



Opinion on Six Policy Items







Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – Winter 2012

March 8, 2012

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Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 87,882 residents (2011 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (70,305). A total of 43,011 Lethbridge residents are male (48.9%) while 44,871 are female (51.1%). South Lethbridge is home to 30,504 residents (34.7%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 32,063 residents (36.5%). There are 25,315 north Lethbridge residents (28.8%). Coaldale has a total population of 6,943 residents (2009 census).
-  **Sample Data** Collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods in the winter of 2012. Students interviewed 738 randomly selected, adult Lethbridge and Coaldale residents by telephone on February 11–12, 2012 under the supervision of School of Liberal Arts faculty member Faron Ellis. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from InfoCanada directories. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge and Alberta 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. The sample has been statistically weighted to even better reflect that of the population (gender, age and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of ± 3.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data. For example, the Lethbridge subsample margin of error is ± 3.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, while the Coaldale subsample has a margin of error of ± 9.5 percentage points 19 times out of 20.
-  **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 Lethbridge College. This particular question was derived from student and faculty interest in the topic.

Social Issues



Same-sex Marriage

A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (68.3%) continue to support same-sex marriages having equal legal status with traditional marriages. Support for same-sex marriages has increased significantly from only 33.5% in 2002 when we first asked Lethbridge residents about this issue. Women (71.8%), the least religious (80.3%), the youth (79.6%) and those with a university education (76.4%) are among the most supportive. Religion, age and education remain the most important predictors of opinion on this issue. Coaldale residents are only slightly less supportive (67.6%) than are Lethbridge residents. Opinion is also divided along partisan lines with Wildrose supporters most opposed (50.9%). However, substantial majorities of PC (61.9%), Liberal (79.1%) and NDP supporters (96.1%) are supportive.



Abortion Choice

Substantial majorities of Lethbridge (77.0%) and Coaldale residents (70.6%) support a woman's right to choose to have an abortion. Men (80.7%) are just as supportive as are women (73.0%). Furthermore, substantial majorities in most demographic categories demonstrate strong support. Religion is the most important determinant of opinion on this issue with a slight majority of the most religious opposed (51.0%). Support climbs to 89.9% among the least religious. Significant partisan differences are measured on this issue with PC (76.5%) and Wildrose (60.2%) partisans less supportive than Liberal (83.6%) and NDP (92.0%) partisans, although strong majorities of all provincial partisans are supportive.



Capital Punishment

Majorities of both Lethbridge (57.4%) and Coaldale residents (63.3%) support Canada reintroducing capital punishment for people convicted of first degree murder. Support is strongest in north Lethbridge (59.8%), among those with the least amount of formal education (73.3%), seniors (66.1%) and PC (66.0%) and Wildrose (68.5%) supporters. Opposition is strongest amongst university graduates (57.0%), the youth (63.2%) and provincial NDP partisans (74.8%).



Legal Medical Marijuana

Substantial majorities of Lethbridge (74.3%) and Coaldale residents (76.5%) support marijuana being legal for medical purposes. Support is strongest with upper income residents (83.7%), university grads (79.6%), and boomers (83.5%).



Decriminalize Recreational Marijuana

Approximately two in every five Lethbridge (38.7%) and Coaldale residents (36.7%) support decriminalizing marijuana for recreational purposes. Support is strongest among men (45.4%), the least religious (49.5%), university graduates (44.9%), and provincial Liberal (50.9%) and NDP (52.4%) supporters.



Legalize Doctor-Assisted Suicide

Majorities of Lethbridge (66.5%) and Coaldale residents (63.8%) support making doctor-assisted suicide legal in Canada. Religion is the most important predictor of opinion with 85.8% of the least religious respondents supportive while a substantial majority of the highly religious is opposed (66.2%).

Opinion on Six Policy Items (%)

Same-sex Marriage	Feb. '02	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12
Agree	33.5	40.5	45.0	39.4	50.8	53.4	51.7	52.2	54.1	58.7	62.3	64.2	67.7
Disagree	66.5	59.5	55.0	60.6	49.2	46.6	48.3	47.8	45.9	41.3	37.7	35.8	32.3

Abortion Choice	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12
Agree	69.9	75.3	73.3	70.3	75.4	74.8	73.0	77.9	75.0	76.2	79.2	74.1	76.6
Disagree	30.1	24.7	26.7	29.7	24.6	25.2	27.0	22.1	25.0	23.8	20.8	25.9	23.4

Capital Punishment	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12
Agree	60.8	60.6	60.0	56.4	60.6	58.4	62.9	60.9	57.6	58.1	62.1	54.8	57.8
Disagree	39.2	39.4	40.0	43.6	39.4	41.6	37.1	39.1	42.4	41.9	37.9	45.2	42.2

Marijuana-medical	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12
Agree	73.1	72.0	73.3	70.4	71.7	72.6	73.7	75.8	74.8	74.7	80.1	73.0	74.4
Disagree	26.9	28.0	26.7	29.6	28.3	27.4	26.3	24.2	25.2	25.3	19.9	27.0	25.6

Marijuana-recreation	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12
Agree	36.1	35.2	37.6	31.5	34.2	36.3	37.9	33.4	35.4	35.8	39.0	38.9	38.6
Disagree	63.9	64.8	62.4	68.5	65.8	63.7	62.1	66.6	64.6	64.2	61.0	61.1	61.4

