

Article categories: **Crime**, **gender**, **education**, **race**, **politics/government**, **quality of life**

Breakdown by categories each year:

1967 — 1 drug, 1 government, 1 race
1968 — 1 quality of life, 1 race,
1969 — 2 quality of life, 1 gender, 1 crime
1970 — 1 education, 2 quality of life
1971 — 1 quality of life, 1 crime, 1 race
1972 — 2 quality of life, 1 crime
1973 — 1 race, 1 crime, 1 politics
1974 — 1 race, 1 crime/gender, 1 education
1975 — 2 quality of life, 1 education,
1976 — 1 race, 1 education, 1 politics
1977 — 1 education, 1 race, 1 politics,
1978 — 1 quality of life, 1 race, 1 education
1979 — 2 race, 1 education
1980 — 1 race, 1 politics, 1 quality of life
1981 — 1 gender, 1 quality of life, 1 politics
1982 — 1 politics, 1 crime, 1 quality of life
1983 — 1 politics, 1 education, 1 quality of life
1984 — 2 quality of life, 1 politics,
1985 — 2 quality of life, 1 politics,
1986 — 1 crime, 1 politics, 1 quality of life
1987 — 2 quality of life, 1 politics
1988 — 3 politics,
1989 — 2 quality of life, 1 politics,
1990 — 2 race, 1 politics,
1991 — 1 quality of life, 1 politics, 1 race
1992 — 2 politics, 1 education
1993 — 2 quality of life, 1 politics
1994 — 2 quality of life, 1 politics
1995 — 2 quality of life, 1 crime,
1996 — 2 politics, 1 quality of life,
1997 — 2 politics, 1 education
1998 — 1 quality of life, 2 politics
1999 — 1 education, 1 politics, 1 quality of life,
2000 — 1 politics, 2 quality of life,
2001 — 2 quality of life, 1 education
2002 — 1 politics, 2 quality of life,
2003 — 2 education, 1 race,
2004 — 2 quality of life

1967

Federal Aide Calls Drugs 'A Middle Class Problem'

Oct. 9, 1967

Language: Ghetto, middle class

Summary/major themes: The New England Director of the Federal Bureau of Drug Abuse Control, Richard Callahan, said drugs are no longer being found in just a few areas of the city but are now in the suburbs. He said "within the next 10 years we'll have another 100 drugs available similar to LSD." Ghetto implies racial segregation and tension.

City Moves to Cut Rents in Future Middle-Income Housing

Feb. 3, 1967

Language: middle class, lower-middle class, slum areas, projects

Summary/major themes: The mayor is proposing the construction of more lower-middle income housing in blighted areas of New York City. Current properties were supposed to go for \$22 a room but space problems led to them being raised to \$35 a month. "The Mayor told the legislators that they should 'discredit the assumption that the solution of housing problems most await the solution to all the other programs that beset the world — in other words, that a solution must await a lessening of defense spending; that it must await an end to the space race.'" (Just love those 1967 concerns). No voices of people affected are included. But it does explain what it means to qualify for middle-income housing: "Middle income housing is open to those who make six to seven times their annual rent, depending on the size of the family. Most of those in middle-income projects make \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year." It also explicitly states the neighborhoods where the construction will take place: Williamsburg and Brownsville in Brooklyn and in the East River area in East Harlem.

White Skins, Dark Skins, Thin Skins

Dec. 3, 1967

Language: all-white neighborhood, high socio-economic community, economically-successful, middle-class Negro,

Summary/major themes: This article includes stories from a variety of black, middle-class Americans living in Queens and Long Island. It notes their professions, public/private school attendance, attractiveness — in some instances, and family dynamic. The article never explained what middle class means, beyond stating that it is "suburban" and in the two previously mentioned borough. It never explains if there are differences between what it means to be white and middle class and black and middle class.

1968

Estimate Board Approves Five Low-Rent Housing Projects Over Middle-Class Neighborhood Protests

Jan. 17, 1968

Language: low-rent development, housing project, ghetto,

Summary/major themes: In this article, middle class people expressed their frustrations at having low income housing built in their neighborhoods. The sentiment that middle class people worked hard for what they had, regardless of their race, was raised as a reason they opposed the construction of this housing. Black people are referred to as "negro" in front of their name, while white people's names are not prefaced with race.

They Are Not So Much Anti-Negro As Pro-Middle Class

March 24, 1968

Language: “higher classes and those below them,” disadvantaged, poor, “culture of poverty,” affluent, middle class, social position, social institutions, conservative, liberal, equality, class-heterogeneous, social change, stratified, hill and flat schools (school integration?), flight to the suburbs, rural life,

Summary/major themes: Much class discussion seems to focus on the shift of racial status in America following the Civil Rights Movement. This article explains the resistance from some middle class people against rapid school integration. This has to do with home prices and neighborhood boundaries, as well as perceived school quality.

1969

Cities Are Left Behind As Middle Class Seeks Breath of Suburban Air

Jan. 6, 1969

Language: ghetto, white middle classes, low cost and public housing, mortgage-interest subsidy

Summary/major themes: Middle class people are departing from cities across the country to the suburbs in pursuit of better schools, less crime and less pollution. They are enforcing zoning laws against low-income housing. As a result, cities are in poor shape due to crime, pollution and a lack of well-paying jobs.

A New Breed of Middle-Class Women Emerging

March 17, 1969

Language: middle class, suburbia, educated house-wife, feminist,

Summary/major themes: This article addresses a change in culture where more women are choosing to work, and how that fits in with their desire to also have children and families. It focuses on the identity of middle class, white women, who, according to a woman professor in the article, have a default title of housewife to fall back on.

How One Middle-Class Family Gets Along in New York: Where it costs more to be middle class than in any U.S. city except Honolulu

Aug. 17, 1969

Language: ghetto, “gets along,” blue collar, white collar, middle class,

Summary/major themes: This story picks apart one family’s daily life in 1969 — their income, lifestyle, grocery shopping habits, political leanings, values, and more. It provides no context for what it means to be middle class or blue collar, but gives this family as an example of both of those things.

Addiction Among Middle Class and Wealthy Is Found On Rise

Dec. 22, 1969

Language: middle class, wealthy, rich, middle-class suburban area, young, affluent,

Summary/major themes: Heroin addiction rehabilitation centers were seeing increases in young, middle class patients. At one center, middle class patients made up 80 percent of the group. The article explores possible reasons why middle class young people are doing more drugs than ever, apparently. One reason is

that their wealthy parents enable them by giving them money or not getting them treatment out of embarrassment.

1970

Top Colleges Fear Costs Will Bar the Middle Class

April 27, 1970

Language: middle class, middle-income, poor, rich, diverse, squeezed out, disadvantaged, polarized, affluent suburbs, suburban, middle class kids, minority-group students, middle-group,

Summary/major themes: Ivy League schools are seeing a drop in applicants for the first time. There is an apparent polarization occurring on campuses, with primarily wealthy students and poor students, supported by scholarships, with a lack of middle class students represented. The middle class is being “squeezed out,” language that is still heard today. The final line, a quote from the admissions dean of Yale, is noteworthy: “Loans and jobs are not the final answer.”

Lawyers Turn to Middle Class, Clients They Admit They Forgot

Aug. 14, 1970

Words used without context/explanation: middle-income, middle-class man or family, rich, poor, middle class, antipoverty legislation, union,

Summary/major themes: Middle class people are uneducated on how to navigate the legal system and do not know when working with a lawyer would be beneficial. Efforts have been made to make lawyers more accessible to the poor, and the wealthy already have access because they can pay the steep lawyer fees.

Straws in the Economic Wind? How the Middle Class Trims Sails

Nov. 29, 1970

Language: middle-class

Summary/major themes: This article explains ways families are cutting back, like not buying new cars and clothes, or not going out to dinner as much. However, it does not offer any insight into why middle class families are feeling the pressure to cut back. It says University of Michigan research shows that the middle class isn't spending as much. But it leaves the question of “Why” unanswered.

1971

Making People Stereotypes

June 28, 1971

Summary/major themes: The middle class is described as the “silent majority,” proud and uncertain. They are the “average” people, “white, lower middle class.” “The Middle Americans” is a photo essay about middle class people, and this is a write-up of that essay. The essay appears to capture a stereotypical “middle class” life — white people doing suburban things like drinking beer and sitting in a salon with hair curlers. Accepting of the stereotype.

