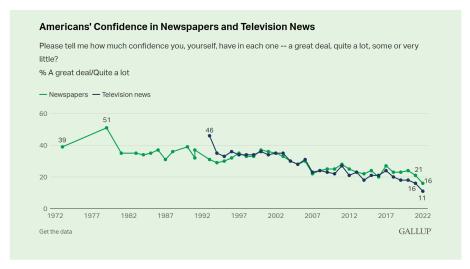


UNDERSTANDING TRUE INFLATION—THE FINANCIAL DANGER ZONE

A recent Reuters Institute survey found that America's trust in the news media is at an all time low. Only 11% of respondents indicated that they have "some degree of confidence" in television news. Newspapers fared slightly better at 16%.

One of the reasons for this could be the fact that the mainstream media has been derelict in helping the public understand (a) how the global economy is evolving and (b) how to position oneself to achieve and maintain financial independence in this ever changing environment. A prime example of this negligence is the media's insistence on merely parroting government financial data instead of examining that information in detail and then explaining the ramifications.



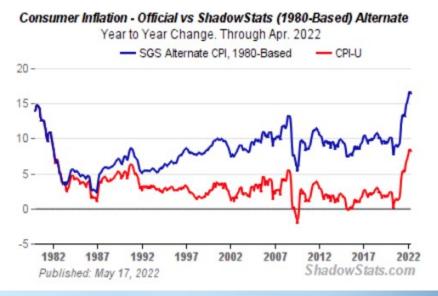




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Case in point, the media at large is reporting that the June 2022 Consumer Price Index (CPI), also known as the inflation rate, as recently published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is 9.1%. No mainstream outlet has taken the time to explain how BLS arrives at this figure and how the methodology is different from what it once was.

Never fear, this is not going to turn into a math class. However, it is vital that you have an understanding of what TRUE inflation is. In this way you can develop a clear plan to acquire assets that keep pace with or, optimally, beat inflation. If you are focused on 9.1% and true inflation is over 17%, then a 5% raise at your job still has you in the negative by 12%.







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Properly defined inflation is simply an expansion of the money supply. The Federal Reserve Bank controls what is known as Monetary Policy and has purview over the country's money supply. President Nixon removed the US Dollar from the gold standard in 1971. In the wake of this decision the United States initiated a program of massive federal spending. A trend that has only accelerated through the current day and has resulted in over \$244,000 in total federal tax debt, and rising, per taxpayer.

In order to engage in this profligate spending the definition of inflation was adjusted to reflect the rising cost of a particular basket of goods and services. This was thought to be a measure of the quality of life associated with an American's buying power. Then in 1980 the inflation definition was tweaked again. No longer measuring the cost fluctuations of a basket of goods, the new measure would reflect costs associated with a "quasi substitution based basket of goods".

This methodology included all manner of abstract calculations that allowed more flexibility than ever in manipulation potential. For example, advances in technology are now used to counterbalance price increases. Literally, if a computer is 15% faster than it was the year before but still sells for the same price the new measure of inflation allows the federal government to claim the computer has dropped in price by 15%.

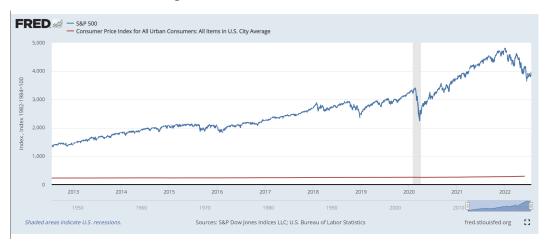




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You may be asking why the government would engage in this type of subterfuge. In addition to being able to spend capriciously there are two main reasons. #1—reporting a lower number is politically advantageous to both sides of the aisle. #2 - certain government benefits have Cost Of Living Allowances linked to the CPI number. Social Security, a government entitlement program scheduled for insolvency by 2034, would go defunct sooner if the benefit amount we're based on the classic definition of inflation.

Maneuvering of this type is dangerous and puts the public at great economic risk. If an investor, employer or employee is basing their ROI, human capital expenses or wages, respectively, on the popularly reported CPI then they are operating in a data deficit. A 9.1% raise, while unlikely, would still be far lower than the inflation rate. Thereby placing more dollars in the employee's pockets while at the same time making them poorer. The same is true with regard to a 9.1% return on investment.







UNDERSTANDING TRUE INFLATION—THE FINANCIAL DANGER ZONE

A solution to this issue is found within the S&P 500. Over time it has consistently beaten inflation.

Another asset that has the potential to outpace inflation and has historically done just that is a well managed small business. According to Kabbage the return expectation for a proficiently run entrepreneurial enterprise is between 15% and 30%.

If you'd like additional insight into any of the topics covered, or if you'd like a complimentary Financial Needs analysis, please contact us today.

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