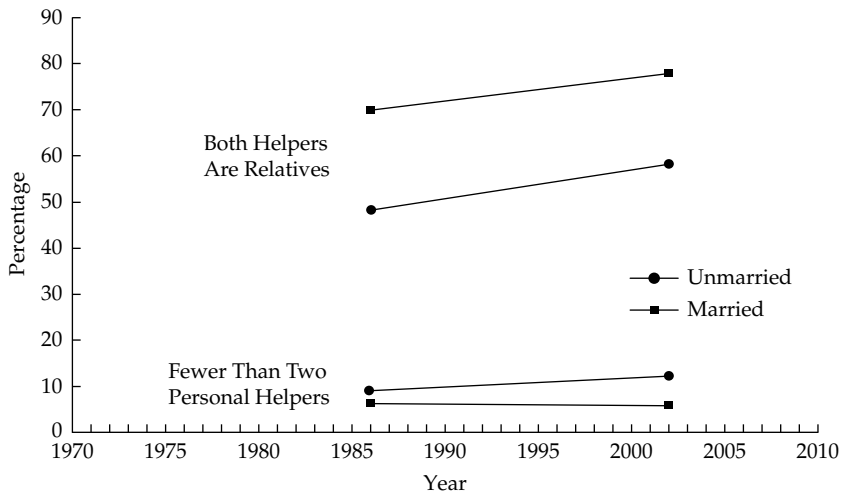


Sources: Author's compilation. ANES analyzed online via SDA, University of California–Berkeley; Roper Reports, Brady et al. (2000), plus the 1996 point as reported by Putnam (2000, 448, note 13).

Questions: (1) ANES “vcf0731”: “Do you ever discuss politics with your family or friends?” (asked 1984 through 2008) (2) ANES “vcf0733”: “How many days in the past week did you talk about politics with your family or friends?” (1984 through 2000, 2004, and 2008; see note below about 2002) (3) ANES “vcf0717”: “During the campaign, did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for [1984 and later: ‘or against’] one of the parties or candidates?” (1952 through 2008) (4) Roper: “PAPOLS”: “Would you read down that list and call off each one you personally have done in the last week, either at home or at work? . . . discussed politics with someone.”

Notes: (1) All ANES analyses used weight = “vcf0009A” (although weighting variations made only minute differences). (2) For “vcf0733”, the online data show a zero score—talked no days in past week—for 100 percent of the respondents in 2002. I treated that year as missing data.

Figure 5.1 Respondents with Fewer than Two Personal Helpers and Those with Relatives As Helpers If Sick—GSS

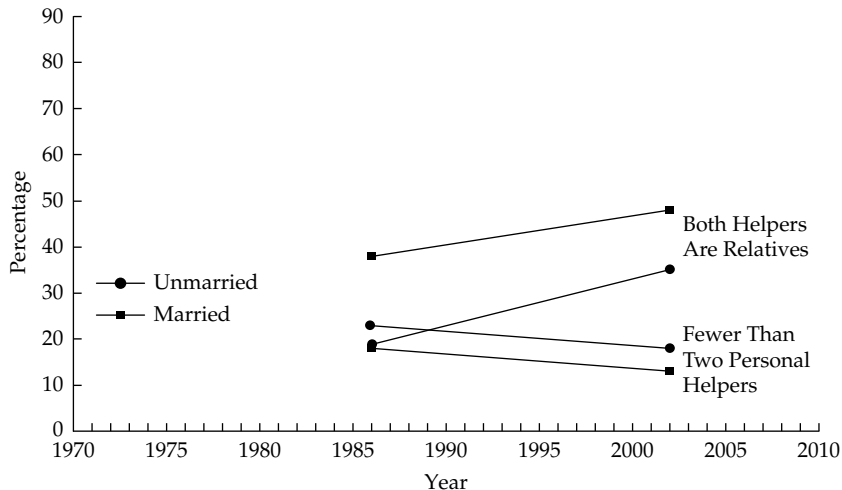


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "sick1," "sick2," "sick1a," "sick2a."

Questions: 1986: "Suppose you had the flu and you had to stay in bed for a few days and needed help around the home, with shopping and such. (a) Who would you turn to first for help? (b) Who would you turn to second?" 2002: "Now we would like to ask you how you would get help in situations that anyone could find herself or himself in. First, suppose you had the flu and had to stay in bed for a few days and needed help around the house, with shopping and so on. (a) Who would you turn to first for help? (b) Who would you turn to second?" The 1986 response categories were "spouse, mother, father, daughter, son, sister, brother, other relative, closest friend, other friend, neighbor, coworker, clergy, family doctor, professional counselor, no one" (and "no answer"). The 2002 response categories were "husband-wife-partner, mother, father, daughter, son, sister, brother, other blood relative, other in-law relative, close friend, neighbor, someone you work with, priest or member of the clergy, family doctor, a psychologist or other professional counselor, a self-help group, someone else, no one" (and "don't know" and "no answer").

