

# NNSP

NATIONAL NETWORK OF STATE POLLS

## MEET THE NNSP: Oregon Survey Research Laboratory

by Patricia Gwartney

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### HISTORY

The University of Oregon (UO) established the Oregon Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL) in 1992 with a \$38,000 strategic planning grant to Founding Director Patricia A. Gwartney (Professor, Sociology). In its first year—with a half-time director, a half-time graduate research assistant, and a dozen student interviewers and assistants, but lacking its own space—OSRL conducted seven studies: two mail-out/mail-back surveys and five list-sample telephone surveys.

OSRL now averages 35 studies annually; employs 14 professional research staff, four staff interviewers in benefited positions and 24 part-time professional interviewers; and hosts one post-doctoral fellow, one Faculty Fellow, and several Research Affiliates. UO students comprise less than one-quarter of interviewers. In its first decade, OSRL conducted more than 280 studies and generated over \$8 million in research revenues.

### MISSION AND GOALS

OSRL's central mission is to serve as a resource and intellectual home for UO faculty, staff and students involved in survey-related research. Its goals are to:

1. Provide survey-related research to UO faculty, staff and students, with secondary priority to government agencies, other research organizations, and non-profit organizations;
2. Provide means for training and instructing students in survey methods;
3. Facilitate research broadly concerned with the structure and organization of the social world, state and local problems, and related areas of social policy;
4. Conduct and promote research in survey methodology.

In 2001, a national panel of external reviews concluded that OSRL meets these goals very well.

OSRL serves as a scholarly, operational and administrative base for survey-related research for UO staff and students. Colleagues at other universities avail themselves of OSRL's opportunities in collaborative undertakings. OSRL's student research training includes interviewing experience, class lectures, seminars, and study consultation. Student workers supplement their OSRL wages with academic credit.

OSRL's research principally concerns designing and conducting surveys on selected target populations using techniques within survey methodology's current paradigms. OSRL is specially equipped to conduct telephone interviews with its Windows-based computer-aided telephone interviewing system (WinCATI). Its home-grown software utilities facilitate

instrument programming, sampling and survey products (see page 3 at <http://osrl.uoregon.edu/papers/annual/annrept98.html>). OSRL also conducts mail surveys, face-to-face interviews, online web-based surveys, in-depth interviews, on-site intercept interviews, focus groups, observational studies, and document surveys (e.g., organizational newsletters). OSRL tailors study designs to each investigation's unique needs, including atypical survey conditions. OSRL encourages investigators to combine its research offerings and options to best satisfy each project's unique demands.

OSRL provides technical and consultative research support to local, state and federal agencies and other research organizations, non-profit organizations, and individuals. On a space-available basis, OSRL undertakes research with private for-profit organizations.

OSRL is one of 35 research centers and institutes administratively accountable to UO's Vice President for Research. The research and ethical standards of both UO and American Association for Public Opinion Research govern OSRL's practices.

## RESEARCH PROGRAMS

OSRL's **Faculty Fellows Program** develops UO faculty members' skills in research design, sam-

pling, instrument design, data collection, data reduction, and analysis, while enhancing the funded research capabilities of faculty. An annual cross-campus competition selects a Faculty Fellow to reside in OSRL half-time for the next academic year. Faculty Fellows' range of activities comprises:

- developing fundable research proposals, to eventually run through OSRL;
- embedding pilot research ideas in ongoing projects, thereby contributing to OSRL's basic research program;
- writing survey-based research articles;
- receiving methodological training to enhance future teaching and research;
- conducting research on the survey research process.

OSRL's **Research Affiliates Program** facilitates campus and community scholars' research by advancing their survey methods knowledge, encouraging their research, and promoting OSRL's mission and goals. Research Affiliate Anthony Leiserowitz, an environmental studies doctoral student, recently conducted the "American Opinions on Global Warming" survey through OSRL, funded by the National Science Foundation.

In 1998, Gwartney and a talented team of survey methods graduate students initiated the **Oregon Annual Social Indicators Survey (OASIS)**. This omnibus statewide random-digit-dial telephone survey allows state agencies, university researchers and graduate students to purchase questions and question modules. OSRL's **basic research program** focuses upon a symbolic interactionist approach to respondent task dedication and task alienation; affective imagery; item nonresponse; question-wording experiments; the changing composition of RDD surveys' dial attempts; and various sampling experiments in mail and telephone surveys. Data for this research typically emerge from client-funded surveys (e.g., aggregate analyses of dial attempts and "don't know"

answers) and from experiments embedded in such surveys (e.g., variations in question wording or mail survey precontact)—with clients' advance permission, of course. OSRL's annual report describes its basic research advances each September.

## FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

OSRL resides in approximately 2,500 square feet, sharing the fourth floor of UO's McKenzie Hall with the Social Science Data Services Laboratory (a data archive) and Social Science Instructional Laboratory (for student statistics and Geographic Information Service training).

