
Man of Many Sweaters, Cliff Huxtable is America's Favorite TV Dad

Ward Cleaver and Jim Anderson Round out Top Three Dads

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – June 16, 2009 – Whether it was always having time for a game of catch or being able to solve big problems in just 30 minutes, dads from television shows may have triggered occasional thoughts of, "wow, why isn't my dad like that?" The top dad that Americans would like to have had when they were growing up brings back memories of sweaters, lots of sweaters. Dr. Cliff Huxtable of *The Cosby Show* tops the list. Coming in at number two is the Beaver's dad, Ward Cleaver of *Leave it to Beaver*, followed by Jim Anderson of *Father Knows Best* at number three on the list. Opie's dad, Andy Taylor of *The Andy Griffith Show* is in at number four while David and Ricky's dad, Ozzie Nelson of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* rounds out the top five.

These are some of the results from The Harris Poll, a new study of 2,681 U.S. adults surveyed online between May 11 and 18, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

Looking further into the list, it's a story of a man named Mike Brady of *The Brady Bunch* who is at number six while the Fonz's favorite dad, Howard "Mr. C" Cunningham of *Happy Days* is at number seven. Even while tilling fields and settling western lands, "Pa" Charles Ingalls of *Little House on the Prairie* had time for Half-pint, so he's in at number eight while another Western icon, Ben Cartwright of *Bonanza* is at number nine. In at number ten is the accident prone Tim Taylor of *Tool Time* and *Home Improvement*.

Diving a bit deeper on the list of favorite TV dads, at number 11 is D.J.'s, Stephanie's and Michelle's dad, Danny Tanner of *Full House* and the father-in-law who gave Meathead problems, Archie Bunker of *All in the Family* is at number 12. Rounding out the top fifteen are Steve Douglas of *My Three Sons* at number 13, then in a tie for the 14th spot, Homer Simpson of *The Simpsons* and Al Bundy of *Married with Children*.

Favorites Among Different Groups

Normally, different groups all have their own favorite. With television dads, this isn't the case as only one group (Matures, those aged 64 and older) did not pick Cliff Huxtable as their favorite TV dad; for Matures it is Jim Anderson. Now, for second favorite there are definitely differences, especially in generation. For Matures, Cliff Huxtable is their second favorite while for Baby Boomers (those aged 45-63) it is Ward Cleaver. Gen Xers (those aged 33-44) pick Mike Brady and Echo Boomers (those aged 18-32) say Danny Tanner is their second favorite television dad.

So What?

Maybe it isn't a surprise to some due to the number of crime shows, reality shows and competitions on television today, but there is only one television dad on the list that is currently on prime-time television, Homer Simpson. While reruns and fond memories bring these other television dads to mind, the next generation may not have the same memories of watching prime-time TV and watching a sitcom father sit down 26 minutes

into the show and solve the episode’s problems. Of the top 15 television dads, seven of them are from shows from the 1950s or 1960s and 2 were set in the 1950s or earlier. Maybe it is the economic crisis or just a desire for the days of old, but it seems when picking their favorites, Americans are looking back to simpler times and maybe even happier times.

**TABLE 1
FAVORITE TV DAD**

“Thinking of television fathers, who would you most like to have had as a dad when you were growing up?”

Unprompted responses

Base: All adults

	2009
Cliff Huxtable, <i>The Cosby Show</i>	1
Ward Cleaver, <i>Leave it to Beaver</i>	2
Jim Anderson, <i>Father Knows Best</i>	3
Andy Taylor, <i>The Andy Griffith Show</i>	4
Ozzie Nelson, <i>The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet</i>	5
Mike Brady, <i>The Brady Bunch</i>	6
Howard Cunningham, <i>Happy Days</i>	7
Charles Ingalls, <i>Little House on the Prairie</i>	8
Ben Cartwright, <i>Bonanza</i>	9
Tim Taylor, <i>Home Improvement</i>	10
Danny Tanner, <i>Full House</i>	11
Archie Bunker, <i>All in the Family</i>	12
Steve Douglas, <i>My Three Sons</i>	13
Homer Simpson, <i>The Simpsons</i>	=14
Al Bundy, <i>Married with Children</i>	=14

“=” prior to a number indicates a tie

**TABLE 2
TOP TWO FAVORITE DADS AMONG DIFFERENT GROUPS**

Group	Top Two Favorite TV Dads
Men	Cliff Huxtable, Ward Cleaver
Women	Cliff Huxtable, Jim Anderson
White	Cliff Huxtable, Ward Cleaver
African American	Cliff Huxtable, Andy Taylor
Hispanic	Cliff Huxtable, Ward Cleaver
Echo Boomers (18-31)	Cliff Huxtable, Danny Tanner
Gen X (32-43)	Cliff Huxtable, Mike Brady
Baby Boomers (44-62)	Cliff Huxtable, Ward Cleaver
Matures (63+)	Jim Anderson, Cliff Huxtable
Republicans	Cliff Huxtable, Ward Cleaver
Democrats	Cliff Huxtable, Jim Anderson
Independents	Cliff Huxtable, Andy Taylor

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States May 11 and 18, 2009, among 2,681 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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