Notes: (1) I recoded the roughly three dozen "no answers" that had been coded missing data to "no help," assuming that respondents who did not answer included many who would have had answered that they lacked help if pressed. That decision had negligible effect on the trend. (2) In both years, the questions appeared on a self-administered questionnaire. (3) Note that the 2002 version included a longer list of relatives and also replaced "spouse" as an option with "husband-wife-partner." Note also that in 2002, but not in 1986, some respondents named "husband-wife-partner" twice, which I took to mean a current spouse and an ex-spouse. (4) The contexts of the questions differed. The 1986 help questions—if sick, if needed money, if "down"—were part of a longer set of such questions; in 2002 they stood alone. In 2002 the three help topics followed a long battery of questions asking about how often respondents got together with and contacted various relatives and friends, and also questions about organizational memberships.

Figure 5.2 Respondents with Fewer Than Two Personal Helpers and Those with Two Relatives As Helpers If Feeling Down—GSS

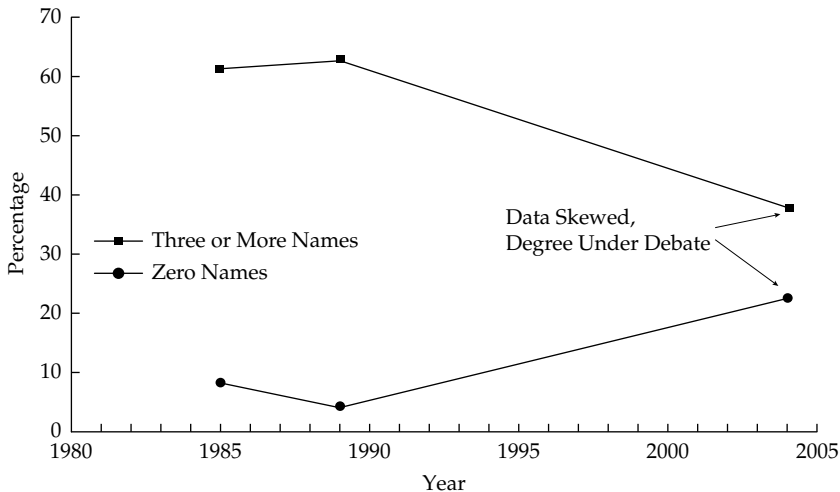


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "down1," "down2," "down1a," "down2a."

Question: "Now suppose you feel just a bit down or depressed, and you wanted to talk about it. . . . Who would you turn to first [second] for help?" For the response categories, see figure 5.1.

Note: See figure 5.1.

Figure 5.3 Respondents Who Give Three or More Names or Give No Names to “Important Matters” Question—GSS

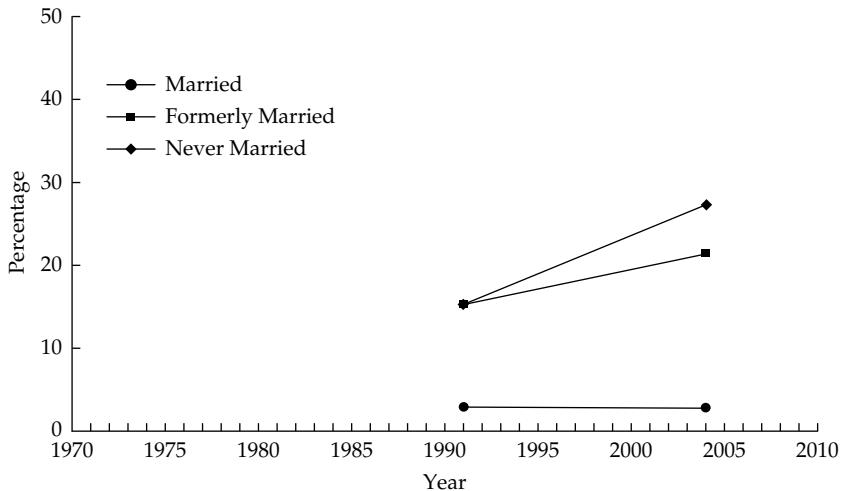


Source: Author’s compilation based on data from GSS item “numgiven.”

Question: “From time to time, most people discuss important matters with other people. Looking back over the last six months, who are the people with whom you discussed matters important to you?” Interviewers record up to five names (three in 1987).

Notes: (1) As discussed in text, the 2004 points are in error, exaggerating isolation; how much is under dispute. McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Brashears (2006, 2009) agree that the zero estimate of 23 percent is too high, but contend that the population value is higher than my estimate (Fischer 2009) of about 10 percent. (2) The figure accounts for forty-one originally miscoded cases in 2004. (3) In 1985 and 2004, interviewers were supposed to encourage respondents to provide at least five names, and in 1987 at least three.

Figure 5.4 Respondents Who Reported a Breakup with a Spouse or Partner in the Past Year, by Marital Status—GSS

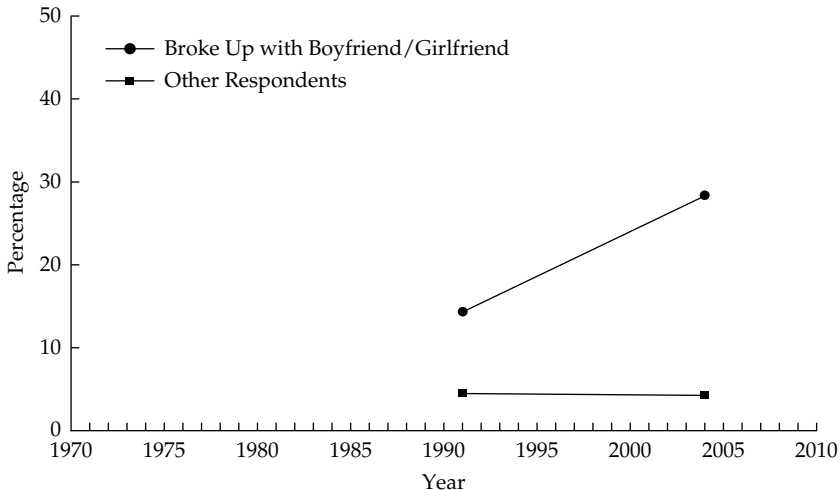


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items "famper1" through "famper3."