Possession of Dangerous Drugs Found a Postscript to Many Routine Arrests in Middle-Class Queens

Nov. 14, 1971

Language: Middle-class borough,

Summary/major themes: More drug offenses are being prosecuted in a Queens courthouse. The writer never states that middle class people are committing drug-related crimes, just that there are more of these crimes being prosecuted in what is considered a middle-class borough.

**WHITES ARE KEY TO HOUSTON VOTE: Middle-Class and Blue-Collar Workers Back Welch
Dec. 9, 1971**

Language: Middle-class, blue-collar, minorities

Summary/major themes: The article analyzes voter turnout in a Houston mayoral election in which Louie Welch won by a margin of 142,000 votes to 130,000. The mayor's aides had said he would be defeated unless white voters turned out. The losing candidate had more minority support, mainly from blacks, Mexican-Americans and teenagers, all grouped together as "minorities."

1972

**Cadman Towers Fights Symbol of Middle-Class Housing Plight
Feb. 20, 1972**

Language: well-to-do, middle class,

Summary/major themes: Rent in the Cadman Towers apartment building in Brooklyn Heights was expected to jump 65 percent. The basic question: can the middle class find housing in New York? These apartments were intended for middle-income people but now may no longer be affordable for them.

**Not All Middle-Class America is in Suburbs
June 11, 1972**

A writer talks about living in Park Slope, saying that 10 or so years ago he was not like anyone in the neighborhood, but now people like him are coming in and beautifying the area. The area now reflects a younger, 70s peace and free-spirit culture. This is distinct from rich white areas and poorer areas of the city.

**JOBS FOR POOR GO TO 'MIDDLE CLASS': Gang Members Also Getting Work for the Summer
July 16, 1972**

The article addresses, without using the words specifically, underemployment and degree inflation. Jobs normally going to poorer people are now going to middle class people. A program director in Harlem said 100 of 2,146 emergency jobs reserved for poor people actually went to middle class families in 1972. The article also mentions the poverty line for a family of four was \$4,000. But, like today, that number is considered a low estimate. Instead, \$6,000 would be a more accurate estimate. The demand put on jobs programs far exceeded the number of jobs available. "Gang members" were putting pressure on the organization to obtain a portion of those jobs.

1973

**Middle Class Whites Still Leaving City
May 29, 1973**

The New York Times looked at school enrollment and birth statistics to determine that blacks and Puerto Ricans would be the majority population in New York City in 12 years. "Whites are continuing to move out of the city in large numbers," and most of those white families are middle class, according to demographers and planners. Manhattan, where middle class housing is being constructed, is the exception to this trend.

Poverty Pockets Said to Erode Many Middle-Class Areas of City

July 8, 1973

Language: "Festered pockets of poverty, financed largely by welfare money..." "eroding a stable middle class and lower middle class," "Pockets of misery in healthy neighborhoods," "situation is greatly aggravated by placing welfare clients in such buildings, some of them addicts, mental cases or otherwise disruptive people," "Welfare hotels," "spread like cancer,"

Summary/major themes: All points raised in this story are very anti-welfare. It describes apartment buildings in good neighborhoods falling into disrepair and then being turned into low income housing. Those tenants then, are responsible for the deterioration of the entire neighborhood. Included the perspective of a woman, possibly the first black person born in the area. She voiced her dissatisfaction with the housing situation and the welfare recipients.

Candidate Calls Middle Class the No. 1 Issue

Oct. 21, 1973

Language: Wants to "save the middle class in this city," "develop opportunities for minorities and the disadvantaged to move into the middle class,"

Summary/major themes: A city council president Galvin said preventing the middle class from fleeing the city for the suburbs is the No. 1 issue facing the council. The city needs to maintain middle class neighborhoods in order to secure the tax base that supports the resources for the underprivileged.

1974

South Shore, Chicago's First Middle-Class Black Section, Fighting Decay

March 3, 1974

Language: "sad harbingers," "droves of middle class white families began to move out," "the odds are long," "sorry pattern that has spelled the downfall of so many urban communities in the United States," "concerned about the decline of the area's public schools," "magnet schools," "jews and blacks are still barred," from the South Shore Country Club,

Summary/major themes: The article explains the history and current status of Chicago's South Shore neighborhood. The question is whether the neighborhood can be "stabilized" as Chicago's first middle-class black neighborhood. A "large institution," could supply that stability, according to a demographic expert. Schools are a big concern for white and black residents. Some families are moving away if they cannot get their child in a private school or magnet school. Residents are torn on whether the community has what it takes to be "a good community."

A Hard Look at Drugs and the Middle-Class Woman: High Expectations (and gender)

Aug. 26, 1974

Language: “prostitutes and other women criminals, women in slums and female flower children turn to drugs,” “middle class women, programmed for interesting jobs, and houses, and husbands in the suburbs may also be popping pills, or shooting drugs,”

Summary/major themes: Women have made major gains — admittance to colleges and the women’s liberation movement — but drugs are rarely talked about. Expresses concern about drug use among the beloved middle class. Theme that drugs can affect anyone, including college educated women. But that these women are more likely than their lower-class counterparts to recover.

COLLEGE AID RISES FOR MIDDLE CLASS: Financial Need to Get Less Stress in Scholarships **Oct. 27, 1974**

Language: “hailed by many as a much-needed response to the pressures of inflation has imposed on middle-class students,” “aroused considerable anxiety, however, among educators working with black and Hispanic students,” “at expense of poor,” “financial squeeze caused by soaring costs of higher education,”

Summary/major themes: New government and college program shave widen definition of financial need for middle class college students. Educators of black and Hispanic students are worried that the focus is shifting from giving aid based on financial need to giving aid based on academic promise. Loan programs being subsidized for families making between \$15,000 and \$30,000 a year. The US Office of Education announced a “liberalized” family contribution schedule.

1975

Middle Class Caught in Economic Storm **Feb. 9, 1975**

Language: “Job losses and spiraling costs are breeding a new group of casualties from the ranks of the previously stable middle class,” “crisis,” “depression,” “assets but no cash,” “getting a job at a lower level,” “overqualified,”

Summary/major themes: In an economic depression, middle class people are experiencing emotional struggles. They are having a hard time adapting to living in a middle class area but not being able to afford things that others around them can. They are having a hard time finding jobs because they are seen as overqualified for the jobs available. Fathers are abandoning families.

Queens College: Passport to the Middle Class **April 28, 1975**

Language: “‘Queens has become the borough of aspirations for the working and lower middle class,’ (Queens College president) ‘Cream of the upwardly mobile,’”

Summary/major themes: Changing demographics, half women, from 90 to 74 percent white. The article describes the culture of Queens College. Most students come from lower middle or working class families, in which parents put an emphasis on education to move up the socioeconomic ladder. It addresses the pros and cons of attending the commuter campus. It highlights that most of the college’s students come from and continue to live in Queens post-graduation.

Housing Costs Found Hurting Middle Class **April 29, 1975**

Language: “Middle-class families priced out of the housing market,” “23 percent more income was required in 1974 than 1973 to buy the average priced house,” according to the Library of Congress.

Summary/major themes: Fewer middle class families are finding themselves able to purchase a home, according to the Library of Congress. By 1974 only 15 percent of families had the \$23,330 annual income to buy a new median-priced home.

1976

Black Middle Class Joining the Exodus to White Suburbia

Jan. 4, 1976

Language: “cozy.... suburb,” “Better schools,” “growing numbers of middle class and black families who find themselves for the first time with the financial ability and the desire to move into predominantly white suburbs,” “move up the ladder economically,” “black flight,”

Summary/major themes: Schools in the city are not adequate, driving the movement of black families to the suburbs. They have the same reasons to move as white families did, but the move can't be compared with “white flight,” because it was not partially racially driven.

College Aid for the Middle Class

April 25, 1976

Language: “applicants in real financial need have an advantage,” “millions of dollars in aid are available to middle and upper-income families too,”

Summary/major themes: This article outlines resources available to middle class high school students looking for financial aid options for college. It mentions that resources for this group of students is expanding and financial aid is not limited to just poor students.

Ford, Vowing Tax Relief, Asserts Carter Hits at Middle-Income Class

Sept. 21, 1976

Language: “middle income families,” “president.... characterized himself as the champion of moderate wage earners,”

Summary/major themes: Ford says Carter is pro raising taxes on the middle class even though the day before Carter said he would not raise taxes on the middle class.

