



# The Texas Lyceum Poll

## Summary of Findings

The first in what we hope will be an ongoing series of Texas Lyceum Polls shows Texans overwhelmingly concerned with the war in Iraq, support for American troops, immigration and public education.

Our poll was designed to get a picture of Texans' religious views, how they see issues that intertwine public policy and personal (and often spiritual) views, and to get an early glimpse at how the crowded presidential race looks to adults in the Lone Star State.

Texans are religious. They're ambivalent about voting. They're concerned about the direction of the country and of the economy, but relatively optimistic about what's to come, particularly for their children. They haven't settled on their favorite presidential candidates, with undecided voters outnumbering any candidate's supporters in either the Democratic or Republican primaries. And they remain split on some perennial public affairs questions.

## General Information

We interviewed Texas adults during the April 26-May 7 period, talking to 1,002 adults, half of them female, half of them male. Four out of five said they are registered voters.

One third are "extremely interested" in politics and public affairs and another 48% are "somewhat interested." Just over half — 51% — said they vote in "every" or "almost every" election.

About a third of the respondents identified themselves as Hispanic, 11% as African American, and 54% as White. And the level of interest and participation in public affairs varied by race. While 91 percent of Whites say they're interested in politics, and 88 percent of African Americans say they're interested, only 61 percent of Hispanics said so. And that tracks with their own voting assessments: 55% of Whites said they voted most or all of the time, compared to 43% of African Americans and 28% of Hispanics.

Over three-fourths said they have Internet access at home or at work; 13% said they get most of their political information there, roughly matching the number who said they get that information from newspapers and magazines. Most said they rely on broadcast (32%) and cable TV (31%).

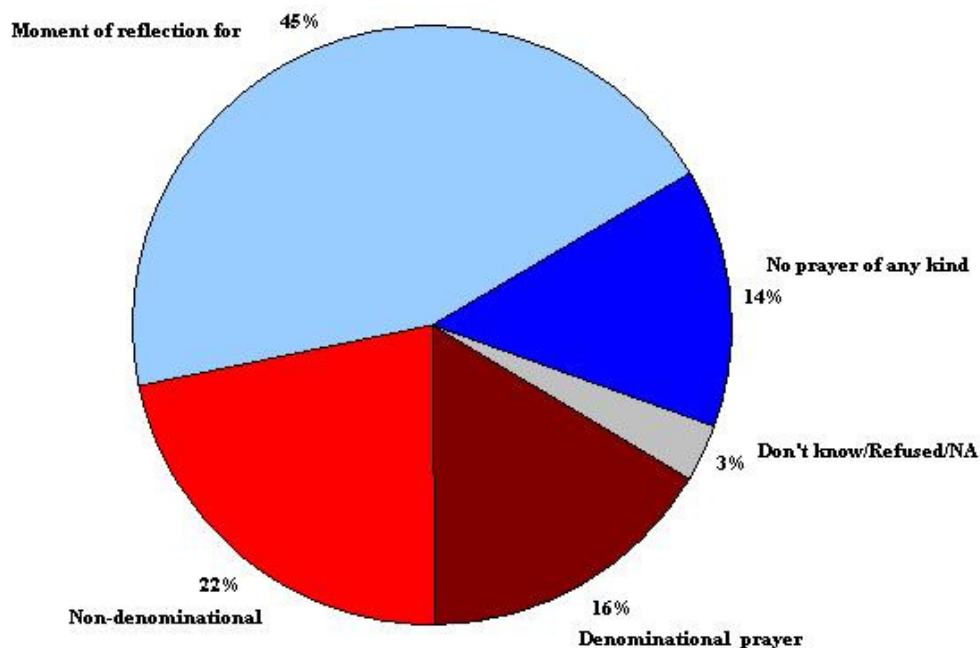
More respondents (40%) identified themselves as Independents than as Republicans (28%) or Democrats (27%). More consider themselves Conservative (41%) than as Moderate (32%) or Liberal (19%).

## Religion

Texans describe themselves as religious and somewhat faithful in the Texas Lyceum Poll. And their responses to questions about faith-based initiatives, prayer in public schools, religious displays, and public funding for private schools show they're somewhat more comfortable with those issues than some of the people they've elected to public office.

Texans have mixed feelings about praying in public schools, with 16% favoring denominational prayers, 22% favoring non-denominational prayers, and 45% in favor of a moment of reflection for personal belief. Just 14% think the schools should allow no prayer of any kind.