Questions: "What about family and personal relationships? During the last year, did you . . . (1) Have serious trouble with your husband/wife/partner; (2) Separate from your husband/wife/partner; (3) Break up with a steady boyfriend/girlfriend or fiancé(e)?"

Notes: (1) The variable in figure 5.4 measures whether respondents reported a breakup in answer to questions "famper2" or "famper3," whether or not they reported trouble in "famper1." (2) In 2004 respondents were also asked specifically whether they had gotten a divorce ("famper6"), but that had not been asked in 1991. In 2004, 60 percent of those who reported a breakup in "famper6" had also reported one in "famper2" or "famper3."

Figure 5.5 Respondents Who Reported Serious Trouble with a Close Friend in the Past Year, by Whether Respondent Broke Up with Boyfriend/Girlfriend in the Past Year—GSS

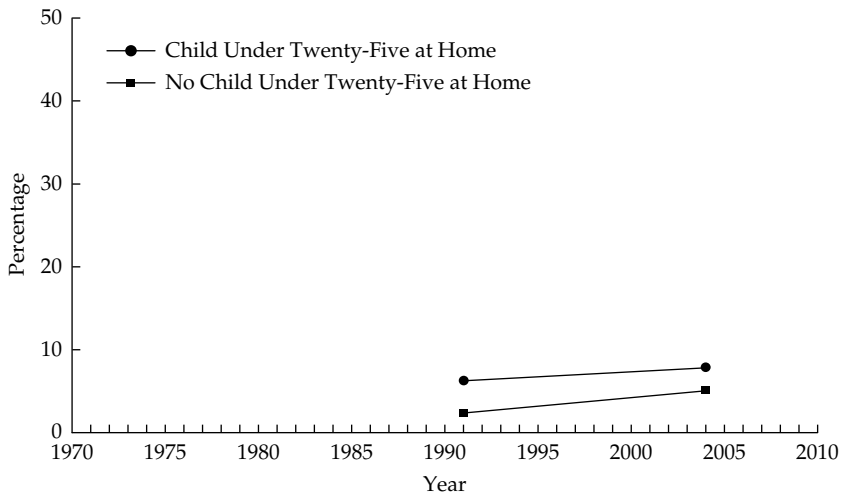


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS item "famper5."

Questions: "What about family and personal relationships? During the last year, did you . . . have serious trouble with a close friend?"

Note: The sample split is based on answers to "famper3" (see notes to figure 5.4).

Figure 5.6 Respondents Who Reported Serious Trouble with a Child in the Past Year, by Whether Respondent Had a Child Under Twenty-Five Years Old at Home—GSS



Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS item "famper4."

Questions: "What about family and personal relationships? During the last year, did you . . . have serious trouble with a child?"

Notes: The sample split—respondent has or does not have a child under twenty-five at home—is only approximate. While any household resident under eighteen is clearly a child, the way items are coded in the GSS makes it difficult to be certain which household members are children of the respondent. In some cases, the eighteen- to twenty-four-year-old in question may be the respondent himself or herself or a spouse. I reran the analyses, dropping respondents under the age of thirty to avoid that confounding, and the results were essentially the same.

Table 5.1 Responses to Spouse Support Questions—National Comorbidity Studies, Eighteen- to Fifty-Four-Year-Olds

	1990 to 1992	2001 to 2003
1) Respondents answering “a lot” to the question ^a : “How much . . .		
. . . does your (husband/wife/partner) really care about you?”	93%	94%
. . . does (he/she) understand the way you feel about things?”	60	82
. . . can you rely on (him/her) for help if you have a serious problem?”	89	90
. . . can you open up to (him/her) if you need to talk about your worries?”	72	77
2) Respondents answering “always” or “most of the time” to the question ^b : “When you have a problem or worry, how often do you let your (husband/wife/partner) know about it?”	70	69

Source: Author’s compilation. National Comorbidity Survey: Baseline (NCS-1), 1990–1992, obtained from University of Michigan, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) study 6693; National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R), 2001–2003, ICPSR study 189.

Notes: The weights are P2WTV3 for 1990 to 1992 and NCSRWTLG for 2001 to 2003, although different weights seem to make little difference. The sample is restricted to eighteen- to fifty-four-year-olds to make the two surveys comparable. The (weighted) sample sizes for these questions are about 3,500 for wave 1 and about 1,000 for wave 2 (although the numbers of actual cases is over 5,000). It appears that the smaller number of respondents in the second survey was a result of subselection—apparently at random—for a “couples sample” (ICPSR, personal correspondence, December 2009 to January 2010). The variables that match up are, from the 1990 to 1992 study, “v201,” “v202,” “v204,” “v205,” “v207,” “v210,” “v211,” and “v212,” and correspondingly from the 2001 to 2003 study, “MR41_1A” through “MR41_1D” and “MR41_2A” through “MR41_2D.” (Several questions in this realm were asked only in the first survey.)