1977

Good College Loan Risks — Middle Class Parents

May 1, 1977

Language: “The very rich can afford to send their kids to college,” “The very poor can qualify for assistance,” “But middle income parents are finding it increasingly difficult,” “To help the middle-income family.” “The problem is not that they don't have the money for higher education... It is that they don't have it in one lump sum

Summary/major themes: The government is not providing financial assistance to families that make \$15,000 a year or more, so colleges are introducing their own loan programs for these families making up to

\$50,000 a year. Harvard and other Ivies were mentioned as offering this, because with any other major purchase like a house, families are able to pay in installments, not all at once.

For Middle-Class Puerto Ricans, The Bias Problem Hasn't Ended

Nov. 23, 1977

Language: “upwardly-mobile Puerto Ricans suffer from the lack of a positive image,” “generation or so removed from their massive migration to New York,” “people overlooked, neglected or abused,” “welfare and drugs,” “sought better housing in stable neighborhoods,”

Summary/major themes: The Times interviewed 10 Puerto Rican families to understand what their life is like. White people see them as abusers of welfare and drugs. The Irish, Italians and Jews are moving out of the neighborhoods when the Puerto Ricans move in.

Ford Urges a \$68 Billion Tax Cut by 1981 as Relief for Middle Incomes

Dec. 21, 1977

1978

Middle Class Thinks Itself Hit Most by Taxes and Inflation

Aug. 1, 1978

Language: “A feeling of outrage,” “I’m not pleased,” “tensely debated political issues of the year: tax reform,” “wasting,” “pinched by rising taxes,” “loudest complaints are made about welfare and other social services,” “Families feel cheated,” “taught that working hard was the key to success,” “rich are not doing that, (paying fair share)”

Summary/major themes: Story focuses on a married couple, a secretary and a teacher, who have a household income in the \$20,000 to \$25,000 range. They feel that married couples who both work are hit the hardest by taxes. This family is presented as a microcosm for the entire middle class. Cites a poll of middle class families (not defined) which reports that a majority feel that the rich do not pay their fair share of taxes. Anger also is voiced against people dependent on welfare who, according to a member of the family quoted, don’t work to earn an income.

THE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS: MAKING IT

Dec. 3, 1978

Language: “While the schism between white and black America is still painfully present, and appears all but irreparable — witness any neighborhood clash in any city over busing, open housing, or low-income projects — the existence of a thriving, mobile black middle class is also a reality.” “blacks who’ve made it, who have it, are saying today that they have more in common than ever with their white counterparts...”

Summary/major themes: Starts out describing a scene on a subway with a black woman leaving work, a white man who looks “tired,” and two “punks” in baggy clothes. When the “punks” try to rob the man, threatening him with a knife, Rachel, the black woman, yells at them for “continuing the stereotype.” Black median income rising. Black enrollment in universities is up 275 percent from 1956 to 1976.

Harvard Fears Its High Tuition Bars the Middle-Class Applicant: ‘Concerned About Competing’

Dec. 17, 1978

Language: “pricing out,” “very rich and the very poor, who would be on scholarships,” “Concerned about competing,” “middle-income families,” “cost squeeze,” “reflecting the increased use of loans to support a major share of student aid.”

Summary/major themes: Administrators at Harvard are worried because students from middle-income families who are admitted to the university are accepting invitations at a 70 percent rate, as compared to an 80 percent rate of student acceptance from upper and lower class families.

1979

2 Black Leaders Differ Over Split Between Poor and Middle Class

May 17, 1979

Language: “existence and importance of a schism between poor and middle-class blacks,” “blacks’ economic status is in bad shape, blaming racism and inflation.” “income gap between the growing black middle class and the black poor,” “‘illusion of black progress’ as ‘one of the most dangerous myths in American life today.’” “Deeper schism projected”

Summary/major themes: Two black officials have differing opinions on whether the growing income gap between the black middle class and the black poor is problematic. The idea that blacks are making progress has been growing in popularity, but one of the officials spoke out saying it is false and dangerous.

Middle-Class Hispanics Heading for Greener Pastures

May 20, 1979

Language: “typical daughters and sons of the restless, ambitious middle class. And they are except in one respect: they are Hispanics.” “America’s newest emerging minority,” “sometimes have difficulties paying their bills. (About the whole group that is moving out of NYC)” “‘upwardly mobile group,’” “The struggle is worth it” “Hispanics had not yet met the same animosity that greeted the first black pioneers in the suburbs.” “no longer in touch with lower-income people in their own ethnic group.”

Summary/major themes: Hispanics, not defined further than that, are moving out of New York City to suburban New Jersey. They have not met with the same animosity that black people did when they made the suburban transition. A result of this trend is that schools now have to have more bilingual educators.

City’s Schools Seek to Attract Middle Class: Mayor Koch’s Concern About Stability Spurs Macchiarola to Act

Oct. 29, 1979

Language: “Mayor Koch’s concern over the stability of New York City’s middle class,” “seeking ways to make public education more attractive to middle class families.” “The problem — by no means confined to white parents — often leads to anguish and confrontation,”

Summary/major themes: The mayor stressed that public schools need to improve to attract more middle class families, but did not expand the \$3 billion budget in order to do so. Koch said the district was getting enough money and would not take funding from police or firefighters to improve schools. The curriculum was being revised after the mayor’s concerns were raised, feeling need to expand gifted education in the 32 local districts. Reluctance to grant a variance for students to study a subject their school doesn’t offer elsewhere if the student is white, because the public school districts are experiencing declining white student enrollment.

1980

Black Middle Class Called Vulnerable: Conference Says Recent Gains Are Periled by Economic Decline and Hostility of Majority

March 30, 1980

Language: “making it,” “upward mobility,” “white-collar blacks,” “spiraling inflation,” public-sector jobs,” “affirmative action,” “President Johnson’s War on Poverty,” “black middle class”

Summary/major themes: While black people’s education levels and job opportunities were increasing, inflation and the end of President Johnson’s anti-poverty programs were leaving black families vulnerable to a decline economically. A sociology professor from the University of Maryland pointed out that black families were only able to maintain their middle-class standing with two adults working, because black people were compensated less for the same level of work as their white counterparts.

Reagan Says His Drive Is Backed by New Coalition of Middle Class

April 9, 1980

Language: “middle-class Americans,” “conservative economic and moral principles,” “Appeals to Middle Class,” “value-oriented voting,” “crossover voting of increasing numbers of blue-collar workers, ethnics, registered Democrats and independents with conservative values,” Reagan said, “threatening the ethical and financial foundations of American family life,”

Summary/major themes: Reagan said he believed he would have support from unconventional groups to support him because he valued middle-class ideals and would support policies for the middle class. This is an example of a politician trying to appeal to the middle-class voter base with promises to restore the value of the dollar and cut taxes.

The Squeeze on the Middle Class

July 13, 1980

Language: “a member of the upwardly mobile middle class,” “middle class path,” “good schools,” “It’s astounding that we have this much money,” he says, “and it’s astounding that it doesn’t buy anything.” “inflated dollar’s loss of buying power,” “dismay and confusion,” “values are distorted,” “madness,” “credit is tightened one month and loosened the next,” “doing all the things my parents said,”

Summary/major themes: This article examined the effect inflation had on middle class families and their buying power. It explains that middle class people are making more money than ever but are not able to afford as much with it. The middle class people are following the path set out for them to achieve more than their parents, but are finding themselves unable to achieve more.

1981

Study Links Toxic Shock Illness to Middle-Class White Families

March 7, 1981

Language: “99 percent of victims were white and most of them were from middle-class families,”

Summary/major themes: This brief explains Toxic Shock Syndrome and that nearly all victims are white and middle class. It provides no context as to why this may be.

Economic Scene: Housing Crisis is Worsening

Aug. 14, 1981

Language: “Middle, low and moderate-income people seeking to rent or purchase shelter will find a housing industry in crisis and unable to meet their needs,” “high inflation,” “higher interest rates,” “Most families are unable to afford new housing, if they are first-time buyers,” “continuing abandonment of low income units in urban areas,” “Federal response continues to be ad hoc,” “absence of consensus about housing issues,”

Summary/major themes: Housing construction slowed down even as the demand for housing grew. But also more middle and lower income families could not afford to purchase housing and needed to rent. The Carter administration proposed that the government would use federal housing programs to promote “stability” in the market, but that policy died because it would require too much funding.