**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Attitudes on Prayer in School**

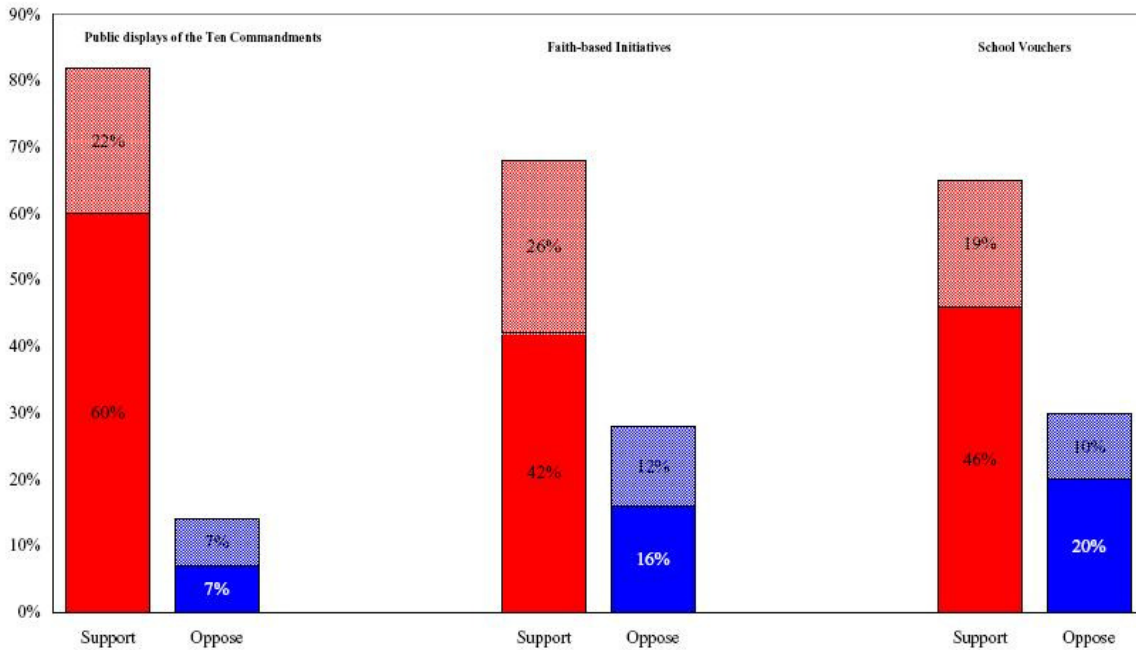


A large majority said they're in favor of displaying the Ten Commandments on the grounds of government offices, either strongly (60%) or somewhat (22%). Another 14% were opposed to such displays.

Faith-based initiatives find favor with most Texans. The majority (68%) support giving taxpayer money to religious organizations that minister to the poor and needy, while 28% oppose such programs. African Americans and Hispanics were more likely to support and less likely to oppose such programs than Whites in the survey.

Almost two-thirds (65%) said they support a program "in which parents are given taxpayer money by the government that they can use to pay for a child's tuition at the school of their choice." Another 30 percent oppose such voucher programs, 20% of them strongly. The racial breakdowns on vouchers tracked those on faith-based initiatives, with Whites more likely to be in opposition and African Americans and Hispanics more likely to support the idea. And younger Texans were more supportive than older ones.

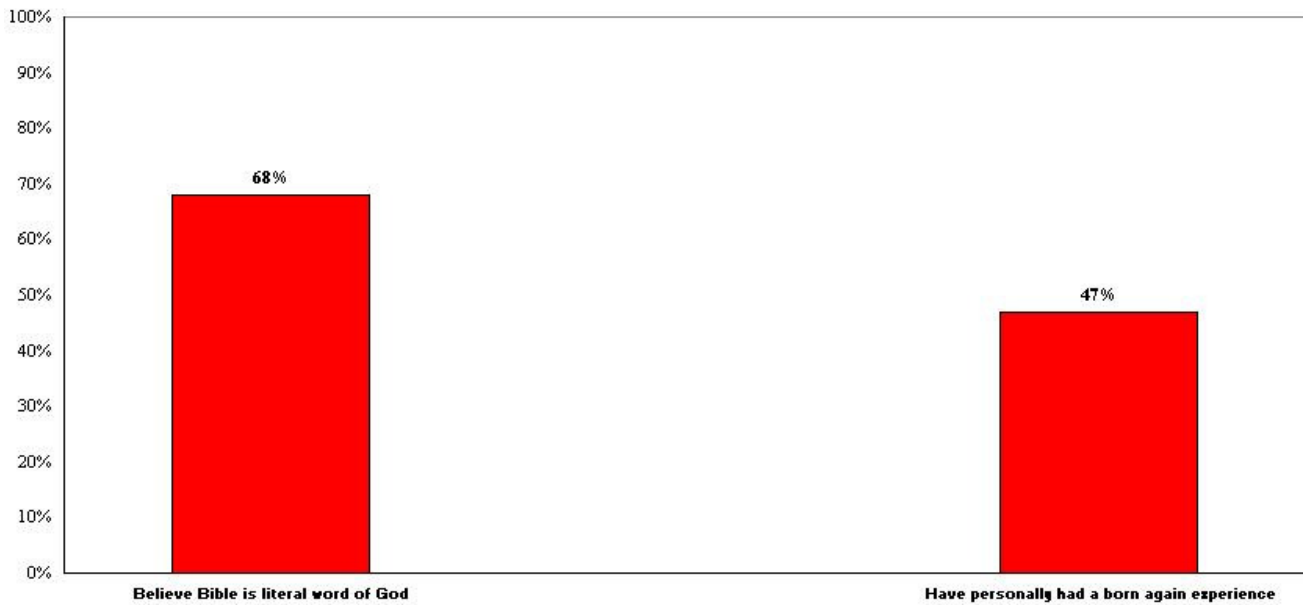
**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Public Attitudes on Values Issues**  
(Solid colors represent "strongly" support/oppose; shaded colors represent "somewhat" support/oppose)



