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Stressful leisure

A Gallup poll last year found that 44 percent of Americans consider themselves to be workaholics | *Timothy Lamer*

It has become axiomatic that the United States is, in the words of CIO magazine, "a nation of stressed-out workaholics." A Gallup poll last year found that 44 percent of Americans consider themselves to be workaholics. Advertisers have cashed in on the idea, with commercials for one theme park featuring fictional undertakers who thank Americans for working themselves into early graves. The concept of the "overworked American" has long been a staple of political and cultural discussion in Western Europe also.

But what if it's not actually true? A study this spring from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and the University of Chicago shows that the conventional wisdom about Americans and work is not only wrong, it is spectacularly wrong. Most Americans simply do not work the long, grueling hours attributed to them by popular lore.

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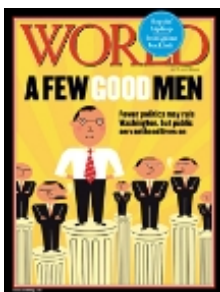
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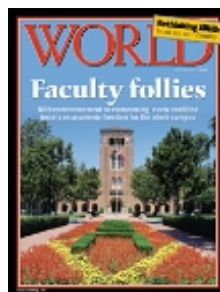
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