The Economic Notebook: Middle Class on the March

Sept. 22, 1981

Language: “popular army so diverse, so mature and so dominated by middle-class working people,” (of the AFL-CIO), “Equal Rights Amendment,” “important message lay in the diversity,” “blue collar people who voted for him (the president) are upset,”

Summary/major themes: The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations led a march and rally in Washington against President Reagan’s budget cuts and spending on travel for himself and dresses for his wife. The article notes diversity in the crowd with a heavy emphasis on middle class people instead of lower and working class.

1982

NO MORE FREE LUNCH FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS: ECONOMY

Jan. 17, 1982

Language: “America’s future prosperity requires that we vastly increase investment in industrial productivity,” “massive Federal programs for housing and for the retired that primarily benefit the middle class,” “giant deficits that cheat our future — has become the norm,” “a nation, like a family, can provide by its future only by saving a big chunk of its income today,” “instant gratification at the cost of tomorrow’s prosperity,” “chosen to consume, rather than invest,”

Summary/major themes: This article was a criticism of the direction of the national government’s spending, but put into terms that tend to describe individual spending habits. It makes it sound like there has been a fundamental shift away from American values of hard work and saving toward instant gratification.

Heroin Addiction: Problem for Middle Class Also

Feb. 26, 1982

Language: “a growing number of addicts are white-collar professionals,” “‘Heroin use,’ he adds, ‘is cutting right across class lines.’” “Able to avoid detection,” “White, middle-class addicts are better able than poorer users to support their habits, and thus avoid detection,”

Summary/major themes: While the exact statistics were apparently unable to be determined, white, middle-class people were apparently increasingly becoming addicted to heroin. These people — Wall Street brokers and secretaries — were seeking treatment in methadone clinics in secret. Middle class people, according to this article, were better able to hide their addictions because of their money.

Letter to the Editor: Social Security Isn't Just Middle-Class

June 22, 1982

Language: “take issue... that Social Security is primarily a transfer of resources to the middle class,” “poor get smaller benefits, the middle class and the wealthy get larger benefits,”

Summary/major themes: In this letter to the editor, the writer argues against a claim brought up in a previous article that Social Security primarily benefits the middle class. Instead, he says, it benefits people of all classes proportionally to their tax contributions.

1983

Budget Plan Could Shift Aid for the Middle Class

Feb. 7, 1983

Language: “President Reagan’s new budget would cut spending on aid to poor people,” “much greater savings are proposed in programs that also benefit the middle class, such as Social Security, Medicare and Civil Service pensions,” “control the cost of benefits that go to people of all income levels, but especially the middle class.” “middle-income citizens take more responsibility for solving the Government’s fiscal problems,”

Summary/major themes: In this article, President Reagan’s proposed cuts to programs like food stamps, welfare, child nutrition and employment training are explained. The money would then go to programs benefiting all classes. Housing aid and Medicaid spending would increase. Federal employees who retired early would be penalized.

Colleges Offer Financial Aid to Middle Class and Wealthy

Nov. 12, 1983

Language: “significant shift,” “aid programs for middle-income, upper-middle-income and even wealthy students,” “subsidized loan programs” “growing number of scholarships”

Summary/major themes: Colleges began to shift their financial aid opportunities from lower-income students to students of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Funding programs for students attending college became increasingly complex. Scholarships and subsidized loan programs became the foundation on which “entire financial aid programs are being built.”

Middle Class Shrinks as Poverty Engulfs More Families, Two Studies Say

Dec. 11, 1983

Language: “distribution of income... has become more unequal,” “middle class has shrunk as many families have sunk into poverty or near poverty,” “definition of disposable income consists of cash plus food stamps minus taxes, after adjustment for inflation,” “high-income jobs in high-technology industries” “lower-paying service jobs for workers,”

Summary/major themes: Two studies showed that the middle class in America was shrinking as the economy shifted and jobs began to be split between high paying technology jobs and low paying service sector jobs. One researcher asserted that poverty was becoming less of a problem, and some democrats voiced concern over that claim.

1984

IT'S NOT JUST DEMOGRAPHICS: The Disappearance of the Middle Class

Feb. 5, 1984

Language: “middle class really is the social glue that holds society together,” “A middle class household is frequently defined as...” “bipolar income distribution,”

Summary/major themes: This article addresses causes for the split of what was the middle class into the lower and upper classes. The problem, according to the article, was both economic and political, but mostly political. It defines the middle class, which is noteworthy. It negates claims that demographics and the baby boom caused this change. It addresses the new areas of growth in America — the technology sector, which produces high-income jobs and decline of labor-intensive blue collar jobs.

Budget Politics Turn to Middle Class Issues

Dec. 16, 1984

Language: “War on Poverty” replaced with “war on the poor,” “the fairness issue,” “whether Mr. Reagan’s proposals are fair to the middle class,”

Summary/major themes: This article explained Democrats’ concerns about Reagan’s budget policies in terms of how they would affect the middle class. The cuts, known to target the poor, also were outlined to be made to programs like veterans’ health benefits student loans, Medicare and Civil Service pensions which had “middle-income beneficiaries.”

Fewer Said to Hold Jobs at a Middle-Class Wage

May 20, 1984

Language: “more difficult to find and keep jobs... that pay middle class wages,” “eliminating high-paying jobs and replacing them with low-paying ones,”

Summary/major themes: Studies showed that high-paying jobs were being eliminated and lower-paying jobs were being created. Examples of such low-paying jobs were mostly in service industries like restaurants, hotels and medical care. It would take several family members to work in these jobs to support a middle-class lifestyle.

1985

The Middle Class is Alive and Well: Stubborn Demographics

June 23, 1985

Language: “Is the middle class dying?” “loss of relatively well-paying manufacturing jobs,” “Neither these presumptions nor prescriptions are correct,” “Manufacturing...scarcely represents the backbone of the middle class,”

Summary/major themes: In this article Robert Z. Lawrence “a senior fellow with the Brookings Institution,” challenges claims that middle-class manufacturing jobs are in decline. He said that commentators and even “sophisticated analysts” believe that the economy is shifting away from manufacturing toward high-technology and service-sector industries, but this is incorrect. He uses data from an unnamed source to support his claims.

Tax Relief for Middle Class Seen: Rostenkowski Will Push Bill

July 31, 1985

Language: “deadlock over the budget deficit,” “tax revision bill,” “‘There’s something out of kilter,’ the congressman continued, ‘when most middle income families face a 25 percent tax rate under the President’s proposal,’ “Administration has acknowledged that its proposals would save upper-income taxpayers thousands of dollars a year,” “oil and gas drilling, fringe benefits and charitable contributions.”

Summary/major themes: Democratic representative Dan Rostenkowski said President Ronald Reagan’s Federal tax system would be “far too generous” to wealthy Americans. Rostenkowski, chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, said his committee would develop an alternative to “give middle-income working families a greater proportional share of tax relief.”

Bishops Reiterate Concern for Poor but Add Emphasis on Middle Class

Oct. 7, 1985

Language: “American society must alter its values and act more generously toward the poor,” “also strengthened the letter’s concern with problems of the middle class,” “‘working people and middle-class Americans live dangerously close to poverty,’ “Changes in emphasis,”

Summary/major themes: In a letter to be discussed at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, some of the Bishops wrote about growing concern over the poor, working and middle classes in America. They made suggestions to the government, calling for worker training programs, eliminating taxes for those below the poverty level, overhauling the welfare system and removing discriminatory barriers against women and minorities.

1986

Crack Addiction Spreads Among the Middle Class

June 8, 1986

Language: “well-paid adults,” “growing number of people,” “many are people with jobs that pay well,” “upper-middle class, casual drug users,”

Summary/major themes: The crack epidemic also affected middle class professionals. Mostly people who were casual drug users and then switched to cocaine. This, according to the article, is in contrast with the idea that crack was only a problem of the poor and teenagers, not middle class adults.

Key Tax Bill Question: What’s Middle Class?

July 12, 1986

IS THE MIDDLE CLASS DOOMED?