Using drugs in religious ceremonies — "even though this violates federal law" — wasn't a popular idea with the respondents: 77% are opposed to those practices, while 18% support them.

Asked about their personal religious views, 68% said they believe the Bible is the literal word of God. Asked whether they personally have had a born-again experience, 47% said Yes and 49% said No.

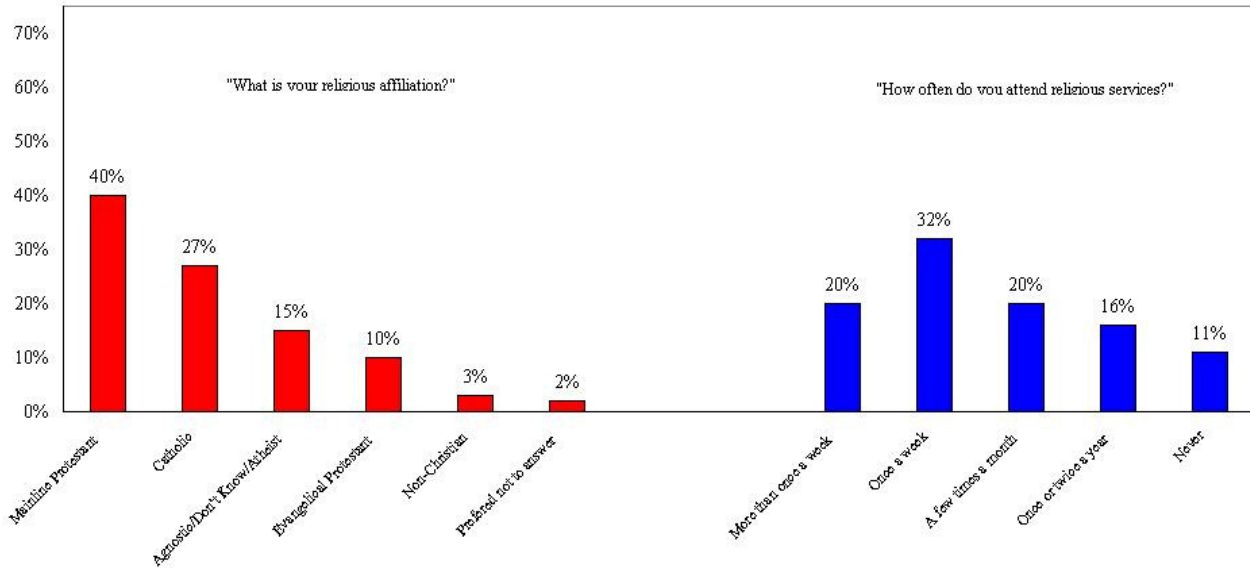
**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Religious Interpretation and Experience**



Almost three-fourths said they regularly attend religious services, either a few times a month (20%), once a week (32%), or more than once a week (20%). Another 16% go once or twice a year and 11% said they never go.

Asked about their denomination, almost half were either Catholic, 27%, or Baptist, 19%. No other response topped 10%.

