

EMBARGOED UNTIL THURSDAY, NOV. 3, 2005, 12:01 A.M.
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The Arkansas Poll, 2005 Summary Report

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Arkansas Poll Website: <http://plsc.uark.edu/arkpoll/>

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*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Most Important Problem

What do you think is the most important problem or issue facing people in Arkansas today? ¹	Percent
• The Economy (includes: wage, unemployment, etc.)	31
• Education	16
• Gas/Fuel Prices	6
• Health Insurance/Healthcare	5
• Crime/Violence/Drugs	4
• Taxes (too much/too high)	3
• Other	24
• Don't Know/Refused	11

Public Figure Approval Ratings/Upcoming Elections

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mike Huckabee is handling his job as governor?	Approve	Disapprove	DK/ Refused	
1999	66%	13%	21%	
2000	69%	14%	17%	
2001	70%	17%	13%	
2002	50%	35%	15%	
2003	47%	38%	16%	
2004	58%	29%	12%	
2005	58%	27%	15%	
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Blanche Lincoln is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?				
1999	46%	17%	37%	
2001	51%	13%	36%	
2002	50%	16%	35%	
2003	55%	10%	35%	
2004	55%	19%	26%	
2005	55%	17%	28%	
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Mark Pryor is handling his job as a U.S. Senator?				
2003	52%	11%	37%	
2004	50%	18%	32%	
2005	56%	12%	32%	
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as president?				
2001	87%	9%	3%	
2002	61%	32%	7%	
2003	47%	46%	7%	
2004	50%	45%	5%	
2005	38%	56%	7%	
If the next governor's election were held today ... for whom would you most likely vote? (561 <i>very likely voters only</i>)	Beebe	Hutchinson	Other	DK/ Refused
2005	47%	40%	3%	11%
Do you ... of Gov. Huckabee running for president in 2008?	Approve	Disapprove		DK/ Refused
2005	43%	44%		13%

¹ In odd-numbered years, the Arkansas Poll records and codes the open-ended answers of respondents. In even-numbered years, respondents are asked to choose from the most frequently mentioned issues of the previous year.

Current Issues

First, in general, would you say you favor stricter gun control, less strict gun control, or should no change be made to existing gun control laws?	Stricter	Less Strict	No Change	DK/ Refused
1999	50% ²	31%	15%	4%
2000	39%	15%	42%	4%
2001	36%	17%	44%	4%
2002	36%	15%	45%	4%
2003	38%	17%	42%	4%
2004	38%	12%	45%	5%
2005	36%	15%	43%	6%
Do you favor laws that would make it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion, favor laws that would make it easier to get an abortion or should no change be made to existing abortion laws?	More Difficult	Easier	No Change	DK/ Refused
1999	45%	14%	32%	9%
2000	43%	11%	40%	6%
2001	46%	13%	35%	7%
2002	43%	13%	38%	6%
2003	47%	13%	33%	7%
2004	42%	10%	40%	7%
2005	44%	9%	39%	8%

Life in Arkansas

Overall, do you feel that Arkansas is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?	Right	Wrong		DK/ Refused
1999	73%	15%		12%
2001	78%	14%		8%
2002	69%	22%		9%
2003	63%	26%		11%
2004	71%	18%		11%
2005	73%	18%		9%
Would you say you are better off financially, worse off, or about the same compared to a year ago?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/ Refused
1999	37%	47%	16%	1%
2001	41%	39%	19%	1%
2002	33%	39%	27%	1%
2003	27%	45%	28%	1%
2004	30%	46%	23%	1%
2005	28%	49%	22%	1%
And, looking ahead, do you think a year from now, you will be ... as now?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/ Refused
1999	43%	46%	6%	1%
2001	41%	39%	19%	1%
2002	40%	45%	10%	5%
2003	35%	49%	12%	5%
2004	38%	46%	11%	5%
2005	34%	46%	15%	5%

² In 1999 respondents were not offered the “no change” option; this response was recorded only if volunteered.