Sept. 7, 1986

1987

More in the Middle Seek ‘Help in a Hurry’

April 26, 1987

Language: “The problems are overwhelming the families,” “struggling to stay afloat on inadequate wages,” “variety of socioeconomic groups,” “Long Island as a region of two worlds, the haves and the have nots,”

Summary/major themes: Middle-class families on Long Island were once immune to mental health problems that came as a result of stress, and which affected the poor. But in 1987, families with incomes of \$34,000 (median), were beginning to experience financial strain causing these problems. And the mental health support systems were not in place to accommodate more demand. “We are seeing middle-class families falling into the cracks; the poorer families have long gone into the hole,” said Paul Patcher, director of community services as the Mental Health Association in Nassau County.

New York Approves Plan to Build 750 Apartments for Middle Class

Nov. 21, 1987

Language: “Mayor Koch scaled back the proposal from 1,000 apartments,” “innovative demonstration of how to build middle income housing,” “contended, in part, that large city subsidies should not be expended on the middle class,” “vehement opposition”

Summary/major themes: The city approved the construction of 750 middle-income apartments. Supporters praised the project as exemplary, while opponents said the city should not be providing middle income housing. The apartments would cost \$110,000 for a two bedroom, with direct subsidies from the city up to \$25,000 each. Opponents said the area for the apartments should be used for new schools instead.

Hiring is Up — To Serve the Middle Class

Dec. 27, 1987

Language: “outcry from middle-income people for better schooling and police protection,” “Americans have been willing to tax themselves heavily for more and better teachers, smaller classes and other improvements,” “Toward the year 2000,” “hiring emphasis is increasingly on the professional public employee,” “Such workers command good salaries,”

Summary/major themes: This article provided a look forward to the last 12-13 years of the century in relation to job prospects and hiring. It predicted growth in “professional public” jobs, mostly for teachers at first, but then a shift would occur and more jobs would be available working with the elderly toward the late 1990s as the baby boomers aged.

1988

Democrats Unveil Ads Aimed at Middle Class Voters: Among the middle-class there is a sense ‘of being squeezed’

Sept. 1, 1988

Language: “Among the middle class, there is a sense of being ‘squeezed,’” “appeal to the economic anxiety of the middle class,” “‘Bringing Prosperity Home,’ (Dukakis’ slogan),” “A ‘Middle-Class Agenda,’”

Summary/major themes: Michael Dukakis announced his presidential campaign. This article explained how his campaign would be geared to the middle class and how it would highlight to middle class voters through television ads how the Republican party was not supporting them.

A Fight to Win the Middle Class: The economic battlefield should belong to Bush, but Dukakis has a potent weapon: voter anxiety about the future

Sept. 4, 1988

Language: “economy that has been free of recessions and soaring prices for the extraordinary stretch of almost six years,” “Incumbents who have had the economy on their side have almost always won,” “both

camps are promoting... frugal government,” “persuading many political experts that middle-class voters believe he offers them something Republicans do not,” “middle class anxiety about the future economy,”

Summary/major themes: This article presented the two presidential slates in terms of their stance on the economy. While Bush should be a frontrunner because the economy was in a stable place, Dukakis presented a strong campaign on the issue because of its perceived importance in the election.

Bush Proposes Saving Plan in Bid for Middle-Class Vote

Sept. 28, 1988

Language: “bolster his appeal among middle class voters,” “Critics question the savings incentive in the plan,” “He wants to give the wealthiest one percent of America 30 thousand dollars on a tax break,” Dukakis said., “need to help low and middle income families,”

Summary/major themes: Vice President Bush proposed a savings plan in an attempt to appeal to middle class voters. However, Dukakis spoke out against the savings plan, saying it would benefit the wealthy more than any other group.

1989

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MIDDLE CLASS

April 23, 1989

Language: “I expected it would be a little down-market from the TV Huxtables,” “a little upscale from Archie Bunker,” “middle has long been this country’s favorite class,” “sociologists have called the ‘middle-class mindedness,’” “Or is middle class just a feeling?” “I feel middle class,”

Summary/major themes: The writer tried to pinpoint what it means to be middle class in New York City. He said he believed it could be found somewhere in Queens. But he outlined that the cost of living is so high, what could be considered middle class by normal standards might not be middle class in the city.

Democrats Seek the Key To the Middle Class

April 30, 1989

Language: “middle class is supposed to rule,” “middle class standard of living — the requirement is an income that can afford a house and a college education,” “programs to help two-earner families find daycare,” “there is no one ‘middle class,’”

Summary/major themes: Gov. James Blanchard in Michigan proposed a plan for parents to pay a deposit that would gain interest in order to ensure their child could attend a state college in the future. The article uses language like “squeezed” to describe the middle class, and the governor’s proposal is an example of how politicians tried to appeal to the middle class voters. The concern was that they were buying votes on the dime of tomorrow’s taxpayers.

Working-Class Families Losing Middle-Class Dreams

Oct. 3, 1989

Language: “all but invisible class,” “secure, often blue-collar jobs,” “Many working-class New Yorkers still long for that life,”

Summary/major themes: This article addressed how stagnating wages were impacting working-class families. A man in one family described how he had been raised to believe in the American dream, but felt

that it was no longer attainable. A professor of urban planning from Columbia University explained how the American dream has as much to do with community services as it does with a person's work ethic.

1990

Missing Middle-Class Black in TV News

May 22, 1990

Language: "impressive evidence that some blacks are making it and making it very well indeed;" "integration ascendent," "disaffection and disarray," "it is not that programs resist showing blacks in a favorable light," "the accomplishments come across as flowers in a world of weeds,"

Summary/major themes: The article addressed a lack of black middle class life portrayed on television and in the tabloids. Positive portrayals of black people, for example in terms of educational achievement, are limited. Most portrayals are of "mayhem." "New York is presented as a bifurcated society without a middle class, the have-plenties in a face off with the have-nothings."

Oversized Taxes for the Middle Class?

April 29, 1990

Language: "proposal by many leading figures in Congress to raise tax rates for the rich, starting with the infamous 'bubble,'" "Tax Reform Act of 1986, enacted simply to punish upper-middle-income taxpayers and reward their wealthier counterparts,"

Summary/major themes: Tax reformers proposed a new system in which lower income people would have a tax rate of 15 percent and upper income people would pay 28 percent. This would eliminate what was 14 marginal tax rates. It also proposed eliminating many tax loopholes available to the wealthy.

Middle-Class Blacks Try to Grip a Ladder While Lending a Hand

Nov. 26, 1990

Language: "Joyce Ford, the daughter of laborers, fled the hand-to-mouth world of Washington's black housing projects and now has amenities of the middle class," "Many are scaling the economic ladder with one hand on the middle rung and the other still outstretched to the relatives who need them," "newly arrived blacks have a loose grasp on prosperity,"

Summary/major themes: This article outlines differences between white and black middle class people. Black people were more likely to have uninsured family members call them for help when they were sick, for example. They also lacked resources available to white people who were more established in the middle class.

1991

More in Middle Class Are Being Squeezed By Industry Shifts

April 28, 1991

Language: "medical expenses and health insurance are now a source of mounting anxiety for millions of middle-class Americans," "'job lock' — fear of changing jobs because of a medical history," "afraid to leave her job or ask for part-time work," "more people are being squeezed financially or abandoned altogether by insurers,"

Summary/major themes: This article described the trend, experienced by middle-class Americans, called “job lock.” That meant that people were choosing to stay in or taking jobs they did not necessarily want because of the health insurance plan provided to them.

New York Taxes Batter Middle Class

July 2, 1991

Language: “The middle class is likely to feel the greatest impact from the \$735 million increase in income and property taxes,” “Businesses will also be hit hard, the smallest ones the worst,” “unwelcome pressure,” “City services at risk”

Summary/major themes: A tax increase in New York City was projected to impact middle-income earners the most. The reporter interviewed middle class people, including one single mother, living in a Harlem brownstone, supporting a family on \$47,000 a year. “People tell me I’m a member of the middle class, but the struggle is so great just to maintain the basics that in one respect I just don’t feel like it,” Ms. Daniels said.

Study Finds Gains for Black Middle Class

Aug. 10, 1991

Language: “blacks remain the most isolated minority in the United States,” “Evidence points to two African-American communities: one of middle-class and affluent blacks who took advantage of the increased opportunities provided by the civil rights movement, the other of poor, largely urban blacks who remain socially and economically isolated from the American mainstream,” said Taynia L. Mann, an author of the report,”

Summary/major themes: Black people were increasingly entering the middle class and becoming “affluent.” The number of affluent black families doubled in the 1980s and “virtually quadrupled” since 1967.

