2007 Lethbridge Public Opinion Study (Fall)

Crime and Punishment Report

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Methodology

Population The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 81,692 residents (2007 municipal census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (65,832). A total of 39,941 Lethbridge residents are male (48.9%) while 41,751 are female (51.1%). South Lethbridge is home to 29,225 residents (35.8%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 28,443 residents (34.8%). There are 24,024 north Lethbridge residents (29.4%). Unless otherwise specified, the data presented below represent the city of Lethbridge population.

Sample Data were collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods and PSC150 – Local Government in the fall of 2007. Students interviewed 866 adult city of Lethbridge residents and 140 Coaldale adult residents by telephone from September 26th to 30th 2007. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from Info Canada directories. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time out of their day to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge Public Opinion Studies can be obtained by visiting the CSRL web pages at: www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl

Representativeness Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge and the town of Coaldale. The sample has been statistically weighted where necessary to even better reflect the demographic distribution of the population (gender and area of the city of Lethbridge).

Confidence The weighted sample yields a margin of error of $\pm$ 3.3%, 19 times out of 20 for the full 2007 Lethbridge sample and $\pm$ 8.2%, 19 times out of 20 for the full Coaldale sample. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

IB Commons Call Centre Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre and applications developed by the Open Source Learning Lab. We thank Dr. James Manis and the OSLL for their efforts in working with us to establish and maintain the IB Commons Call Centre.

Sponsorship 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. This particular set of question was derived from the research interests of Lethbridge College faculty and students.

Tougher Sentences for Serious Youth Criminal Offenders

Strong majorities of both the Lethbridge (78.4%) and Coaldale (84.2%) populations agree that youth convicted of serious criminal offenses should serve penalties similar to those given to adult offenders.

Within the Lethbridge population, women (81.1%), gen-xers (83.9%) and Conservative party voters (82.6%) are most supportive. University graduates (29.9%), the youth (30.1%), and Liberal party voters (31.0%) are among the least supportive.

Tougher Youth Crime Penalties (%)	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	78.4	84.2
Disagree	21.6	15.8

Tougher Youth Crime Penalties (%)	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Strongly Agree	25.6	23.3
Somewhat Agree	52.8	60.9
Somewhat Disagree	19.1	15.0
Disagree	2.5	0.8

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

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Incarceration Best Rehabilitation for Serious Criminals

- Majorities of both the Lethbridge (60.2%) and Coaldale (56.1%) populations agree that incarceration is the best form of rehabilitation for serious criminals.

- Within the Lethbridge population, lower income earners (63.8%), those with the least amount of formal education (69.3%), and seniors (65.8%) agree most likely to agree. Interestingly, agreement is almost identical among supporters of the various federal political parties. Liberal (61.6%) and Conservative (61.0%) supporters are most likely to agree, but NDP (58.3%) and Green (57.8%) supporters are almost as likely to agree. Undecided voters (61.5%) indicate similar levels of agreement as do decided voters.

Incarceration Best Rehabilitation for Serious Criminal Offenders (%)	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	60.2	56.1
Disagree	39.8	43.9

Incarceration Best Rehabilitation for Serious Criminal Offenders (%)	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Strongly Agree	10.4	5.3
Somewhat Agree	49.9	50.8
Somewhat Disagree	32.7	38.6
Disagree	7.0	5.3

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Tougher Youth Crime Sentences (Lethbridge – October 2007) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge Residents
Agree	74.7	81.1	78.4
Disagree	25.3	18.9	21.6

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	77.8	79.7	77.7	84.2
Disagree	22.2	20.3	22.3	15.8

Household Income	Under $40,000	$40,000 to $80,000	Over $80,000
Agree	78.8	78.9	74.9
Disagree	21.2	21.1	25.1

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	81.0	74.2	87.7	70.1
Disagree	19.0	25.8	12.3	29.9

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	69.9	83.9	79.5	78.8
Disagree	30.1	16.1	20.5	21.2

Federal Vote Intention	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Undecided
Agree	82.6	69.0	73.0	73.3	79.3
Disagree	17.4	31.0	27.0	26.7	20.7

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Crime and Punishment

Incarceration Best Rehabilitation for Serious Criminals (Lethbridge – October 2007) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge Residents
Agree	60.4	60.1	60.2
Disagree	39.6	39.9	39.8

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	62.1	59.8	58.8	56.1
Disagree	37.9	40.2	41.2	43.9

Household Income	Under $40,000	$40,000 to $80,000	Over $80,000
Agree	63.8	60.2	51.4
Disagree	36.2	39.8	48.6

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	69.3	62.6	58.2	50.2
Disagree	30.7	37.4	41.8	49.8

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	62.8	60.9	54.6	65.8
Disagree	37.2	39.1	45.4	34.2

Federal Vote Intention	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Undecided
Agree	61.0	61.6	58.3	57.8	61.5
Disagree	39.0	38.4	41.7	42.2	38.5

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Crime and Punishment

Demographics

Gender (%)

Male	48.6
Female	51.4

Area of City (%)

South	35.0
North	29.3
West	35.7

Income (%)

Under $40,000	35.8
$40-$80,000	39.3
Over $80,000	24.9

Education (%)

H-School/less	27.8
Some P-Sec.	19.1
Col-Tech-Grad	25.6
University Grad	27.4

Age (%)

18-29	22.9
30-44	23.3
45-64	31.9
65 or older	21.8

Federal Vote Intention (%)

Conservative	57.1
Liberal	17.2
NDP	7.4
Green	6.6
Undecided	11.8

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100

Questions

Q. Youth who are convicted of serious crimes should receive sentences similar to those given to adult offenders.

Q. Incarceration (jail time) is the best way to rehabilitate criminals who commit serious offences?