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Fall 2006 Lethbridge Public Opinion Study

Same-sex Marriage

October 24, 2006

Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 78,713 residents (2006 municipal census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (63,000 est.). Approximately 48% of Lethbridge residents are male while approximately 52% are female. South Lethbridge is home to 28,318 residents (36.0%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 27,154 residents (34.5%). There are 23,241 north Lethbridge residents (29.5%).
-  **Sample** Data were collected by Lethbridge Community College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods at Lethbridge Community College. In the fall of 2006, students interviewed 577 adult city of Lethbridge residents (September 30th and October 1st) by telephone using the Western Wats Lethbridge call center facility. Telephone numbers were selected using random predictive dialing from a sample drawn from the Telus Superpages. We sincerely thank Western Wats for their hospitality. We also sincerely appreciate and thank all the Lethbridge residents who took time out of their day to respond to our survey.
-  **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 where necessary to even better reflect the demographic distribution of the population (gender and area of the city).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of $\pm 4.1\%$, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.
-  **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 questions arose out of student interest and our ongoing tracking of Lethbridge residents' opinion on important public policy issues.

Same-sex Marriage

- A slight majority of Lethbridge residents (51.7%) continue to support keeping same-sex marriages legal, and enjoying the same legal status as traditional marriages. Almost as many residents, however, are opposed (48.3%).
- Well established patterns of opinion differences amongst groups emerge with the youth (69.2%) much more supportive than are other age groups. Support declines with age to 61.1% amongst gen-xers, and below majority support amongst boomers (45.5%). Seniors remain most opposed with only 28.7% indicating support for same-sex marriages while 71.3% remain opposed.
- Religious participation is an important predictor of opinion. Those who attend church most frequently are the least supportive (30.8%). A slight majority of those who attend church sporadically are supportive (52.8%), while three-quarters of those who rarely or never attend church support same-sex marriages (67.9%).
- Formal education impacts opinion with university grads (59.6%) and those with some post secondary education (57.7%) much more supportive than are those with a high school education or less (38.1%).
- Partisanship also impact opinion with federal Conservatives supporters least supportive (35.0%). Majorities in all other partisan categories support equality for same-sex marriages with Liberals (73.1%) and New Democrats (83.6%) most supportive.
- When asked to indicate reasons why they may or may not support the federal government's plan to hold another parliamentary vote on the issue, a clear majority stated that the Conservatives should hold a vote, but not necessarily because they want the law changes. In fact, only 18.4% of all residents believe the government should hold a vote because the law should be changed. Fully one-third of all Lethbridge residents (33.6%) think a vote should be held because the Conservatives promised to do so in the last election. A further 9.5% told us that the vote should be held simply because the Conservatives are likely to lose that vote and the issue would be finally resolved. A further 34.3% stated a vote should not be held because the issue had already been settled.

Same-sex Marriage	Feb. '02	Oct. '02	Feb. '03	Oct. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06
Agree	33.5	—	—	38.9	40.5	45.0	39.4	50.8	53.4	51.7
Disagree	66.5	—	—	61.1	59.5	55.0	60.6	49.2	46.6	48.3

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

Same-sex marriage by demographic group (October 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Agree	44.3	58.9	51.7
Disagree	55.7	41.1	48.3

	South	North	West
Agree	47.7	47.0	60.2
Disagree	52.3	53.0	39.8

	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	51.1	49.5	59.5
Disagree	48.9	50.5	40.5

(religious attendance)	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	30.8	52.8	67.9
Disagree	69.2	47.2	32.1

	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	38.1	57.7	48.1	59.6
Disagree	61.9	42.3	51.9	40.4

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	69.2	61.1	45.5	28.7
Disagree	30.8	38.9	54.5	71.3

(federal vote intention)	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Undecided
Agree	35.0	73.1	83.6	55.6	54.5
Disagree	65.0	26.9	16.4	44.4	45.5

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

New Parliamentary Vote on Same-sex Marriage by demographic group (October 2006)

	Support SSM	Oppose SSM	All Residents
Hold vote & change law	9.9	28.1	18.4
Hold vote to keep promise	32.5	34.8	33.6
No vote & keep law	2.9	5.9	4.2
No vote - issue settled	48.5	17.8	34.3
Hold vote to finally settle issue	6.2	13.4	9.5

	Male	Female	All Residents
Hold vote & change law	18.7	18.0	18.4
Hold vote to keep promise	35.9	31.4	33.6
No vote & keep law	4.6	3.9	4.2
No vote issue settled	29.4	38.9	34.3
Hold vote to finally settle issue	11.5	7.8	9.5

	South	North	West
Hold vote & change law	18.1	20.9	16.4
Hold vote to keep promise	35.8	27.8	35.9
No vote & keep law	3.1	7.0	3.1
No vote issue settled	33.7	33.5	35.4
Hold vote to finally settle issue	9.3	10.8	9.2

	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Hold vote & change law	18.5	23.3	11.4
Hold vote to keep promise	34.1	26.5	39.8
No vote & keep law	2.9	7.4	1.6
No vote issue settled	35.3	33.3	37.4
Hold vote to finally settle issue	9.2	9.5	9.8

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

New Parliamentary Vote on Same-sex Marriage by demographic group (October 2006)

(religious attendance)	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Hold vote & change law	26.3	15.6	15.0
Hold vote to keep promise	34.2	36.7	31.4
No vote & keep law	5.8	4.6	2.3
No vote issue settled	25.8	26.6	43.6
Hold vote to finally settle issue	7.9	16.5	7.7

	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Hold vote & change law	16.7	20.8	22.7	13.9
Hold vote to keep promise	36.0	30.9	32.8	35.1
No vote & keep law	7.0	4.7	2.3	3.3
No vote issue settled	28.9	31.5	32.8	41.7
Hold vote to finally settle issue	11.4	12.1	9.4	6.0

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Hold vote & change law	14.9	20.1	15.5	27.9
Hold vote to keep promise	36.4	32.1	30.5	36.0
No vote & keep law	4.1	3.0	6.0	2.3
No vote issue settled	35.5	33.6	37.5	26.7
Hold vote to finally settle issue	9.1	11.2	10.5	7.0

	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Undecided
Hold vote & change law	21.3	16.0	8.6	14.3	17.5
Hold vote to keep promise	41.5	21.7	24.1	33.3	30.0
No vote & keep law	4.3	3.8	5.2	4.8	5.0
No vote issue settled	23.1	49.1	55.2	33.3	37.5
Hold vote to finally settle issue	9.7	9.4	6.9	14.3	10.0

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

Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	47.8	South	36.1	Under \$40,000	37.0	H-School/less	21.3	18-29	22.9
Female	52.2	North	29.4	\$40-\$80,000	38.1	Some P-Sec.	27.7	30-44	23.8
		West	34.5	Over \$80,000	24.9	Col-Tech-Grad	24.0	45-64	37.2
						University Grad	27.0	65 or older	16.0

Federal Vote Intention (%)		Religious Participation	
Conservative	51.6	2-3/month-more	36.8
Liberal	20.1	Several/year	20.3
NDP	11.2	Rarely-never	42.8
Green	8.5		
Undecided	8.6		

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.

The Harper government is planning on holding another vote in Parliament on the same-sex marriage issue. Please tell me which of the following best represents your opinion about the upcoming Parliamentary vote.

the government should hold a vote because I want the same sex marriage laws changed

the government should hold a vote because they made a campaign promise to do so

the government should not hold a vote because I do not want the same sex marriage laws changed

the government should not hold a vote because this issue has already been settled and Parliament should move on to other more business

the government should hold a vote because the motion is likely to be defeated and the issue will finally be settled