^a The response categories were: “a lot,” “some,” “a little,” and “not at all.”

^b The response categories were: “always,” “most of the time,” “sometimes,” “rarely,” and “never.”

**Table 5.2 Responses to Relatives and Friends Support Questions—
National Comorbidity Studies, Eighteen- to Fifty-Four-Year-Olds**

	1990 to 1992	2001 to 2003
Support from relatives		
Respondents answering “a lot” to the question ^a : “(Not counting your husband/wife/partner), how much . . .		
. . . can you rely on [1990 to 1992: ‘your relatives’; 2001 to 2003: ‘relatives who do not live with you’] for help if you have a serious problem?”	74%	62%
. . . can you open up to [1990 to 1992: ‘them’; 2001 to 2003: ‘relatives who do not live with you’] if you need to talk about your worries?”	45	46
Support from friends		
Respondents answering “a lot” to the question ^a : “How much . . .		
. . . can you rely on [1990 to 1992: ‘them’; 2001 to 2003: ‘your friends’] if you have a serious problem?”	51	48
. . . can you open up to [1990 to 1992: ‘them’; 2001 to 2003: ‘your friends’] if you need to talk about your worries?”	47	49

Source: Author’s compilation. National Comorbidity Survey: Baseline (NCS-1), 1990–1992, obtained from University of Michigan, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) study 6693; National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R), 2001–2003, ICPSR study 189.

Notes: For details see notes to table 5.1, with the variation that the weighted n for 1990 to 1992 is about 5,300 and for 2001 to 2003 about 5,700. The variables used from the 2001 to 2003 survey are numbers “SN2” through “SN10”; they correspond to these variables in the 1990 to 1992 survey: “v217,” “v218,” “v220,” “v222,” “v230,” “v231,” “v233,” “v235.”

^aThe response categories were: “a lot,” “some,” “a little,” and “not at all.”

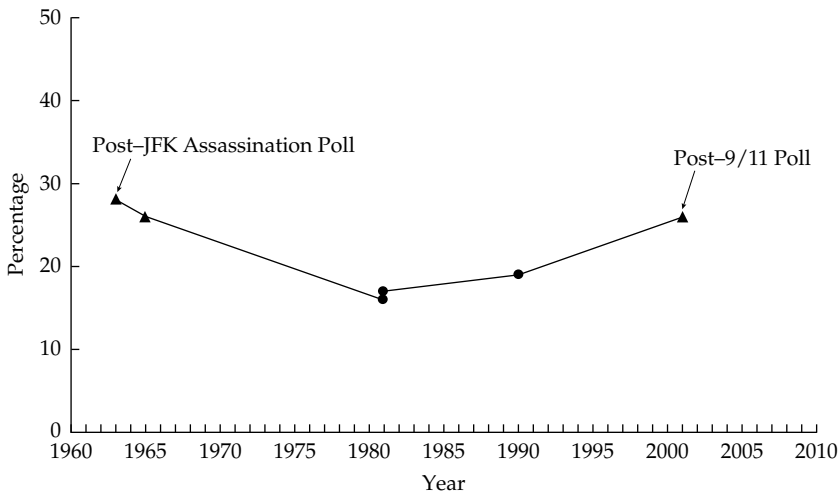
Table 5.3 Responses to Demands and Stress Questions—National Comorbidity Studies, Eighteen- to Fifty-Four-Year-Olds

	1990 to 1992	2001 to 2003
Spouses		
Respondents answering “often” or “sometimes” to the question ^a : “Does your (husband/wife/partner) . . .		
. . . make too many demands on you?”	45%	29%
. . . criticize you?”	28	22
. . . let you down when you are counting on (him/her)?”	17	15
. . . get on your nerves?”	47	46
Friends		
Respondents answering “rarely” or “never” to the question ^a : “How often . . .		
. . . do your friends make too many demands on you?”	25	14
. . . do [1990 to 1992: ‘they’; 2001 to 2003: ‘your friends’] argue with you?”	18	11

Source: National Comorbidity Survey: Baseline (NCS-1), 1990–1992, obtained from University of Michigan, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) study 6693; National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R), 2001–2003, ICPSR study 189.

^aThe response categories were: “often,” “sometimes,” “rarely,” and “never.”

