Surely, the centerpiece of the year 1976 was the bicentennial celebration of our nation’s birth. We saw a grand procession of tall ships sailing into New York Harbor and countless other celebrations, elaborate and simple, taking place in big cities, small towns, and citizens’ backyards throughout the United States.

July was notable for other reasons, as well. In a coda to twenty years of brutal civil war, North and South Vietnam were officially united as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, with its capital in Hanoi, on July 2; on the following day, the Supreme Court restored the death penalty as a constitutionally acceptable form of punishment. Also in July, some 180 veterans attending an American Legion convention at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia were felled by a mysterious form of pneumonia that killed at least 29 of them; the ailment later came to be known as Legionnaires’ Disease.

Elsewhere, other events more quietly took place in 1976 that, in a different way, were perhaps as revolutionary as those heralded by the signing of the Declaration of Independence two centuries before: In a California garage, two college dropouts named Stephen Wozniak and Steven Jobs started a company called Apple Computer; in Atlanta, Ted Turner established WTBS, the first television station to beam its signal via satellite to homes nationwide; and somewhere, likely in Tennessee, Alex Haley put the finishing touches on a book called Roots.

— Lisa Ferraro Parmée

**We Hold These Truths to Be Self-Evident**

*Question:* Looking at America in our bicentennial year, how much do you think we have succeeded over these 200 years in achieving the ideals for which this country was founded, as you understand them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>A fair amount</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>None at all</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**I Love a Parade**

*Question:* In terms of what you saw and heard of the bicentennial celebration on the Fourth of July, did you find it very exciting, quite interesting, a little dull, very disappointing, or didn’t you pay much attention to it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quite interesting</th>
<th>A little dull/Very disappointing</th>
<th>Did not pay attention</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**The Next 200 Years**

*Question:* How much confidence do you have in the future of the United States: quite a lot, some, very little, or none at all?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Very little/None at all</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Survey by the Gallup Organization, February 27-March 1, 1976.
Much Ado About Nothing

Question: There has been a lot of talk about the possibility this winter of a swine flu epidemic like the one that killed so many people in 1918. The government has set up a program for mass inoculations for the public against swine flu to be financed out of tax revenues. Do you think you personally will get an inoculation against swine flu this fall or not?


Just Talk

Question: Now let me read you some statements that have been made about Jimmy Carter, the 1976 Democratic candidate for President. For each one, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree... He was wrong to have talked about sex the way he did to Playboy magazine.

Note: Asked of likely voters.

Putting the “Me” in Team

Question: Let me read you some statements that some people have made about this new practice of baseball players being able to sell themselves to other teams. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree... By selling themselves to other clubs, players show they are more interested in money than in the game of baseball.

Note: Asked of baseball fans.

Tale as Old as Time

Question: Are you personally shocked by the latest scandals about the sex life of some members of Congress—or do you feel that this kind of thing has been going on for a long time and there's nothing that's new or different about it?

Note: Asked of registered voters.

The “Me” Generation

Question: What role does each of the following values play in your life—is it very important to you, fairly important to you, or not very important to you...?

...making a contribution to society

...fulfilling one's self as a person

Note: Asked of adults from families with children under 13 years of age.
Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for General Mills, December 1976.