1992

The Middle Class Feels Betrayed, But Maybe Not Enough To Rebel

Jan. 12, 1992

Language: “It is people who have high school diplomas and sometimes some college, family incomes of \$20,000 to \$60,000, a little more in cities like New York and Los Angeles, and in recent years, an equivalent amount of consumer debt,” “They have a house in a suburb, two vehicles, and one or two family members who work full time,” “a living room carpet is a sizable expense,” “Mr. Bush is expected to offer middle-class voters tax breaks”

Summary/major themes: The amount of money households spent on taxes for housing and utilities rose from 20 percent to 26 percent from the start of the 1970s to the late 1980s. The middle class recognized this change in the value of their money, and politicians sought to appeal to them as a result. Dukakis tried to do this in his campaign, but he was too late, according to the article. President Bush proposed a pre-Christmas tax cut to appeal to the middle class.

To the Presidential Hopefuls, The Middle Class Is Royalty

Jan. 11, 1992

Language: “vast group of voters known as ‘middle-class America; is about to be courted with a vengeance as the 1992 Presidential campaign gets under way,” “show their concern for the middle-income American with a family, a house in the suburbs, a sense of economic alarm and a feeling that the politicians don’t care,” “the invocation of “middle-class values” and economic concerns is a standard feature of political campaigns,” ““the middle class,” a loosely defined term based partly on income and partly on attitudes, is the starting point for the Presidential campaign”

Summary/major themes: Last election, Dukakis was too late in his attempt to appeal to middle class voters. He launched a slogan in the last few weeks of the campaign directed at the “vast” middle class, but it did not work. In the 1992 election, candidates were expected to try and appeal to the middle class from the outset.

House Passes a Student-Aid Bill Aimed at Middle-Class Families

March 27, 1992

Language: “ middle class with greater access to educational aid,” “need to distribute more benefits to the middle class, especially in an election year,” “grants that have gone primarily to the poor available to families with incomes up to \$49,000,” “ease the burdens of students facing the average 135 percent rise in college tuitions since 1980,”

Summary/major themes: The House of Representatives passed a bill to provide more financial assistance to middle-class families with college-bound children. A veto was expected to come from the White House. The average college tuition rose 135 percent since 1980. It would make Pell Grants, which formerly had to go to 70 percent of students with families under \$15,000, now more available to middle class students. One in five Pell Grants would now go to middle class students.

1993

Middle-Class Rage: Like in History, Only Different

Feb. 1, 1993

Language: “So when Mr. Phillips talks about the mood of American voters we had better pay attention,” “or the middle class, which he believes to be the engine of great financial empires,” “ No group has been hurt more by rising taxes, declining real income, escalating expenses, a shrinking job market, deteriorating public services, falling home values, growing health costs, weakening safety nets, the loss of savings and the threat of collapsing pension and insurance funds.”

Summary/major themes: Book review. “Boiling Point” by Kevin Phillips. In his book, Phillips examined the feelings and the reasoning for those feelings of middle class people. He described the middle class as negatively impacted by the Reagan and Bush eras, left to deal with rising taxes, declining real income, deteriorating public services and other problems. The decline of the middle class, the reviewer wrote, is not surprising to most people.

My ‘Middle-Class’ Family Lives From Paycheck to Paycheck

April 15, 1993

Language: “Like many in today’s middle class, my parents live each week from paycheck to paycheck,” “My sister and I cannot have paid tuitions for college and graduate school. Thus, as a law student, I mortgage my future every day with accumulating loans.”

Summary/major themes: Letter to the editor. The writer described how her “upper-middle class” parents, who earned \$75,000 annually, could not afford yearly vacations and hadn’t purchased a car since 1973. The

writer urged politicians to analyze how his parents' income was "increasingly modest." He outlines how insurance costs were a drain on his parents as well.

Bradley Asks U.S. to Confront Middle-Class Economic Fears

Oct. 7, 1993

Language: "economic anxieties of middle-class Americans," "insecurity that American workers feel in light of changing economic conditions," "focusing on promising health care coverage for all workers,"

Summary/major themes: Senator Bill Bradley praised President Bill Clinton for his efforts to attain health care for all Americans. The article addressed middle class "anxiety" and "insecurity" because of the economy. Bradley also stressed the importance of the government not intervening in business and the importance of the free market.

1994

Family Struggles to Make Do After Fall from Middle Class

March 11, 1994

Language: "His middle-class status was stamped on the pay stub: \$15.65 an hour," "he quickly learned the market value of a blue-collar worker with a strong back and a good work ethic but few special skills: about \$5 an hour," "The solid, working-class middle ground, where the Millers once stood, has meanwhile grown narrow -- and slippery,"

Summary/major themes: The article told the story of a middle class family from Overland Park, Kan., in the aftermath of a job loss. The father lost a unionized sheet metal worker job and worked in a McDonald's for \$5 an hour and drove a bus. The mother worked at a Toys 'R' Us for \$5.95 an hour. The city, according to the article, was becoming polarized with high-paying jobs and low-paying jobs with little middle- and working-class jobs in between. The father talked about pride and continued to describe his family as middle class despite making a "lower class income."

The Fracturing of the Middle Class

Aug. 31, 1994

Link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/31/opinion/the-fracturing-of-the-middle-class.html>

Language: "old middle class into three new groups: an underclass largely trapped in center cities, increasingly isolated from the core economy; an overclass, those in a position to ride the waves of change; and in between, the largest group, an anxious class, most of whom hold jobs but are justifiably uneasy about their own standing and fearful for their children's futures,"

Summary/major themes: The middle class began to be further divided based on education and skills. The article compared those with a high school diploma and a college diploma, both, usually, members of the middle class. The person with the college diploma was much less likely to experience a cut in health insurance benefits and also less likely to experience joblessness.

Middle-Class War

Dec. 22, 1994

Language: "Bill Clinton's campaign promise of a 'middle-class tax cut' to dress up a necessary placation of the overtaxed as a "Middle-Class Bill of Rights,"

“Higher education is a privilege, not a right, best to be earned by high-school scholarship merit and willingness to work or borrow,” “Here's the current state of class warfare. To be a member of the Lower Class is to be a helpless victim of an unfair system, or a lazy bum. To be a member of the Middle Class is to be a wonderful mainstreamer, justly resentful of being put upon by the leeches below and top-hatted bloodsuckers above. To be a member of the Upper Class is to be selfish and sinful.”

Summary/analysis: The writer criticized the language used to describe the three dominant American classes. Why should the lower class be categorized as lazy bums, the middle class as the wonderful mainstreamer or the upper class as selfish and sinful? This provided an interesting take on the perceptions of the American class system.

1995

Talk of Middle-Class Tax Cut Makes Wall St. Uneasy

Jan. 3, 1995

Language: “vie for the hearts and minds of the middle class with promises of tax relief,” “But without specific spending cuts to compensate for any loss in revenue, such a package could spook the markets,” “In addition to the capital gains cut, the proposal to expand I.R.A.'s and to create a new ‘American dream account’ would have a “dramatic, positive effect on the markets, both stocks and bonds,”

Summary/analysis: This article took a look at what could happen economically if the Republicans or Democrats’ proposed tax relief aimed at the middle class could have. Usually such tax cuts are made to stimulate the economy by increasing individuals’ spending, but that was not needed at the time because the Federal Reserve had raised interest rates six times in 1994.

The Middle Class Rediscovered Heroin: Its Improved Image Suits the 90s and Entices More Professionals

Aug. 14, 1995

Middle Class Works Overtime to Stay Afloat

Aug. 20, 1995

Language: “Mr. Frum neglects to mention that individual incomes have declined since 1973 so that the only way many households have been able to remain in the middle class has been by increasing the hours of work per household,” “middle-class households with the same real income are not nearly as well off as their counterparts a generation ago,”

Summary/major themes: In this letter to the editor, the writer negates claims made by David Frum of the Manhattan Institute that “the only change has been the shift of proportion of the population from the middle class to the wealthy.” The writer said that middle class people are having to work longer hours to support themselves and as a result have to spend more on work-related expenses, like child care. As a result they are not as well off as they were a decade ago, even taking inflation into consideration.

