by {ga=abeveridge}
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More than two months after the end of the three-day New York City transit strike , both the attention and the tension have dimmed. But there is still no settlement in place, and indeed some transit workers have signed a
petition to vote again
on the contract that had been rejected on January 20th by a mere seven votes.

It would be difficult to say with whom the majority of New York bus and subway riders sided, the transit workers or the management of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. It is a safe bet to say that during the inconvenience of the strike itself, most commuters had little polite to say about either of them.

Since people tend to sympathize with those who seem similar, it is worth looking at the ways in which transit workers resemble, and differ from, transit riders.

Transit Riders

New York City is one of the few places in the United States in which only a minority of people rely on the automobile to get to work. Nationwide, 86 percent of people who live in or near central cities commute by car. In New York City, that number is about 33 percent.

Table 1 offers a breakdown:

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Table 1. Means of Getting To Work

	U.S Workers in Areas with Central Cities	All Workers in NYC	Public Transit Workers
Auto, truck, or van	85.90%	33.41%	48.37%
Motorcycle	0.13%	0.03%	0.00%
Bus or trolley bus	3.55%	11.88%	9.97%
Streetcar or trolley car	0.09%	0.16%	0.13%
Subway or elevated	2.49%	32.85%	31.61%
Railroad	0.84%	7.73%	4.97%
Taxicab	0.19%	1.42%	0.22%
Ferryboat	0.05%	0.43%	0.72%
Bicycle	0.46%	0.39%	0.26%
Walked only	2.88%	8.75%	3.14%
Other	0.68%	0.41%	0.21%
Worked at home	2.76%	2.53%	0.41%

TABLE 3. Characteristics of Full-Time Workers and Means of Getting to Work

	Drive or Ride Automobile	Bus	Subway	Commuter Rail	Other Mode (Includes Walking)	Work At Home
% Male	64.4	42.0	52.0	65.7	52.5	56.6
Median Age	41	40	36	40	39	43
% White	59.6	51.8	48.6	78.8	60.8	68.4
% African American	19.1	25.8	23.4	9.6	11.8	13.0
% Asian	9.8	9.0	12.0	7.6	12.8	7.9
% Hispanic	16.5	20.0	22.5	6.5	19.7	15.7
% Born in United States	62.3	61.5	56.5	79.5	59.9	63.4
% Married, spouse present	62.1	44.7	38.7	68.6	40.3	43.7
% Owner Occupied	63.9	43.4	30.9	78.2	28.4	38.9
% Hi School Grad	88.2	85.3	85.4	96.8	83.7	87.4
% College Grad	38.5	37.5	43.9	66.1	48.9	55.0
Median Personal Income	$40,000	$33,300	$33,730	$62,000	$35,500	$35,000
Median Houshold Income	$76,540	$65,000	$62,000	$112,000	$64,100	$69,500

Transit Workers

Public transit workers make a median income that is more than the public they service. Instead of $34,000, they earn a median income of $47,000.

There are other differences as well. A larger fraction of transit workers are male and black than the public at large. They are also less likely to be educated, are as a group older than New Yorkers as a whole, and are more likely to own their own homes and live in married-couple households. Despite their relative lack of education, the arduous nature of transit work coupled with their unionized power has led them to a relatively high income.

TABLE 2. Characteristics of NYC Transit Workers and Other Workers

	Transit Workers		Other NYC Workers
	Public	Private	
% Male	83.2	73.8	56.5%
Median Age	44	43	40
% White	40.7	46.1	57.1%
% African American	42.1	36.2	19.6%
% Asian	8.3	2.7	10.5%
% Hispanic	14.0	19.3	18.3%
% Born in United States	67.3	64.8	61.6%
% Married, spouse present	63.3	57.5	50.3%
% Owner Occupied	60.3	55.0	47.7%
% Hi School Grad	91.0	75.7	87.2%
% College Grad	18.6	7.5	44.0%
Median Personal Income	$47,200	$36,000	$38,000
Median Houshold Income	$72,000	$60,700	$70,800

How this analysis was done.

This analysis made use of the Public Use Micro-sample data from the IPUMS website . Using a variety of variables it was possible to isolate those who work in the public or private transit industry, as well as those who work in New York City and travel to their jobs in various ways.

Young Lawyers Get $20,000 raises

According to New York Observer, a bidding war has broken out among the major so-called Wall Street or White Shoe law firms. New associates are now being offered $145,000 up from $125,000, where it has been for about 5 years. My earlier column on New York Lawyers still seems to be basically accurate , though the figures have increased.

Nine Million New Yorkers?

Is New York growing so fast that it is likely to reach 9 million population in the next two decades? Using recent projections from some private entities a New York Times story indicates that the Bloomberg administration is planning for it. New York City reached over seven million by 1940 and it took 60 years to reach eight million. Could it really reach nine million by 2025? So far, according to census numbers, New York City is growing more modestly than it did in the 1990s. The census recently changed their estimation methods, but the city usually challenges their estimates and is given credit for a few more thousand people. During that decade
the census estimated
that the city was only growing about 10,000 per year, but it actually was growing about 60,000. We will probably know more when the new fully implemented
American Community Study data
are released next August. Until then, the Census will issue a new estimate for the population through July 31, 2005 sometime this spring.

Census Says Keep Counting the Prisoners in Prison

Despite the efforts of many in the redistricting and criminal justice communities the Census Bureau says that prisoners should still be counted at the prison sites and that the data should continue to be added to the counts in many small towns and counties. A rider was added to the census appropriation bill asking for a report on this issue. Not surprisingly the Census Bureau did not want to change a thing. The current method deprived the city of thousands of residents, who were moved upstate along with their power to affect the drawing of legislative lines for Congress, and State Senate and Assembly. But
at least one New York State County
does not use prisoners when they draw the county legislative lines, they think they distort the power in that county.

Andrew A. Beveridge has taught sociology at Queens College since 1981, done demographic analyses for the New York Times since 1993, and been in charge of Gotham Gazette's demographics topic page since 2000. The opinions expressed are his alone.Â