Figure 6.1 Respondents Who Felt Lonely in the Past Few Weeks—NORC and Gallup

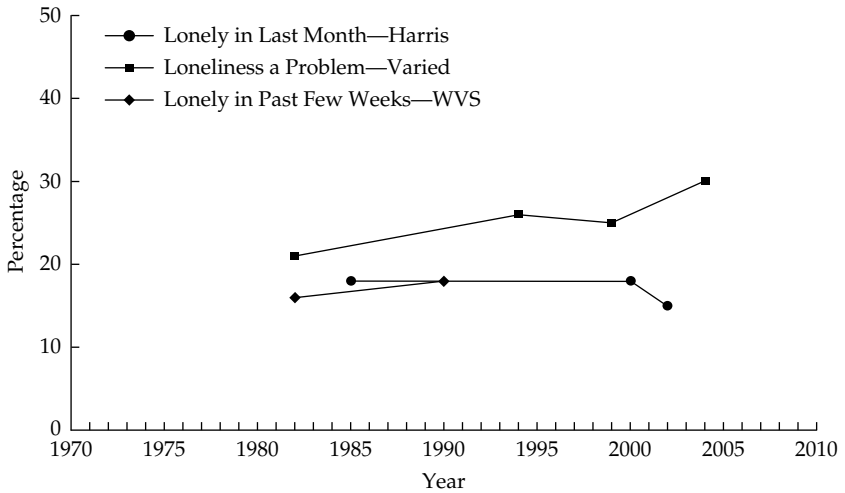


Sources: Author's compilation. 1963: National Opinion Research Center (NORC) via iPoll, USNORC.63KENN.R34D; 1965: NORC via iPoll, USNORC.65SRS.R05D; 1981a: Gallup via iPoll, USGALLUP.030082.R122D; 1981b and 1990: Gallup for the World Values Survey website; 2001: NORC via iPoll, USNORC.01NTS1.Q10.

Question: 1963 and 1965: "(Here are a few questions we have been asking people regularly during the last few years, and we'd like to get your answers now. We are interested in the way people are feeling these days.) During the past few weeks, did you ever feel . . . very lonely or remote from other people?" 1981a, 1981b, and 1990: "(We are interested in the way people are feeling these days.) During the past few weeks, did you ever feel: very lonely or remote from other people?" 2001: "(Here are a few questions we have been asking people regularly during the last few years, and we'd like to get your answers now.) During the past weeks did you ever feel . . . very lonely or remote from other people?"

Notes: (1) The NORC points are marked by triangles, the Gallup points by dots. (2) Respondents to the fall 2001 NORC survey were reinterviewed several weeks later; 24 percent said "yes."

Figure 6.2 Respondents Who Said They Were Lonely in the Last Month or That Loneliness Was a Problem—Varied Sources

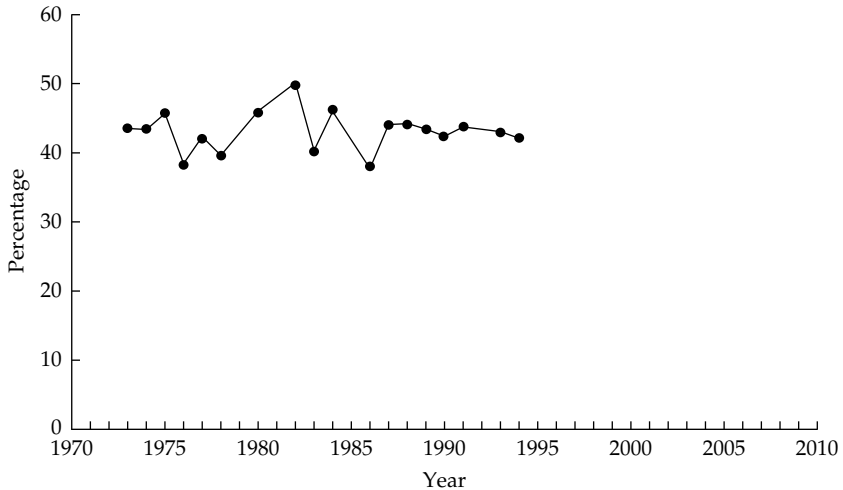


Sources: Author's compilation. (1) Lonely in last month: Harris via iPoll, USHARRIS.102885.R09, USHARRIS.102500.R1J, USHARRIS.121802.R1M; (2) loneliness a problem: varied, all via iPoll, Chilton Research Services for ABC News/*Washington Post*, USABCWASH1982-763250; 1994: FGI Research, for AARP, USFGI.94AGE.RC06C; 1999: Harris Interactive, for National Council of the Aging, USHARRIS.00AGING.R420C; 2004: FGI Research, for AARP, USAARP.06AGING.RH06C; (3) lonely in past few weeks: WVS online, question A013.

Questions: (1) Harris: "(Now I'd like to read you a list of things that may have affected you in the last month. For each, please tell me if it's affected you in the last month, or not) . . . being lonely." (2) Varied: 1982: "(I'm going to read you some health-related problems that people sometimes have. For each, will you please tell me how much of a problem it is for you personally: a very serious problem, a serious problem, a minor problem, or no problem at all.) . . . loneliness." 1994: "(I'm going to read you some problems that other people have mentioned to us. For each, would you tell me if it is a serious problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for you personally?) How much of a problem is . . . loneliness . . . for you personally?" 1999: "(I'm going to read you some problems that other people have mentioned to us. . . . Would you tell me whether it is a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or not a problem at all for you personally?) . . . loneliness." 2004: "(Now I'm going to read you some problems that other people have mentioned to us. For each, would you tell me if it is a serious problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for you personally?) How much of a problem is . . . loneliness?" (3) WVS: "We are interested in the way people are feeling these days. During the past few weeks, did you ever feel . . . very lonely or remote from other people?"

