

Lethbridge Public Opinion Studies

# Abortion Choice

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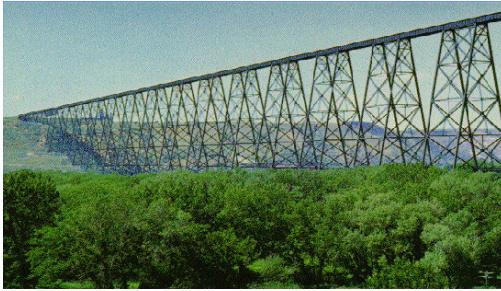
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## City of Lethbridge

Located in southwestern Alberta, the city of Lethbridge is home to 72,717 residents, 57,674 of which are 18 years of age or older.



The city is divided into six census areas, two each for its South, North and West geographic areas. It is divided north and south by Alberta highway 3, and east west by the Oldman River.

South Lethbridge's 27,941 residents represent 38.4 of the city's total population. West Lethbridge (22,429) and north Lethbridge (22,347) represent 30.8 and 30.7 respectively.

## Methodology

The primary information in this report is based on data collected by students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods and PSC150 – Local Government at Lethbridge Community College in the Fall of 2003. Students interviewed 769 adult residents by telephone over a two-week period from October 1 to 15, 2003 using numbers drawn randomly from the Lethbridge telephone directory.

Using this method, the Fall 2003 sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 3.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

Other sample sizes are as follows:	Winter	2001	501 respondents	( $\pm 4.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20)
	Fall	2001	408 respondents	( $\pm 4.8\%$ , 19 times out of 20)
	Winter	2002	484 respondents	( $\pm 4.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20)
	Fall	2002	576 respondents	( $\pm 4.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20)
	Winter	2003	470 respondents	( $\pm 4.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20)
	Winter	2004	488 respondents	( $\pm 4.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20)

Analysis of the demographic data indicated that, within acceptable limits, the samples accurately represent the demographic distribution of the voting age population within the city of Lethbridge. The data have been statistically weighted where necessary to better reflect the actual distribution of the population.

These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at LCC.

What follows is a selection of our findings based on the levels of agreement and disagreement to the statement below.

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Citizen Society Research Lab

**Q.** Abortion is a matter of choice that should be decided between a woman and her doctor.

## Abortion Choice (October 2003)

Overall, and over time, a strong majority of Lethbridge residents support individual choice concerning abortion. Approximately three-quarters of all adult residents agree that abortion is a matter of choice that should be decided between a woman and her doctor.

Support varies little between the genders with men (70.9%) almost as likely as are women (72.8%) to support choice.

West Lethbridge residents (79.0%) are more likely to support abortion choice than are South (73.3%) and North (64.4%) Lethbridge residents.

Upper income earners (77.9%) and university graduates (77.7%) are more likely than lower income (69.5%) and less educated residents.

Interestingly, and similar to trends measures across North America, Lethbridge youth (67.4%) are slightly less supportive of choice than are their parents generation (76.1%) and seniors (75.2%).

## Effect of Religion on Opinion (October 2003)

Religion is the most important determinant of opinion on abortion choice. Those who attend church most are the least supportive of choice (45.6%) while those who never attend church functions are the most supportive (85.0%).

Religious denomination is also important with United Church members (87.5%) more supportive of choice than all other groups including non-Christian religions (84.2%), those with no religion (84.2%), Anglicans (78.0%), Lutherans (75.0%), and Catholics (70.9%). Those who are members of other Christian denominations are more divided with only 56.3% supporting choice. LDS members are the only denomination in which a majority is opposed (54.5%).

## Opinion on Abortion Choice Over Time

Opinion is relatively consistent over time with strong majorities supporting a woman's right to choose.

Abortion Choice by Over Time (%)

	Feb. '01	Oct. '01	Feb. '02	Oct. '02	Feb. '03	Oct. '03	Feb. '04
Agree	76.8	74.5	73.5	75.7	69.9	71.9	75.3
Disagree	23.2	25.5	26.5	24.3	30.1	28.1	24.7

## Opinion on Abortion Choice by Political Party

New Democratic supporters, both federally and provincially, are the most supportive of abortion choice (82.6%) and 82.2% respectively). Federal Liberals (79.9%) are slightly more likely to support choice than are provincial Liberals (74.1%), who are very similar in their opinions to provincial Progressive Conservatives (72.0%).

Federal Alliance (60.7%) and federal Progressive Conservatives (64.4%), along with provincial Alliance supporters (54.3%) are among the least supportive of choice.

## Snapshot of Differences (October 2003)

### Abortion Choice by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
Agree	70.9	72.8	71.9
Disagree	29.1	27.2	28.1

### Abortion Choice by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
Agree	73.3	64.4	79.0
Disagree	26.7	35.6	21.0

### Abortion Choice by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
Agree	69.5	72.3	77.9
Disagree	30.5	27.7	22.1

### Abortion Choice by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post-Secondary	Col-Tech-Trade Grad	University Grad
Agree	70.7	68.4	71.0	77.7
Disagree	29.3	31.6	29.0	22.3

### Abortion Choice by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
Agree	67.4	70.5	76.1	75.2
Disagree	32.6	29.5	23.9	24.8

### Abortion Choice by Religious Participation (%)

	Once/week or more	Few/month to rarely	Never
Agree	45.6	79.5	85.0
Disagree	54.4	20.5	15.0

### Abortion Choice by Religious Denomination (%)

	United	Non Christian	No Religion	Anglican	Lutheran	Catholic	Other Christian	LDS
Agree	87.5	84.2	84.2	78.0	75.0	70.9	56.3	45.5
Disagree	12.5	15.8	15.8	22.0	25.0	29.1	43.8	54.5

### Abortion Choice by Federal Vote Intention (%)

	Liberal	Alliance	PC	NDP	Other	Undecided
Agree	79.9	60.7	64.4	82.6	91.7	73.3
Disagree	20.1	39.3	35.6	17.4	8.3	26.7

### Abortion Choice by Provincial Vote Intention (%)

	PC	Liberal	ND	AB Alliance	Other	Undecided
Agree	72.0	74.1	82.2	54.3	53.8	72.8
Disagree	28.0	25.9	17.8	45.7	46.2	27.2

## Tabular Data

### Abortion Choice (%) (October 2003)

Q. Abortion is a matter of choice that should be decided between a woman and her doctor.

#### Abortion Choice by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
Strongly Agree	20.7	27.1	24.0
Agree	50.3	45.6	47.9
Disagree	15.6	16.7	16.1
Strongly Disagree	13.4	10.7	12.0

#### Abortion Choice by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
Strongly Agree	26.1	19.7	26.5
Agree	47.2	44.7	52.5
Disagree	17.1	19.1	11.4
Strongly Disagree	9.7	16.5	9.6

#### Abortion Choice by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
Strongly Agree	21.5	25.8	25.6
Agree	48.1	46.8	52.3
Disagree	17.3	15.5	14.0
Strongly Disagree	13.1	11.9	8.1

#### Abortion Choice by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post-Secondary	Col-Tech-Trade Grad	University Grad
Strongly Agree	16.0	20.2	28.0	30.9
Agree	54.6	48.4	43.0	46.8
Disagree	15.3	19.1	18.1	11.2
Strongly Disagree	14.1	12.2	10.9	11.2

#### Abortion Choice by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
Strongly Agree	24.0	23.5	28.3	15.2
Agree	43.2	47.0	47.8	60.0
Disagree	19.2	15.7	12.4	17.1
Strongly Disagree	13.5	13.9	11.5	7.6