**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Religious Affiliation and Church Attendance**



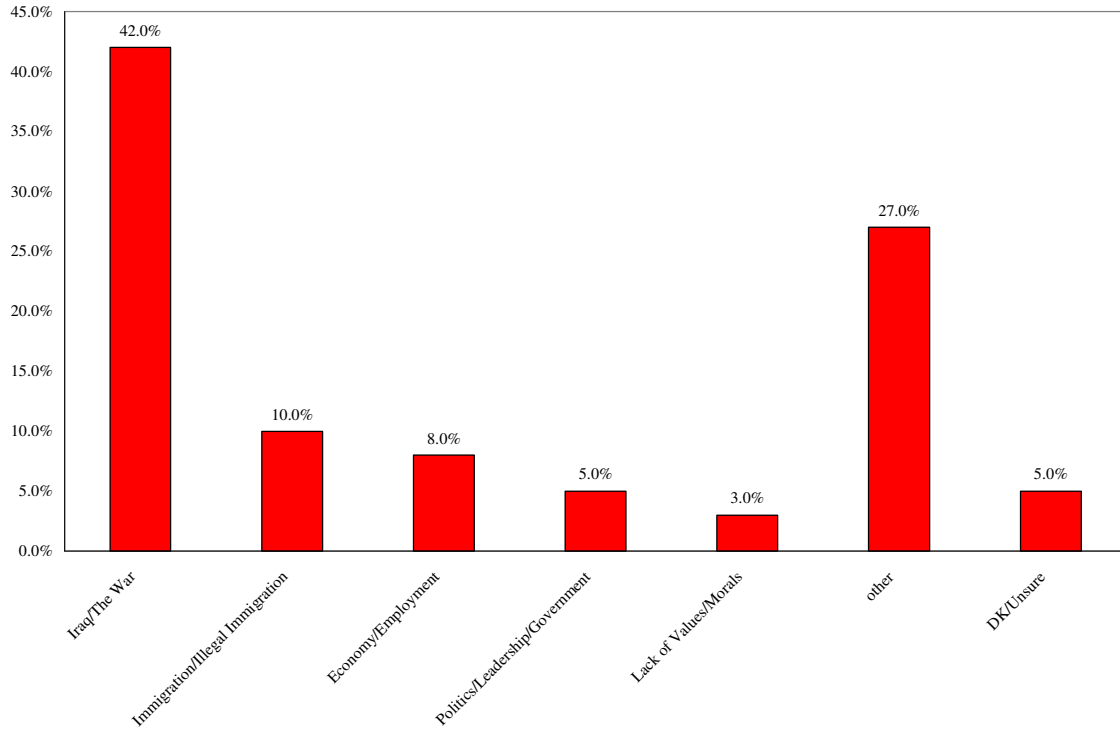
## Issues

The Texas Lyceum Poll found the state worried about the present – particularly the War in Iraq and the U.S. troops there – but optimistic about the future. The issues that have their attention drop off quickly after that big one, but they're concerned about immigration and education

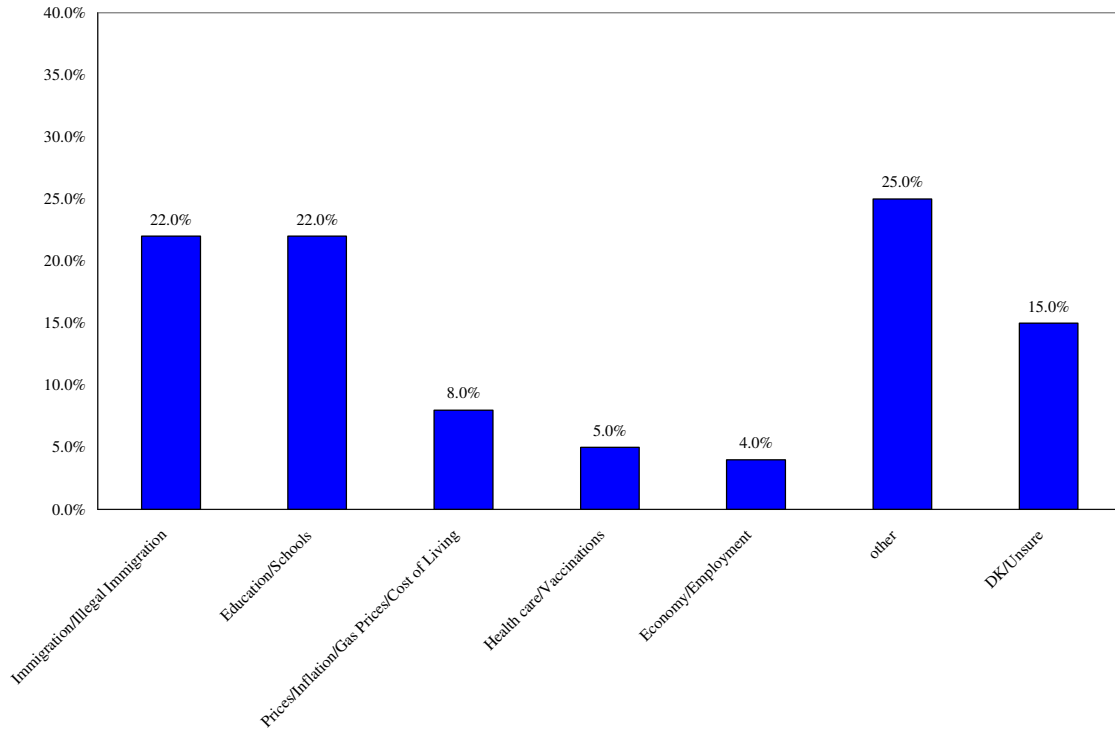
Most of the Texans we surveyed believe the country is on the wrong track (62%) and they overwhelmingly mentioned the War in Iraq/Supporting Troops (42%) when asked an open-ended question about the most important issue facing the country today. The next biggest issue – Immigration/Border Control/Illegal immigrants – was the top concern of one in ten respondents, followed by the economy, politics and government, and lack of values/morals.