Notes: (1) The Harris "lonely" question is embedded in a long list of conditions, such as frequent noise, hassles from a boss, and not enough money. (2) WVS: In the online database, the 1990 results were coded 18.5 percent "yes" and 81.5 percent "system missing." I assumed that this was an error and treated the 81.5 percent as "no."

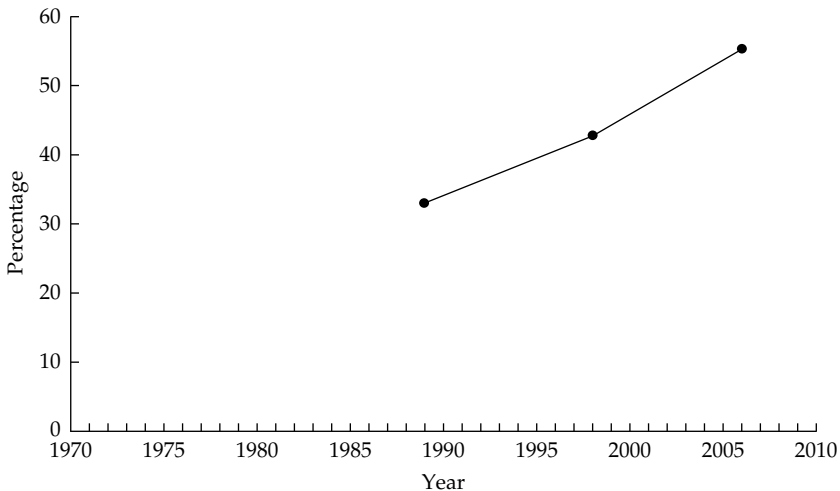
Figure 6.3 Respondents Who Get a Very Great Deal of Satisfaction from Family Life—GSS



Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS item "satfam."

Question: "For each area of life I am going to name, tell me the number that shows how much satisfaction you get from that area . . . your family life." Answers range from 1 (very great deal) to 7 (none).

Figure 6.4 Respondents Who Want to Spend Much More Time with Family—GSS

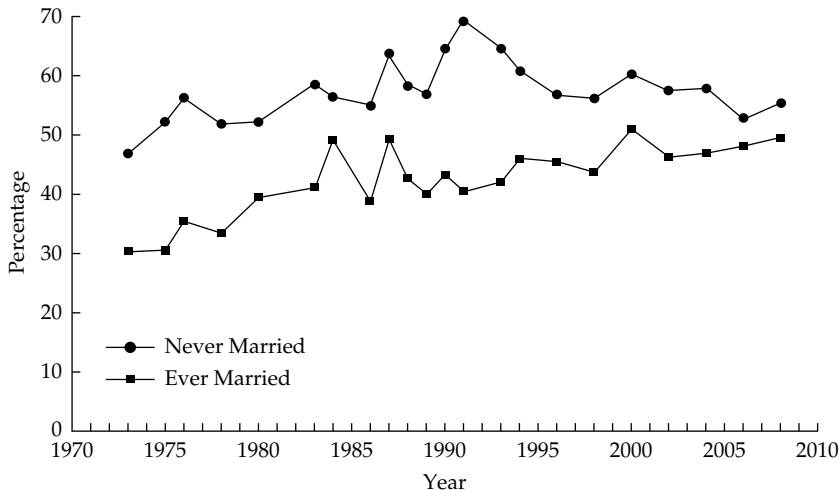


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS item "timefam."

Question: "Suppose you could change the way you spend your time, spending more on some things and less on others. Which of these things on the following list would you like to spend more time on, which would you like to spend less time on, and which would you like to spend the same amount of time as now? . . . time with your family." Answers range from 1 (spend much more) to 5 (spend much less).

Note: In 1989 and 1998, the question was asked in a SAQ, in a battery that included questions about time spent on "paid work" and on "household work" before asking about family. In 2006 interviewers asked respondents the same order of questions while presenting each with a card listing the response categories.

Figure 6.5 Respondents Who Say It Is a Good Idea for Older People to Live with Grown Children, by Marital History—GSS

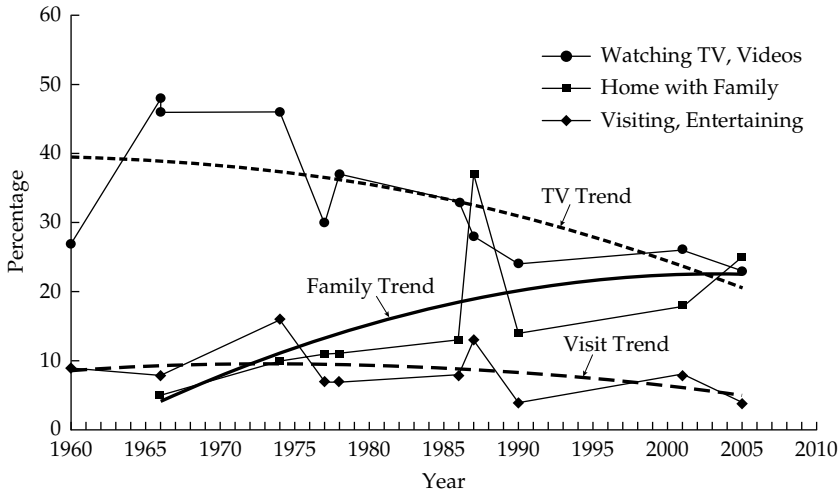


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS item "aged."