Attitudes toward Gays and Lesbians

Do you approve or disapprove of...	Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref
• <i>allowing</i> openly homosexual men and women to serve in the armed forces of the United States?			
all respondents	54%	35%	11%
evangelicals/"born agains" (only)	46%	42%	12%
weekly+ churchgoers (only)	45%	42%	13%
know a gay or lesbian person (only)	67%	26%	8%
somewhat/very unfavorable view of gays/lesbians (only)	38%	54%	9%
• a law that would <i>allow</i> a lesbian or gay man to adopt a child if the court found them fit in all other ways to become an adoptive parent?			
all respondents	66%	26%	8%
evangelicals/"born agains" (only)	65%	27%	5%
weekly+ churchgoers (only)	64%	25%	10%
know a gay or lesbian person (only)	76%	21%	4%
somewhat/very unfavorable view of gays/lesbians (only)	61%	30%	9%
• a law that would <i>prohibit</i> an employer from discriminating against homosexuals in employment?			
all respondents	31%	60%	9%
evangelicals/"born agains" (only)	22%	70%	8%
weekly+ churchgoers (only)	19%	71%	10%
know a gay or lesbian person (only)	41%	53%	6%
somewhat/very unfavorable view of gays/lesbians (only)	14%	81%	5%
• a law that would <i>prevent</i> gays and lesbians from serving as foster parents?			
all respondents	46%	46%	8%
evangelicals/"born agains" (only)	52%	39%	9%
weekly+ churchgoers (only)	54%	36%	10%
know a gay or lesbian person (only)	44%	51%	5%
somewhat/very unfavorable view of gays/lesbians (only)	62%	33%	5%
• a law that would <i>prohibit</i> Arkansas textbooks from defining marriage as anything other than a relationship between one man and one woman?			
all respondents	70%	23%	7%
evangelicals/"born agains" (only)	76%	18%	6%
weekly+ churchgoers (only)	81%	13%	6%
know a gay or lesbian person (only)	68%	26%	6%
somewhat/very unfavorable view of gays/lesbians (only)	83%	15%	2%
Which of the following policy positions most closely resembles your own view regarding relationships between two people of the same sex?			
• Gay couples should be allowed to legally marry		15%	
• Gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions or domestic partnerships, but not legally marry		22%	
• There should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship		54%	
• don't know/refused		9%	

Do you personally ...	Yes	No	DK/Ref
• know or work with anyone who is gay or lesbian?	55%	40%	5%
• know any gay or lesbian couples that have been together for more than one year?	34%	62%	4%

Do you think that sexual relations between two adults of the same sex is:	
• always wrong	65%
• almost always wrong	5%
• wrong only sometimes	6%
• not wrong at all	14%
• don't know/refused	11%
Which of the following factors would you say has had the most influence on your current attitude towards sexual relations between two adults of the same sex:	
• knowing someone who is gay	19%
• teachings of my religion	45%
• learning about gays and lesbians through the media	7%
• changes in scientific knowledge about homosexuality	5%
• something else	14%
• don't know/refused	11%
How would you rate your feelings toward lesbians and gay men on the following scale? Are your feelings very favorable, somewhat favorable, neither favorable nor unfavorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable?	
• very favorable	5%
• somewhat favorable	10%
• neither favorable nor unfavorable	32%
• somewhat unfavorable	14%
• very unfavorable	30%
• don't know/refused	10%
Some people say that gay rights leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they are going too slowly. How about you? Do you think that gay rights leaders are:	
• trying to push too fast	59%
• are going to slowly	3%
• are moving at about the right speed	21%
• don't know/refused	18%