Immigration and Education/School Funding are the top issues facing the state, each getting the top response from 22% of those polled. The list was rounded out with gas prices and other utility issues, health care and vaccinations, and the economy and employment.

**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Most important problem facing the United States**



**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Most important issue facing Texas**



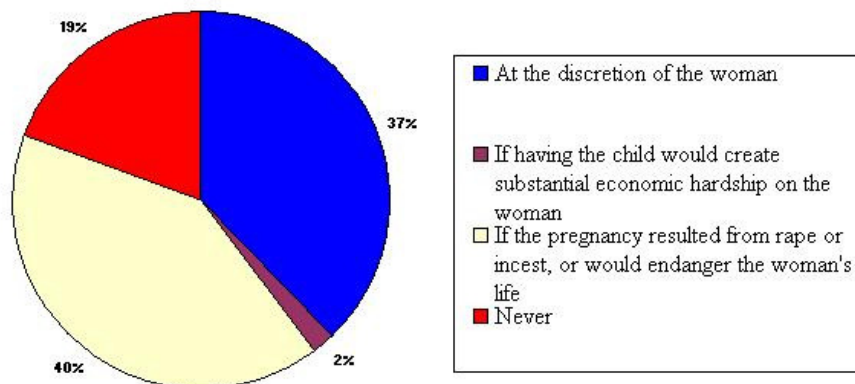
They're more upbeat about economics and the future. More think the country is in the same economic shape it was in a year ago (43%) than think it's worse off (35%) or better off (22%). Half say their own personal economic situation is the same as a year ago, while 32% said they were better off and 19% said they were worse off.

Only 20 percent said their children's economic situations would be the same as their own, while 47% expect their kids to do better economically, and 27% think their children will be worse off. Hispanics were most optimistic here, with 59% predicting their children would be better off than they, compared to 42% of Whites and 33% of African Americans.

We asked respondents for their views on abortion, the death penalty, and stem cell research – recurring issues in state and national politics, and issues that often come up in conversations about religion and politics.

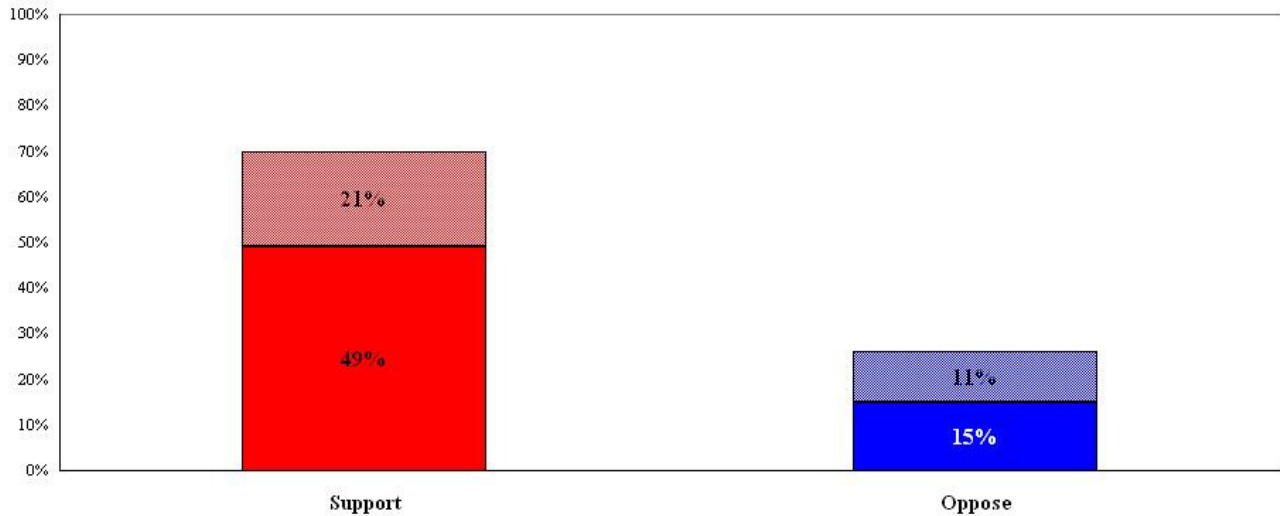
Most said abortions should be permitted under certain circumstances, while 19% said all abortions should be outlawed (including 25% of Hispanics surveyed). Given three circumstances to consider, 37% said decisions about abortion should always be left to the woman, and 40% said abortions should be permitted only in cases of rape, incest or endangerment to the woman's life. Only 2 percent said abortions should be permitted if having a child would create a substantial economic hardship for the woman.

