Consider it a time honored tradition (or pure masochism). With the exception of last year, The Marist Poll has asked for 25 years whether or not Americans consider the age of Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion, to be young, middle-aged, or old. To date, Miringoff has escaped relatively unscathed. Have the tides turned this year as he marks the big 7-0? Well, this year, it depends on how the question is asked.

- In the Marist Poll’s annual closed-ended question, where respondents are provided options, a whopping 70% of Americans say 70 is old. This is the first time in the history of this question that a majority has responded in this way. In 2019, they divided. 48% considered age 68 to be middle-aged, and 46% said it was old. In 2018, a majority (53%) reported that age 67 was middle-aged. Now, only 24% think age 70 is middle-aged, and a measly 6% say it is young.

- Sadly for Dr. Miringoff, regardless of demographic group, at least, a majority consider 70 to be old. This includes 59% of Miringoff’s fellow Baby Boomers.

- Dr. Miringoff may want to thank his elders. A plurality of those in the Silent-Greatest generation (45%) still consider 70 to be middle-aged. These residents are more likely than any other sub-group to say 70 years old is young (15%).

- But, there is hope for Miringoff in a question that was introduced for the first time this year. In an open-ended question, where respondents are not given choices, the average age Americans consider old is 73. This gives Dr. Miringoff peace of mind for at least a few more years. (We, at The Marist Poll, can only hope!)

- The average age that Gen Z/Millennials consider to be old is 66, but the average goes up from there, topping off with an average of 82 years among the Silent-Greatest generation.

“What started out as a fun way for a pollster to come to terms with advancing age, has lost its charm. Although I don’t plan on retiring any time soon, I may retire this question next year,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist Poll. “They say that ‘age is just a number,’ and I don’t feel a day over 25. Just don’t ask me to play centerfield for the New York Yankees. My reflexes may not agree with that assessment.”