Doctor-ass't suicide	Oct. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12
Agree	—	—	60.7	59.2	67.9	62.3	63.4	63.9	61.5	61.7	67.0	61.9	66.4
Disagree	—	—	39.3	40.8	32.1	37.7	36.6	36.1	38.5	38.3	33.0	38.1	33.6

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

Same-sex marriage by demographic group (February 2012) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	63.2	71.8	68.3	67.6
Disagree	36.8	28.2	31.7	32.4

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	70.0	67.4	67.6
Disagree	30.0	32.6	32.4

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	62.7	65.5	76.0
Disagree	37.3	34.5	24.0

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	42.5	74.3	80.3
Disagree	57.5	25.7	19.7

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	59.9	65.3	64.0	76.4
Disagree	40.1	34.7	36.0	23.6

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	79.6	66.0	71.7	54.4
Disagree	20.4	34.0	28.3	45.6

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Agree	61.9	49.1	79.1	96.1	69.7
Disagree	38.1	50.9	20.9	3.9	30.3

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

Abortion choice by demographic group (February 2012) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	80.7	73.0	77.0	70.6
Disagree	19.3	27.0	23.0	29.4

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	79.2	77.3	75.0
Disagree	20.8	22.7	25.0

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	71.9	76.3	83.1
Disagree	28.1	23.7	16.9

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	49.0	82.1	89.9
Disagree	51.0	17.9	10.1

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	74.1	69.5	82.0	80.1
Disagree	25.9	30.5	18.0	19.9

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	71.6	74.0	80.5	77.6
Disagree	28.4	26.0	19.5	22.4

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Agree	76.5	60.2	83.6	92.0	76.5
Disagree	23.5	39.8	16.4	8.0	23.5

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

Capital punishment by demographic group (February 2012) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	59.1	56.6	57.4	63.3
Disagree	40.9	43.4	42.6	36.7

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	56.3	59.8	56.6
Disagree	43.8	40.2	43.4

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	59.8	59.4	51.2
Disagree	40.2	40.6	48.8

Religious Attendance	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	52.6	63.5	59.3
Disagree	47.4	36.5	40.7

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	73.3	53.1	72.5	43.0
Disagree	26.7	46.9	27.5	57.0

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	36.8	61.2	62.8	66.1
Disagree	63.2	38.8	37.2	33.9

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Agree	66.0	68.5	50.0	25.2	64.4
Disagree	34.0	31.5	50.0	74.8	35.6

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

Medical marijuana by demographic group (February 2012) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	74.7	74.3	74.3	76.5
Disagree	25.3	25.7	25.7	23.5

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	76.0	73.2	73.6
Disagree	24.0	26.8	26.4

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	75.8	72.3	83.7
Disagree	24.2	27.7	16.3

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	56.9	83.0	81.9
Disagree	43.1	17.0	18.1

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	72.6	68.9	72.6	79.6
Disagree	27.4	31.1	27.4	20.4

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	75.8	70.2	83.5	66.0
Disagree	24.2	29.8	16.5	34.0

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Agree	70.9	61.3	82.9	88.5	79.3
Disagree	29.1	38.7	17.1	11.5	20.7

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

Recreational marijuana by demographic group (February 2012) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	45.4	32.2	38.7	36.7
Disagree	54.6	67.8	61.3	63.3

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	40.0	38.8	37.2
Disagree	60.0	61.2	62.8

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	43.7	37.2	42.3
Disagree	56.3	62.8	57.7

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	26.0	30.6	49.5
Disagree	74.0	69.4	50.5

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	34.6	32.3	40.0	44.9
Disagree	65.4	67.7	60.0	55.1

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	48.0	26.9	48.6	28.5
Disagree	52.0	73.1	51.4	71.5

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Agree	30.0	32.7	50.9	52.4	36.8
Disagree	70.0	67.3	49.1	47.6	63.2

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

Legalize doctor-assisted suicide by demographic group (February 2012) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	65.7	67.0	66.5	63.8
Disagree	34.3	33.0	33.5	36.2

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	65.8	66.9	66.9
Disagree	34.2	33.1	33.1

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	63.7	68.9	74.4
Disagree	36.3	31.1	25.6

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	33.8	69.2	85.8
Disagree	66.2	30.8	14.2

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	65.2	59.3	67.5	71.1
Disagree	34.8	40.7	32.5	28.9

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	56.6	65.3	75.5	64.3
Disagree	43.4	34.7	24.5	35.7

Provincial Vote	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Agree	67.5	50.9	72.9	74.0	65.9
Disagree	32.5	49.1	27.1	26.0	34.1

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

Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	48.0	South	34.3	Under \$40,000	20.7	H-School/less	23.4	18-29	21.3
Female	52.0	North	27.3	\$40-\$80,000	42.2	Some P-Sec.	22.9	30-44	20.2
		West	38.4	Over \$80,000	37.0	Col-Tech-Grad	18.0	45-64	31.6
						University Grad	35.7	65 or older	26.9

Church Attendance (%)	
2-3/month +	31.3
Several/year	21.3
Rarely/never	47.4

Provincial Vote (%)	
PC	41.7
Wildrose	18.8
Liberal	18.8
NDP	17.2
Alberta Party	1.1

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

Questions

The federal government should continue to recognize same sex marriages giving them equal legal standing with traditional marriages.

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

Canada should re-introduce capital punishment for people convicted of first-degree murder.

Marijuana should be legal for medical purposes.

Marijuana should be decriminalized for recreational purposes.

People with terminal illnesses should be allowed to legally access doctor assisted suicides.

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know (unprompted)
- Refused (unprompted)