#### 2007 Texas Lyceum Poll - Public Attitudes on Abortion



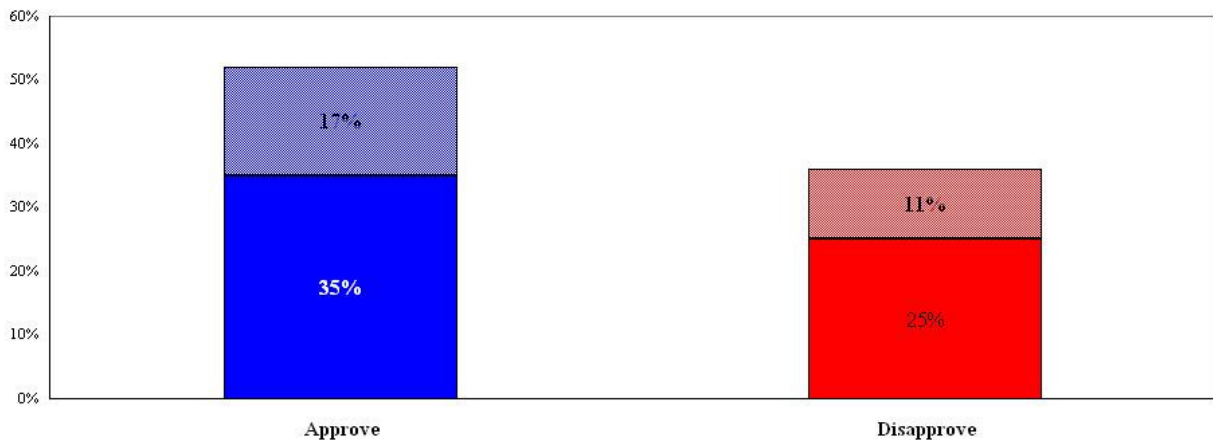
Most Texans support the death penalty for those convicted of violent crimes, 49% strongly so, and 21% percent somewhat so. Just over a quarter oppose it, 15% of them strongly and 11% somewhat. The racial divides were significant on this question. African Americans (45%-to-50%) and Hispanics (60%-to-31%) were less likely to support the death penalty and more likely to oppose it than Whites (80-to-18%). There wasn't an appreciable gender gap on the abortion question, but men in the survey were more likely than women to favor the death penalty.

2007 Texas Lyceum Poll - Public Attitudes on the Death Penalty



Texans are split a little more evenly over embryonic stem cell research. More approve of federal government funding for such research (52%) than oppose it (36%), but the number of people without an opinion was a relatively high 12%.

2007 Texas Lyceum Poll - Public Attitudes towards Federal Funding of Embryonic Stem Cell Research



## *Electoral Politics/State of the Union*

The Texas Lyceum Poll found support for presidential candidates splintered, with nobody from either party winning the support of more than one in five voters in their own primaries.

Asked where they'd vote if the presidential primaries were held now, 36% said they'd vote in the Democratic primary, 30% would turn out for the Republican primary, and 24% said they'd skip the primaries. Women were more likely to vote in the Democratic primary than men; men were more likely to skip.

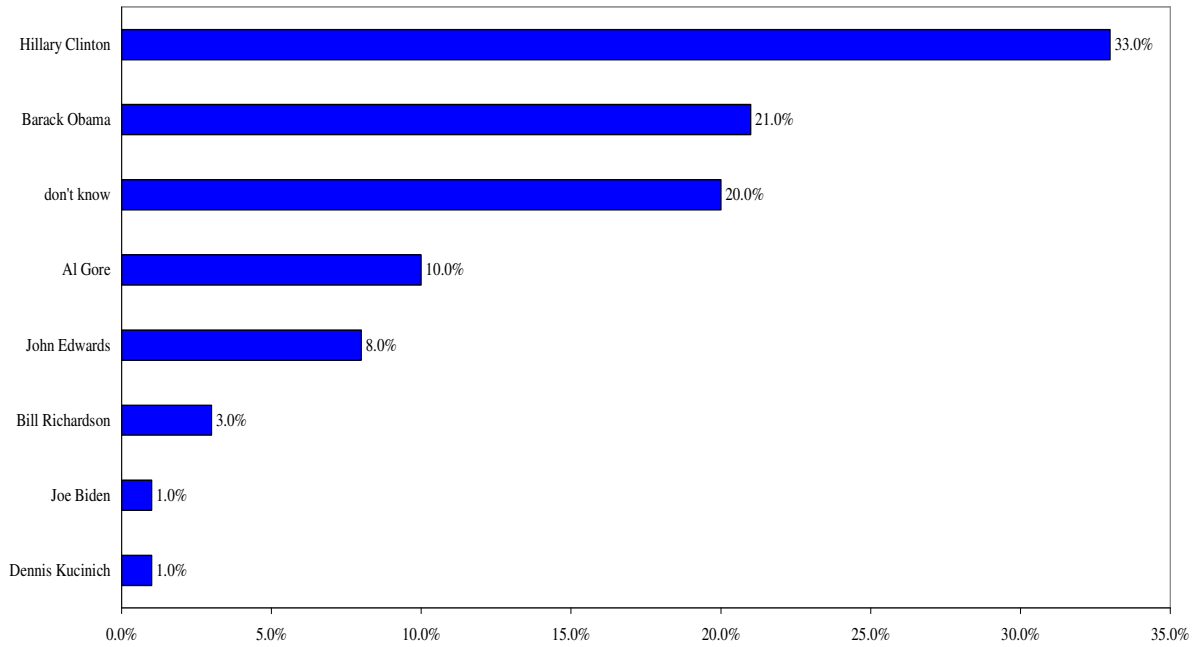
The leading Democrat among the registered voters in our survey was Hillary Clinton (33%), followed by Barack Obama (21%), Al Gore (10%), John Edwards (8%), Bill Richardson (3%), Joe Biden (1%), and Dennis Kucinich (1%). About one in five voters – 21% – didn't name a favorite.