School Quality, Charter Schools, Vouchers

	Strongly Approve	Approve	Neither (silent)	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove	DK/Ref
Would you say that you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of the way that the public school system in Arkansas is doing its job?	6%	41%	8%	29%	11%	5%
As you may know, charter schools operate under a charter or contract that frees them from many of the state regulations imposed on public schools and permits them to operate independently. Do you ... of charter schools in Arkansas?	10%	46%	6%	21%	5%	13%
Some states are initiating policies allowing parents to send their school-age children to any private or church-related school they choose. For those parents choosing non-public schools, the parents are given government financial assistance to support this choice. Do you ...of this policy?	13%	35%	2%	29%	17%	4%
How much do you trust the public school system in Arkansas? Would you say you completely trust it, somewhat trust it, somewhat distrust it or completely distrust it?	Comp'tly Trust	Somewh't Trust	Neither (silent)	Somewhat Distrust	Completely Distrust	DK/Ref
	10%	46%	4%	26%	9%	4%
In which level of government do you have the most trust to handle the improvement of public schools: the federal government, state government, or local government?	Federal	State	Local	Other		DK/Ref
	11%	36%	43%	3%		8%

Political Party and Ideology

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?	Republican	Democrat	Indep't	Other	DK/ Refused
1999	23%	35%	31%	4%	7%
2000	23%	36%	35%	0%	6%
2001	27%	33%	32%	5%	3%
2002	28%	33%	33%	3%	3%
2003	24%	38%	31%	4%	3%
2004	30%	35%	28%	3%	4%
2005	23%	36%	33%	4%	4%
Independents only: Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic Party?	Closer to Republican	Closer to Democrat	Just Indep't		DK/ Refused
1999	33%	29%	34%		4%
2000	35%	25%	35%		5%
2001	29%	36%	31%		4%
2002	30%	32%	33%		4%
2003	33%	34%	33%		2%
2004	39%	31%	30%		0%
2005	30%	35%	32%		4%
How would you describe your views on most political matters? Generally, do you think of yourself as a liberal, moderate, or conservative?	Liberal	Moderate	Conserv'e		DK/ Refused
1999	14%	38%	38%		10%
2000	16%	36%	39%		9%
2001	17%	39%	38%		6%
2002	15%	39%	41%		5%
2003	17%	36%	39%		7%
2004	17%	35%	42%		7%
2005	13%	40%	39%		8%

Methodology and Sample Information

Between October 8th and October 17th, the Survey Research Center at the University of Arkansas dialed 6,808 randomly selected Arkansas telephone numbers. These attempts yielded 766 completed surveys³. The remainder of the surveys were not completed for a variety of reasons, including the resident's absence, a refusal to participate, a busy or disconnected line, or the resident's ineligibility. Employing guidelines established by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the poll's cooperation rate was 37%. This figure reflects completed surveys as a percentage of all eligible individuals contacted. The survey's margin of error is +/- 3 percentage points.

To assess the representativeness of the sample drawn for the poll, the Arkansas Poll team opts to publish what most polling organizations do not: a comparison of survey respondents' key demographic characteristics to those of the state as a whole. This information is reported in the table below.

	2005 Arkansas Poll Sample	State of Arkansas
Median Age Category (for 18+ pop.)	45-54 years of age	35-44 years of age
Average # persons per household	2.5	2.5
Marital Status	58% married	58% married
Gender	43% male	49% male
Educational Attainment		
high school graduates	87%	76%
college graduates	30%	17%
Median household income	\$35,001-\$50,000	\$32,182
Race/Ethnicity		
White	81.1%	80.0%
Black or African American	9.7%	15.7%
Multi-Ethnic	2.3%	1.3%
Hispanic	2.5%	3.2% ⁴
Native American	1.6%	0.7%
Asian	0.7%	0.8%
Something Else, Don't Know, Refused	2.2%	0.0%

Source: All data from the Arkansas Poll or the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

³ Seventeen, or 2%, of the 766 interviews were conducted in Spanish.

⁴ Hispanics may be of any race, so these identifiers also are included in applicable race categories.