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The Arkansas Poll, 2009 Summary Report

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*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Most Important Problem

What is the most important problem or issue facing people in Arkansas today? ¹	Percent
• the economy/jobs/wages	39
• healthcare (including insurance)	16
• education	6
• government/taxes/politics	5
• crime (including drugs and violence)	3
• immigration/illegal immigrants	1
• other (single mentions or categories composing less than 1% of total responses)	30

Public Figure Approval Ratings

Do you approve or disapprove of the way _____ is handling his job as governor?	Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref
Mike Huckabee 1999	66%	13%	21%
2001	70%	17%	13%
2003	47%	38%	16%
2005	58%	27%	15%
Mike Beebe 2007	70%	9%	21%
2008	74%	9%	18%
2009	70%	9%	20%
Do you ... Blanche Lincoln ... as a U.S. Senator?			
1999	46%	17%	37%
2001	51%	13%	36%
2003	55%	10%	35%
2005	55%	17%	28%
2007	50%	24%	26%
2008	54%	20%	27%
2009	43%	34%	23%
Do you ... Mark Pryor ... as a U.S. Senator?			
2003	52%	11%	37%
2005	56%	12%	32%
2007	53%	18%	29%
2008	56%	16%	28%
2009	51%	22%	27%
Do you ... _____ ... as president?			
George W. Bush 2001	87%	9%	3%
2002	61%	32%	7%
2003	47%	46%	7%
2004	50%	45%	5%
2005	38%	56%	7%
2006	36%	58%	6%
2007	30%	65%	6%
2008	27%	67%	7%
Barak Obama 2009	42%	47%	10%

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.

2010 Election

How closely have you followed news about the candidates who are running for the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Blanche Lincoln?	
• very closely	6%
• fairly closely	17%
• not too closely	34%
• not at all closely	42%
• don't know/refused	1%

If that election were held today, would you be most likely to vote for the:			
	all respondents	following "very closely"	registered voters only
• Republican Party's candidate	34%	40%	36%
• Democratic Party's candidate	40%	42%	41%
• other	11%	9%	10%
• don't know/refused	16%	9%	10%

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
2000	39%	15%	42%	4%	
2002	36%	15%	45%	4%	
2004	38%	12%	45%	5%	
2006	37%	11%	47%	5%	
2008	29%	13%	54%	4%	
2009	24%	20%	52%	4%	
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%	
2001	46%	13%	35%	7%	
2003	47%	13%	33%	7%	
2005	44%	9%	39%	8%	
2007	41%	13%	36%	9%	
2009	43%	11%	38%	8%	

Just your best guess, if the healthcare system is changed, do you think the quality of your health care will get better, get worse, or remain about the same?	all	not insured	insured
• better	15%	27%	13%
• worse	44%	23%	48%
• about the same	30%	32%	29%
• don't know/refused	11%	18%	10%
Would you support or oppose having the government create a new health insurance plan to compete with private health insurance plans?			
• support	39%	56%	36%
• oppose	48%	33%	51%
• don't know/refused	13%	11%	13%

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		
	2005	15%
	2006	15%
	2007	16%
	2009	18%
• Gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions or domestic partnerships, but not legally marry		
	2005	22%
	2006	26%
	2007	27%
	2009	22%
• There should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship		
	2005	54%
	2006	54%
	2007	51%
	2009	54%
• don't know/refused		
	2005	9%
	2006	5%
	2007	6%
	2009	6%

And which comes closest to your view about what government policy should be regarding undocumented immigrants currently residing in the United States. Should the government:		
• allow undocumented immigrants to remain in the United States to work for a limited amount of time?		
	2007	9%
	2008	10%
	2009	9%
• allow undocumented immigrants to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain criteria like learning English and paying their back-taxes?		
	2007	55%
	2008	59%
	2009	57%
• deport all undocumented immigrants?		
	2007	27%
	2008	26%
	2009	27%
• allow undocumented immigrants to become permanent residents with no requirements?		
	2007	2%
	2008	2%
	2009	2%
• don't know/refused		
	2007	5%
	2008	4%
	2009	5%