Clinton did better than Obama with African Americans and Hispanics in the poll, while Obama had an edge with White voters on the Democratic side. One gender difference was that women were more likely than men to support Clinton and more men than women were likely to support Gore.

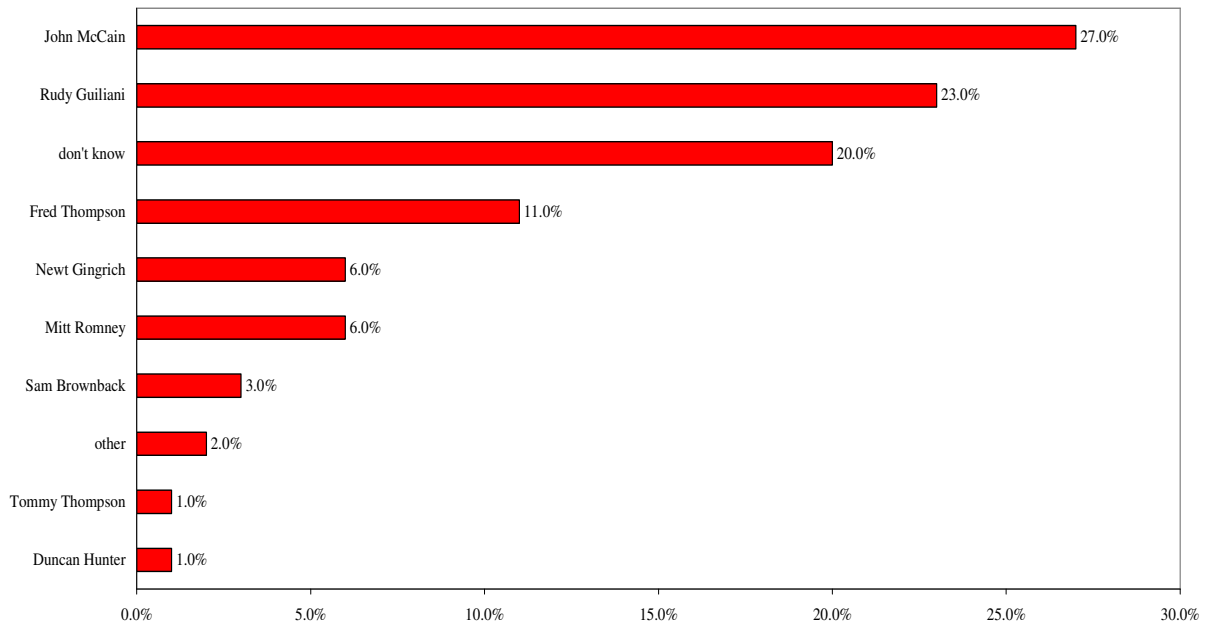
The leading Republican among registered voters in our poll was John McCain (27%), followed by Rudy Giuliani (23%), Fred Thompson (11%), Newt Gingrich (6%), Mitt Romney (6%), Sam Brownback (3%), Tommy Thompson (1%), Duncan Hunter (1%), and Ron Paul (0%). As with the Democrats, 21% didn't name a favorite in the GOP primary.

Giuliani outdid McCain with White voters on the Republican side, while McCain did better with African Americans. Hispanics were split, giving Giuliani a slight edge. Women on the GOP side were much more likely to be undecided and were less supportive than men of either of the front-runners.