Question: "As you know, many older people share a home with their grown children. Do you think this is generally a good idea or a bad idea?"

Note: About 16 percent of all respondents over all the years volunteered, "it depends," with the percentage growing over time. I treated that answer as a "no" for purposes of this analysis, thereby understating the affirmative trend.

Figure 6.6 Respondents' Favorite Ways to Spend an Evening (Original Points and "Smoothed" Trends)—Gallup

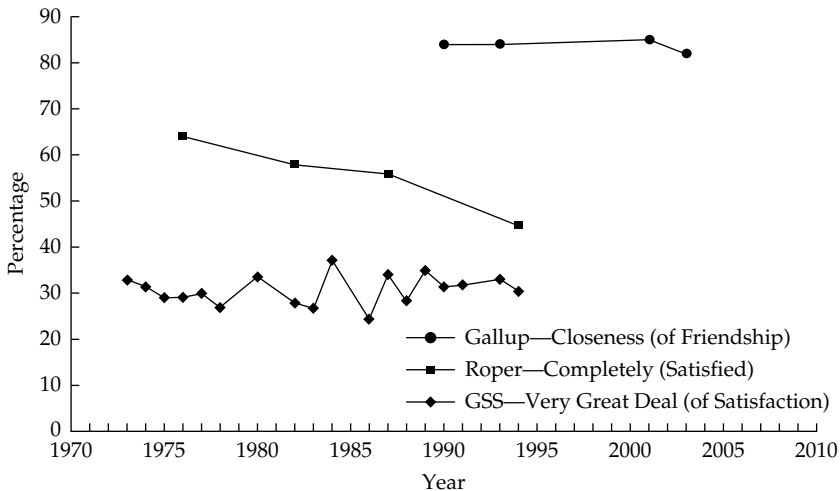


Source: Author's compilation based on data from Gallup Brain, searched by question wording (also available from iPoll).

Question: "What is your favorite way of spending an evening?"

Notes: (1) As discussed in the text, the coding categories shifted over time, perhaps stabilizing in the later years. (2) Gallup also asked this question in 1998 (available from iPoll), but collected multiple responses, about 1.7 per interviewee, making its inclusion unworkable. (It is not clear from the questionnaire in that year whether answers were coded in order of preference.)

Figure 6.7 Respondents Who Say They Are Satisfied with Their Friendships—Gallup, Roper, GSS

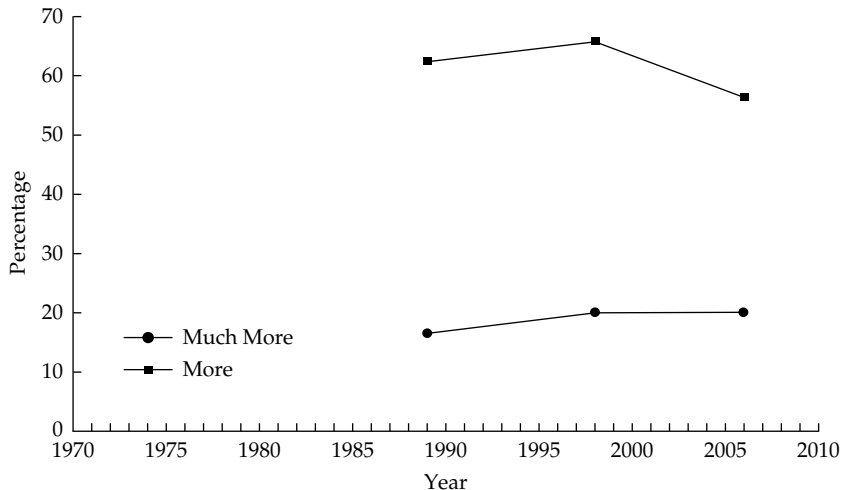


Sources: Author’s compilation. (1) Gallup: Gallup polls, except for 1993 (PSRA), all via iPoll, USGALLUP.90FRND.R03, USPSRA.93JUN1.R47, USGALLUP.01DC06.R44, USGALLUP.03DBR11.R22; (2) Roper: Roper and Roper Starch Worldwide Polls, via iPoll, USROPER.76-7.R37F, USROPER.82-7.R61F, USROPER.87-7.R61F, USROPER.94REC.R01C; (3) GSS: GSS item “satfrnd.”

Questions: (1) Gallup: “Are you satisfied with the closeness of your relationships with your friends, or would you like to have closer relationships?” (2) Roper: “Now here is a list of a number of different things. (Card shown to respondent.) Would you go down that list and for each one tell me how satisfied with it you are or whether it doesn’t apply to you? . . . The friends you’ve made . . . are you completely satisfied with [the friends you’ve made], fairly well satisfied with [the friends you’ve made], not too satisfied with [the friends you’ve made], or not at all satisfied with [the friends you’ve made]?” (3) GSS: “For each area of life I am going to name, tell me the number that shows how much satisfaction you get from that area . . . your friendships.” Answers range from 1 (very great deal) to 7 (none).

Note: PSRA was established in 1989 by a group from Gallup, so we can assume continuity in procedures.