Do you think global warming is an urgent problem requiring immediate attention or a longer-term	
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problem that requires more study before government action is taken?		
• Urgent problem		
	2006	44%
	2007	44%
	2008	44%
	2009	34%
• Longer-term problem		
	2006	46%
	2007	44%
	2008	36%
	2009	46%
• Not a problem (only if volunteered)		
	2006	3%
	2007	5%
	2008	10%
	2009	10%
• Unsure (only if volunteered)		
	2006	3%
	2007	4%
	2008	7%
	2009	6%
• Don't Know/Refused		
	2006	4%
	2007	3%
	2008	3%
	2009	3%

Do you think teachers should or should not be permitted to spank children at school?	
• should	60%
• should not	35%
• don't know/refused	5%

Do you believe the execution of a murderer provides a sense of closure to the family members of the murder victim?	
• yes	59%
• no	26%
• don't know/refused	15%
Do you believe the death penalty in Arkansas costs less than keeping those convicts in prison for life without parole?	
• yes	69%
• no	16%
• don't know/refused	15%
Do you believe having a death penalty in Arkansas effectively discourages others from committing murder?	
• yes	50%
• no	42%
• don't know/refused	7%

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
2001	27%	33%	32%	5%	3%
2003	24%	38%	31%	4%	3%
2005	23%	36%	33%	4%	4%
2007	24%	39%	30%	3%	2%
2009	24%	33%	34%	7%	3%
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
2001	29%	36%	31%		4%
2003	33%	34%	33%		2%
2005	30%	35%	32%		4%
2007	34%	37%	29%		1%
2009	39%	32%	27%		2%
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
2001	17%	39%	38%		6%
2003	17%	36%	39%		7%
2005	13%	40%	39%		8%
2007	16%	37%	39%		6%
2009	14%	37%	42%		7%

Life in Arkansas

Overall, do you feel that Arkansas is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?	Right	Wrong		DK/Refused
2003	63%	26%		11%
2005	73%	18%		9%
2007	69%	21%		8%
2008	71%	19%		10%
2009	72%	16%		12%
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
2003	27%	45%	28%	1%
2005	28%	49%	22%	1%
2007	30%	48%	20%	1%
2008	20%	38%	41%	1%
2009	22%	46%	31%	2%
And, looking ahead, do you think a year from now, you will be ... as now?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/Refused
2003	35%	49%	12%	5%
2005	34%	46%	15%	5%
2007	38%	45%	12%	3%
2008	35%	39%	18%	8%
2009	32%	48%	17%	4%

Methodology and Sample Information

Between October 14th and October 28th the Survey Research Center at the University of Arkansas completed 754 telephone surveys among a random sample of adult Arkansans.² Eighteen percent of all respondents spoke with SRC interviewers via cell phone.

The survey's margin of error statewide is +/- 3.5 percentage points, meaning that we are 95 percent confident that the actual result lies within 3.5 percentage points (in either direction) of the result our sample produced.

Employing guidelines established by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the poll's overall cooperation rate was 50%. This figure reflects completed surveys as a percentage of all eligible individuals contacted.

To assess the representativeness of the sample drawn for the poll, the Arkansas Poll team publishes 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.

	2009 Arkansas Poll Sample	State of Arkansas
Average Age Category (for 18+ pop.)	55-64 years of age	35-44 years of age
Average # persons per household	2.4	2.5
Marital Status	61% married	58% married
Gender	46% male	49% male
Educational Attainment		
high school graduates	89.9%	82.0%
college graduates	32.3%	18.8%
Median household income	\$35,001-\$50,000	\$38,239
Race/Ethnicity		
White	84.4%	80.8%
Black or African American	9.2%	15.8
Multi-Ethnic	2.7%	1.4%
Hispanic	0.9%	5.6% ³
Native American	1.5%	0.9%
Asian	0.3%	1.1%
Something Else, Don't Know, Refused	1.2%	na

Source: All data from the Arkansas Poll, Current Population Survey, the American Community Survey 2008, the U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000, or the U.S. Bureau of the Census State and County QuickFacts 2008.

² Six, or .08%, of the interviews were conducted in Spanish.

³ Hispanics may be of any race, so these respondents also are included in applicable race categories.