**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
2008 Democratic Presidential Primary**  
(36% of Texans intend to vote in the Democratic Primary)



**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
Republican Presidential Primary**  
(30% of Texans intend to vote in the Republican Primary)

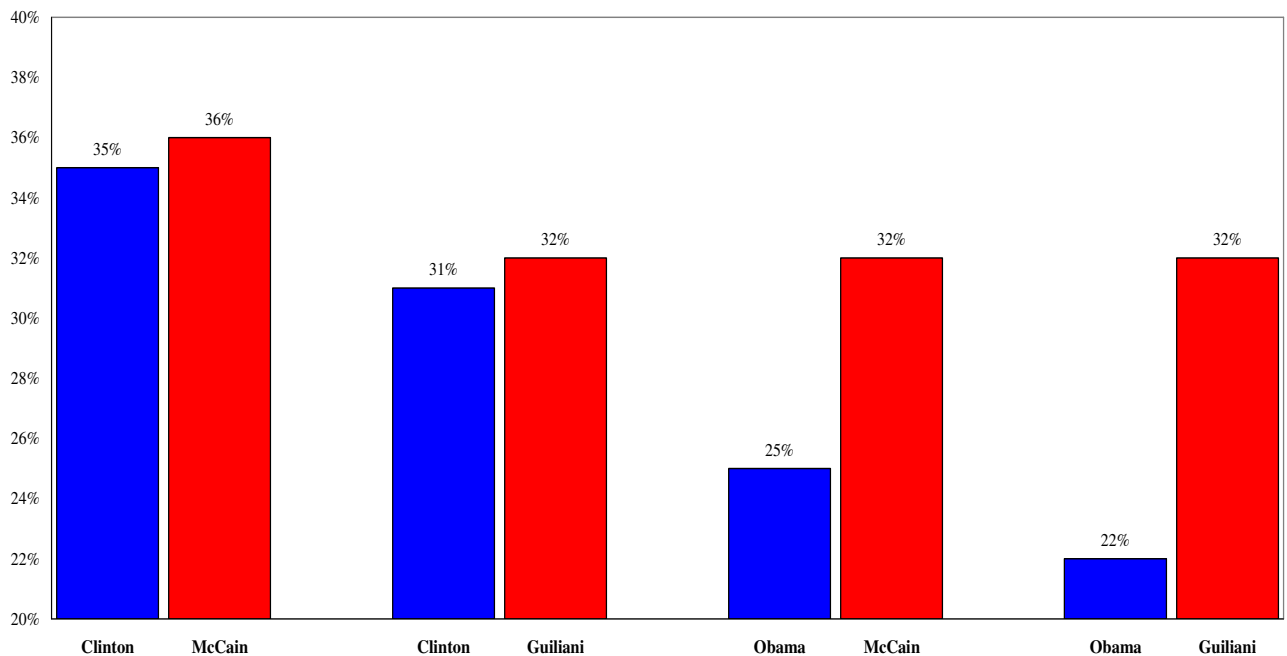


In trial head-to-head match-ups, John McCain beat Hillary Clinton by one percentage point (he won with Whites while she had more minority support), although this is a virtual tie with a margin of error for the survey at 3%. Giuliani beat Clinton by the same amount in a trial heat, but more people were undecided in that contest. The racial breakdown on that was similar to the first race, though Giuliani's support among African Americans is very thin.

Both Republicans in our poll beat Barack Obama, McCain by seven percentage points, and Giuliani by ten. Obama carried Hispanics in the first contest, and African Americans in the second, but lost among most other groups.

Clinton did better with women than men, beating either McCain or Giuliani handily. With men, the McCain race was a tossup, and she was behind Giuliani by a percentage point. Obama didn't do as well: Women in the survey favored McCain (men did, too, but only by two percentage points). Both women and men put Giuliani in front of Obama.

**2007 Texas Lyceum Poll -  
2008 Presidential Election Preferences**  
(among self-identified registered voters)



## Methodology

The 2007 Texas Lyceum Poll is a random-digit dial telephone survey of Texas adults. Telephone coverage within the state of Texas is approximately 97%. Randomized selection procedures were assiduously followed throughout the process, even at the level of selecting individuals within the household. The final sample size is 1,002 adult Texans. The instrument itself relies on questions that have been used previously in national polls, and have been shown to be both valid (correlating with plausible independent and dependent variables) and reliable (robust to question order and interviewer effects). A Spanish version of the instrument was developed and respondents were given a choice of participating in English or Spanish. Bilingual interviewers were utilized, and approximately 60 interviews (6% of the sample) were completed in Spanish. The overall response rate (completed interviews / contacts) is 40%. This rate is partially the result of an extended time in the field, which facilitated call-backs. The overall margin of error for the sample is +/- 3.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The data used to generate top-lines and tables are weighted by U.S. Census Bureau estimates with respect to age, gender, and race. For example, Census data indicate the proportion of 18-29 year old Hispanic females in Texas, and we use these estimates to weight the survey data. As expected, the most significant weights are applied to young, male, minority respondents (who are under-represented here, as they are in almost all polls in the U.S.).

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