Figure 6.8 Respondents Who Say They Want to Spend (Much) More Time with Friends—GSS

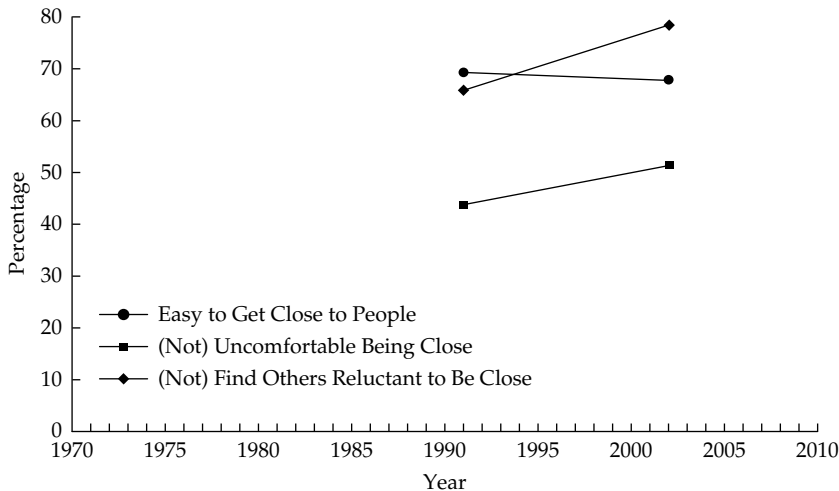


Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS item "timefrnd."

Question: "Suppose you could change the way you spend your time, spending more on some things and less on others. Which of these things on the following list would you like to spend more time on, which would you like to spend less time on, and which would you like to spend the same amount of time as now? . . . time with your friends." Answers range from 1 (spend much more) to 5 (spend much less).

Note: In 1989 and 1998, the question was asked in a SAQ, in a battery that included questions about time spent on "paid work" and "household work" before asking about family and friends. In 2006 interviewers asked respondents the same order of questions while presenting each with a card listing the response categories.

Figure 6.9 Respondents Who Affirm Their Capacity for Intimacy (Eighteen- to Fifty-Four-Year-Olds)—National Comorbidity Survey

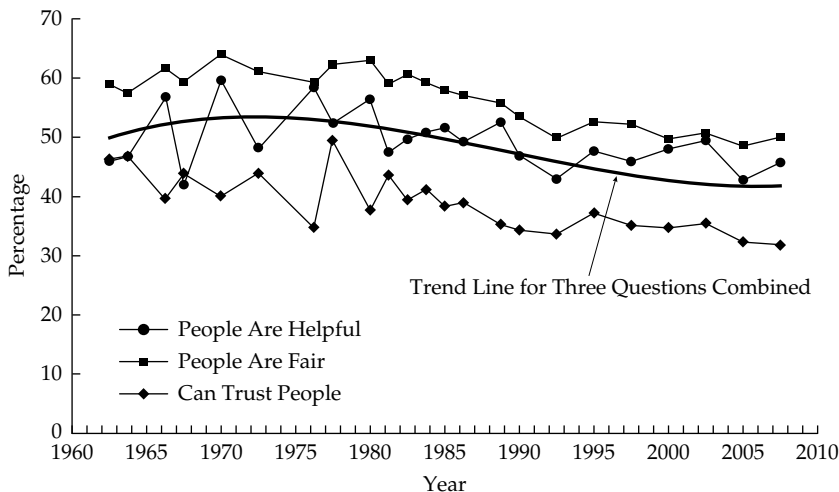


Sources: Author's compilation based on data from the National Comorbidity Survey.

Questions: "Next, I will read three statements and ask how much each one sounds like you." (1) "First, I find it relatively easy to get close to other people. I am comfortable depending on others and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me." How much does this sound like you—a lot, some, a little, or not at all?" (2) "I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely and difficult to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close to me." (3) "I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that people who I care about do not love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away."

Notes: (1) The figure shows the percentages saying "some" or "a lot" to the first question and then saying "not at all" to the other two. (2) The weights are "P2WTV3" for 1990 to 1992 and "NCSRWTLG" for 2001 to 2003, although different weights seem to make little difference. The sample size for these questions for the first wave is (weighted) about 5,380, and for the second wave 4,075. (3) The sample is restricted to eighteen- to fifty-four-year olds to make the two years comparable.

Figure 6.10 Respondents Giving More Trusting Answers to Three Trust Questions—GSS



Source: Author's compilation based on data from GSS items labeled "helpful," "fair," and "trust."

Questions: (1) "Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?" (2) "Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair?" (3) "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in life?"

Notes: (1) Respondents who volunteered something like "it depends"—about 5 percent—were so coded. (2) The summary "smoother" is the result of this process: Each respondent received a one for each of the three questions he or she answered in the affirmative—helpful, fair, trustworthy—and a zero for any other answer, yielding a scale from zero to three. I plotted the time trend for the percentage of respondents each year who scored two or three—not shown, for readability—and then fit a quadratic equation to that line. The heavy smoother is that quadratic fit.

Table 6.1 **Respondents Who Rate Aspects of Life As
Very Important—WVS**

	1990	1995	1999	2006
Family	92%	95%	95%	95%
Work	62	56	54	33
Friends	54	70	64	60

Source: Author's compilation.