1996

Dole’s Capital-Gains Tax Plan Aims to Woo the Middle Class

Aug. 22, 1996

Language: “As the self-proclaimed candidate of a financially squeezed middle class, Bob Dole,” “very core of the American workforce -- the small, growing businesses,” “Mr. Dole wants to cut income-tax rates by 15 percent,” “Republicans argue that a capital-gains cut would pump up the economy, unleashing a burst of entrepreneurial energy,”

Summary/major themes: Bob Dole and Republicans were calling for income tax rates to be cut by 15 percent, hoping it would result in energy to stimulate business entrepreneurship and improve the economy.

New Mastercard is Aimed at Middle-Class Borrowers: It will try to dent American Express base Dec. 10, 1996

Language: “moves to lure middle class borrowers,” “credit line for those who want to pay their balances over time,” “spend more than normal credit limits”

Summary/major themes: Visa, Mastercard and American Express were squabbling in efforts to dominate the travel-oriented credit card market. These cards had higher limits than normal credit cards.

Will Rent Reform Hurt or Help Middle Class?

Dec. 14, 1996

Language: “Can a newspaper purporting to have New York City's interest at heart really believe (editorial, Dec. 8) that the city will be better off if the borough of Manhattan consists of the very rich and the very poor? The middle class has always provided stability to New York. With rent deregulation, we will have no choice but to flee the city.”

Summary/major themes: Entire body of letter from Gloria Zicht posted above.

1997

Welfare for the Middle Class: In Subsidized Apartments Illegal Sublets and Bed-and-Breakfasts March 2, 1997

Language: “welfare cheats,’ we don’t think of middle-class people ripping off New York City,” “provide middle class rentals... in housing starved New York City,” “Applicants now wait 10 to 12 years for one of our apartments,” “illegal structural changes,” “They rent it out and clear a handsome profit,”

Summary/major themes: A manager of a middle-income apartment complex in New York City described some of the problems that he had to deal with. He explained that the two-bedroom apartments rented for \$900 each, and the waitlist for one of those units would take 10 to 12 years to get through. He said some people would make illegal changes to the structure of their apartments and others would move in together in one unit and rent out the other one for a profit.

Clinton Rejects GOP Tax Cuts as Unfair to Middle Class

June 11, 1997

Language: “President Clinton today rejected the Republican blueprint for apportioning proposed Federal tax cuts, saying it would shortchange the middle class,” “The Republican plan ‘does not meet the standards of fairness to families and promotion of education,’ Mr. Clinton said.” “Mr. Archer is facing a torrent of criticism from Democrats who say his plan would be unfair to many moderate-income families,” “‘To protect middle-income taxpayers,’ Mr. Archer said, ‘I will strongly oppose any effort to take money away from the taxpaying public, notably parents with teen-age children, so people who pay no taxes can receive a government check.’”

Summary/major themes: Republicans and Democrats were debating a tax cut proposal that both groups would find suitable. Republican Rep. Bill Archer proposed the plan as chair of the Ways and Means Committee. Democrats said the plan would “deny some families with low tax bills the full benefit of credits that higher-income families would enjoy.”

Middle Class Education

Dec. 24, 1997

Language: “Better Mr. Bruno look to plug a wallet-drainer that affects thousands of college students and middle-income parents: skyrocketing public college tuition costs,” “New York public tuition costs have risen by more than 150 percent in the last decade,”

Summary/major themes: Letter to the editor by Michael Livermore, chairman of the New York Public Interest Research Group. In his letter, Livermore said the cost of public college tuition in New York is too high and rising, while financial aid resources are being cut.

1998

Middle Class Inequality

March 5, 1998

'97 Middle-Class Tax Relief Benefits Wealthy First

April 5, 1998

Language: “President Clinton signed the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, praising it as a milestone that focused most of its benefits on the middle class through a \$500 child tax credit, education tax breaks and the new Roth individual retirement accounts,” “only 1 in 17 poor and middle-class taxpayers will enjoy any tax relief,” “The cut in the capital gains rate means that the wealthiest 1 percent of taxpayers will enjoy \$1,189 of tax benefits in 1997 for each dollar of tax relief enjoyed by the bottom 80 percent of Americans,”

Summary/major themes: This article outlined how the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, aimed to benefit middle class taxpayers, did not help those taxpayers in 1997 because the benefits had not yet taken effect. They took effect in 1998. This was 10 days before Tax Day. But Republican Sen. William V. Roth’s spokeswoman said the middle class would receive a bulk of the cuts in 1998.

The Middle Class: Winning in Politics, Losing in Life

July 19, 1998

Link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1998/07/19/weekinreview/ideas-trends-bottom-s-up-the-middle-class-winning-in-politics-losing-in-life.html>

Language: “THE great American middle class. Politicians of the left and right court it. Policies, liberal and conservative, are proclaimed on its behalf,” “Most voters see themselves as members of the middle class,” “But for all its mythic power, the middle class is finishing last in the race for improvement in the current economic boom,” “Half of the so-called middle class tax cuts enacted last year went to people earning more than \$93,000,”

Summary/major themes: The middle class was increasingly being courted by politicians, but was not seeing the benefits of the promises made to it. Half of the tax cuts, the article points out, were said to benefit middle class people, but actually benefitted people earning more than \$93,000 annually. The median household income in 1998 was \$40,000.

1999

Responding to Middle Class, Some Colleges Trim Tuition: Not a trend, but 2 states blaze trail

Feb. 3, 1999

Language: “The great majority of colleges and universities have been raising their costs even faster than inflation for at least two decades. But a handful of schools say they feel the pain of middle-class and working-class parents and have responded,” “These colleges and universities are reacting as they see some financially hard-pressed parents and their children increasingly shying away from relatively expensive private colleges,”

Summary/major themes: In a reaction to increasing number of middle class students choosing to attend less-expensive schools or not going attending a university altogether, some schools began to cut tuition around 1999. It wasn't yet a trend, according to the article, but schools like Marlboro College, Muskingum College, and state universities in Massachusetts and California.

Republican Senator Urges Income Tax Cut to Aid Middle Class

July 10, 1999

Language: “Seeking to give a modest break to middle-class taxpayers as the budget surplus swells,” “bill would also include expansions of the Individual Retirement Account and 401(k) retirement savings programs, a break for married couples and a variety of proposals for health, education and child care,”

Summary/major themes: Republican Sen. William V. Roth proposed a less partisan tax cut bill alternative to Republican Rep. Bill Archer's. The cut would mean a \$450 reduction in taxes for a family of four with an annual income of \$55,000. Roth's proposal was geared more to the middle class, whereas Archer's proposed cuts to all incomes.

The American Middle, Just Getting By: Where figures and feelings don't match the American middle

Aug. 1, 1999

Language: “Their family income of \$49,700 puts them, statistically, in the heart of the American middle class. But while Madeira would be an ideal setting for a movie about a middle-class family, the Joneses struggle to feel that they belong,” “The robust economy of the last three years has lifted their family fortunes,” “Four middle-income families interviewed at length for this article say they do not think of themselves as middle-income,”

Summary/major themes: Families considered middle-income on paper felt that they were struggling to get by, and not just in cities known to be expensive. The Jones family interviewed lived in Cincinnati. Mr. Jones mowed lawns on the side to earn extra income and Mrs. Jones worked part-time as a bookkeeper to assist the family.

2000

GORE OFFERS VISION OF BETTER TIMES FOR MIDDLE CLASS: Issues economic goals, Vice President shifts emphasis from 'working families'

Sept. 7, 2000

Language: “painting an image of a prosperous middle class that enjoys higher incomes, with more home ownership, more high-tech jobs and more people going to college,” “The speech reflected a shift in language

and approach for Mr. Gore, who has in recent days replaced the "working families" he courted so assiduously during the Democratic National Convention last month with "middle-class" families," "The economic blueprint that Mr. Gore offered today is a road map of middle-class life,"

Summary/major themes: Al Gore shifted his language in speeches, focusing more on saying "middle class" and less on "working class." He proposed a "book-length plan that hinges on optimistic fiscal forecasts," and spoke of an idealistic middle-class lifestyle and the desire to make that more attainable.

Working Families Strain to Live Middle-Class Life

Sept. 10, 2000

Language: "he pointed a finger -- unintentionally perhaps -- at a central fact of American life: most of the nation's 72 million families feel they cannot make ends meet," "No one argues that middle-income families cannot put food on the table, pay the mortgage, own a car or two, take a modest vacation,"

Summary/major themes: Returns to the Jones family from Cincinnati from a previous article and analyzes their monthly spending habits and when they dip into savings, like when Mrs. Jones splurged on snack foods for lunches at Sam's Club one day. Gore shifted his rhetoric and "unintentionally perhaps," exposed how 72 percent of American families cannot make ends meet. The traits of the middle class have shifted from taking vacations and buying cars to being able to afford clothing and food.

Calculating One Kind of Middle Class

Oct. 29, 2000

Language: "COURTING the middle class, as presidential candidates are wont to do, requires no great political calculus: most Americans -- nearly 70 percent by one count -- reckon that the siren song is directed at them," "No official definition exists," "it may be surprising to learn that this middle class, the mathematical middle, isn't quite so well-heeled as the middle class Vice President Al Gore and Gov. George Bush are romancing."

Summary/major themes: Most Americans thought of themselves as middle class, and as a result the presidential candidates worked to romanticize the middle class. However, no definition for actually calculating what is middle class existed. The Times took a quick look at class based on employment, education, the home, the household, health care and finances.

2001

Auditing the Poor

Feb. 19, 2001

Language: "During his campaign, President Bush kept promising to remove the "toll booth on the road to the middle class" by easing taxes and other burdens on the poor," "For taxpayers who make more than \$100,000, audits have dropped from 9 in 100 in 1988 to less than 1 in 100 last year. Meanwhile, almost half of all the agency's audits -- 44 percent -- involve returns filed by the working poor who apply for the earned-income tax credit, the most significant government program for helping people out of poverty," "Congress is largely responsible for the erosion in the agency's ability to audit returns and for the distortion in priorities,"

Summary/major themes: The writer suggests that President George W. Bush should address why the IRS pays a disproportionate amount of attention to auditing the working poor over auditing the rich.

Negotiations Under Way On School Site: Parents Have Sought Tougher Academics

June 9, 2001

Language: “after a two-year campaign by middle-class parents who say the needs of their children for an academically rigorous neighborhood high school are not being met, city officials said yesterday,” “while a return of the middle class to public schools has rejuvenated many elementary and middle schools, high schools have not kept pace,”

Summary/major themes: The New York City Board of Education was negotiating to lease a building for a new high school in the city after parents raised concerns that their children were not receiving a challenging high school education. There were questions about whether the site would be acceptable. Parents felt that elementary and middle school education was improving but not high school.

In 90's Economy, Middle Class Stayed Put, Analysis Suggests

Aug. 31, 2001

Language: “The booming late 1990's appear to have left the middle class in the New York region and California no better off than it was a decade before,” “The poor got a little poorer, the rich got a lot richer and the large group in the middle emerged slightly worse off than when the decade began,” “the gap between rich and poor throughout the country had inched wider during the 1990's,” “There is a worsening of income inequality,” Professor Beveridge said. “And in New York State, the middle class has not kept up. The poor have treaded water, more or less. The well-off have made gains. So you have this squeeze in the middle -- people like cops, firemen, people making under \$80,000 a year.”

Summary/major themes: There was a growing recognition that income inequality grew in the 1990s, leaving the poor worse-off, the rich better-off, and the middle class slightly worse-off as well.

2002

Study Says Middle Class to Lose Much of Bush Tax Cut's Benefit

Sept. 19, 2002

Language: “Nearly all middle- and upper-middle-class families will lose some of the income tax cuts scheduled over the next eight years,” “The additional burden will fall largely on families with incomes of \$75,000 to \$500,000,” “Indeed, virtually all taxpayers earning \$100,000 to \$500,000 will fall under its sway,”

Summary/major themes: Middle class earners will begin to be pushed off the regular income tax system and onto the alternative income tax system. This would result in an additional burden, and a tax expert under Reagan and Clinton said it indicated that a “class tax” was becoming a “mass tax.”

From Middle Class to the Shelter Door: In a Trend, New Yorkers Face Poverty After Last Unemployment Check

Nov. 17, 2002

Language: “They have run through their \$12,000 or so in savings. They have borrowed to the limit on their credit cards, another \$12,000. And in June, Mr. Nardulli's extended unemployment insurance ran out,” “people whose comfortable lives have abruptly unraveled because of the recession and the economic aftereffects of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001,” “unemployment insurance, which has traditionally been a safety net of the middle class, as public assistance has been for the poor,”

Summary/major themes: Middle class families are finding themselves running out of unemployment and unsure of where to turn next. The percentage of families who have reached the end of their unemployment benefits is at its highest since in 20 years.

Problem of Lost Health Benefits is Reaching Into the Middle Class

Nov. 25, 2002

Language: “Once thought to be a problem chiefly of the poor and the unemployed, the health care crisis is spreading up the income ladder and deep into the ranks of those with full-time jobs,” “1.4 million Americans lost their health insurance last year, an increase largely attributed to the economic slowdown and resulting rise in unemployment,” “The problem has long been acute among minorities, immigrants, part-time workers and employees in low-wage service jobs,”

Summary/major themes: Job losses in high technology and telecommunication sectors meant a shift in a lack of health care from just the lower classes to the middle class. Thirty million American families lacked health care coverage in 2002.

2003

Regents Gap Persists for Middle-Class and Poorer Schools

April 13, 2003

Language: “illustrate the gap between Long Island's middle- and upper-middle-class school districts and those poorer districts that have a significant number of high-need and minority students,”

Summary/major themes: Students from lower class families graduated at lower rates than students from middle class families. Long Island had higher graduation rates than districts in poorer areas of the city.

Blacks Lose Better Jobs Faster as Middle-Class Work Drops: Recessions Hurt Blacks More

July 12, 2003

Language: “rising at a faster pace than in any similar period since the mid-1970's,” “Nearly 2.6 million jobs have disappeared over all during the last 28 months,” “jobless black Americans have been unusually persistent about staying in the labor force,”

Summary/major themes: Most of the job loss experienced by black workers has been in manufacturing. Part of the explanation for the high unemployment rate is that blacks have been persistent about staying in the labor force, despite not being able to find work.

Top Colleges, With Middle-Class Aid Seekers in Mind, Alter How They Count Assets

July 27, 2003

Language: “more than two dozen of the nation's most selective universities have started looking at home equity in a new light, a change that could significantly benefit middle-income families,” “No longer will the colleges count the market value of a home as if it were a more liquid asset,” “families that are house rich and cash poor. However small their incomes, their homes could essentially be held against them,” “expect families to contribute as much as 5 percent of their equity toward an education,”

Summary/major themes: Families had been expected to count their homes as they would liquid assets when conveying their wealth to colleges for financial aid. This was problematic for families who are “house rich and cash poor.” Schools like “Stanford and Yale, the Universities of Chicago and Pennsylvania,

Columbia and Cornell, Williams and Wesleyan” will continue to consider homes an asset and expect families to contribute “as much as 5 percent of their equity toward an education.”

2004

Helping the Middle Class Buy Homes

Oct. 17, 2004

Language: “city-run lottery for middle-class New Yorkers under the New Housing Opportunities Program, known as New-HOP,” “As housing prices climb, more middle-class New Yorkers need help buying their first home,” “The city can hardly keep up with the demand,” “Rather than face that challenge, and all the paperwork that goes along with it, most middle-class home buyers resort to loan options.”

Summary/major themes: Housing assistance previously provided to just people living below the poverty level were expanded and adapted for the middle class. More New Yorkers needed assistance in buying a home, and the city had trouble keeping up with demand. The article defines the segment of the population it refers to based on income.

Economic Squeeze Plaguing Middle-Class Families

Aug. 28, 2004

Language: “it is the middle-class squeeze -- rising college tuition and soaring health care premiums at a time when wages are stagnant and job creation is sluggish -- that may be the sleeper economic issue of the presidential campaign,” “and remembers getting 'about \$400 a kid' in the Bush tax cut, but she said it still feels like the family budget is shrinking,” “even solid partisans are troubled by the tremors at the edge of middle-class life,”

Summary/major themes: In a presidential election year, the economy is considered the number one issue for many middle class people. It cites low inflation and record home ownership as signs of strength in the economy, but says that many middle class people do not feel economically secure and are one or two bills away from falling behind.