OSRL routinely operates 35 desktop and laptop computers running Microsoft Windows NT/2000 on Dell Optiplex workstations, including 19 WinCATI stations (expandable to 25 or more using the sister labs' shared resources). Other equipment includes six printers and three in-house servers running Microsoft Windows NT 4.0 Server. OSRL has approximately 45 connections to UO's Ethernet network, approximately 50 telephone lines (including 1-800 numbers for certain projects), a fax machine, and a scanner. OSRL also can access the various technical equipment, telecommunications resources, and repair and support services UO provides all research institutes.

OSRL staff utilizes a wide array of software for sampling, data collection, analysis, and reporting, including Microsoft Office, SPSS, Sawtooth's WinCATI and Ci3, and all standard Internet tools. For more specialized data analysis, OSRL staff uses SSIL's statistical software (e.g., AMOS for structural equation modeling with latent variables). For qualitative data analyses, OSRL staff members use Ethnograph, NUD\*IST, and SPSS TextSmart. OSRL's online surveys run on home-grown software.

## FUTURE

In June 2003, OSRL's Founding Director Patricia Gwartney steps down, with relief, after an intense decade. Persons in two new positions replace her: Director of Administration Bob Choquette and Director of Research Woody Carter.

## NNSP UPDATE

by Ronald E. Langley

Greetings! We are happy to be finally resuming the NNSP Newsletter. We will be publishing a regular newsletter each spring and fall. Following a previous call for submissions, we did not receive enough of a response to publish a newsletter. The submissions that were received at that time are included among the following studies and are now a bit dated. As we resume publishing the newsletter on a regular basis, this type of backlog will not occur. Submissions can be sent to [jmbroc1@uky.edu](mailto:jmbroc1@uky.edu).

## ANNUAL NNSP/ASRO SESSION AT AAPOR CONFERENCE

In May, we had our annual joint NNSP/ASRO (Academic Survey Research Organizations) session in Nashville, Tennessee, during the 2003 American Association for Public Opinion Research Conference. For the second year in a row, we held a Friday morning breakfast meeting that worked out nicely, despite some attendees needing to leave early to catch morning panels. It seems that having the breakfast meeting allows more members to join us because it does not conflict with Thursday afternoon short courses. This year we had a lively discussion about how organizations are dealing with the increasing incidence of state "do not call" lists, caller ID, and



restrictions at some academic survey organizations regarding using lotteries or raffles as a respondent incentive. We also presented an update on the state of the NNSP Data Archives (see more below). We had 30 attendees at this year's session, including 17 NNSP member representatives. In addition, 11 other NNSP members attended AAPOR and/or the International

Field Directors and Technolo-

### NNSP DATA ARCHIVE

gies Conference. One of the most important accomplishments of the NNSP in recent years has been the creation of the NNSP Data Archive. The archived data are included in the Odum Institute's Public Opinion Poll Question Database, which allows researchers to search by question wording, date, and state to identify questions of interest. The index displays the full question text and marginals for each item retrieved. It is useful to researchers who wish to look up marginals for particular items, as well as to those who wish to examine previously asked questions for the purpose of designing their own questionnaires. The index is accessible at no charge to any researcher with an internet connection. The NNSP archive currently contains over 550 state-level studies consisting of over 59,000 questions and over 600,000 respondents.

The archive has proven to be quite useful to public opinion researchers, with over 12,000 searches of the database since 1998 (with over 8,500 datasets downloaded). The NNSP Data Archive regularly appears on college course syllabi and has been written up as a valuable social science research tool in professional organization publications such as *The Federalism Report* (Winter/Spring 2002). The NNSP organization and the archive will also have an entry in the

forthcoming *Polling America: An Encyclopedia of Public Opinion*, which should ensure increased exposure.

The one thing impeding the usefulness of the archive is that only a few of the contributing survey organizations have regularly updated their contributions. Thus, many valuable longitudinal items stop in the mid-1990s. In some instances this is due to particular polls no longer being conducted. I will be contacting NNSP members throughout the summer to see what can be done to encourage more contributions to the archive. In the meantime, anyone wishing to contribute statewide surveys to the archive can download the data deposit forms at <http://survey.rgs.uky.edu/nnspp/Deposit.pdf>.

## CURRENT RESEARCH

### NORTH CAROLINA HOUSEHOLDS' RESPONSE TO DECEMBER 2002 ICE STORM

*Copyright, The Howard W. Odum Institute for Research in Social Science*

In early December 2002, millions of North Carolinians experienced what in years to come may be remembered as The Great Ice Storm. According to power company reports, more than 1.5 million customers lost service that day. Overnight temperatures in the teens meant more than a little discomfort. Some households were still waiting to get power back more than a week after the storm.

Scientific surveys of households affected by natural disasters are rare. What was the true cost of the storm—not just in restoring power outages but in days of work missed, spoiled food, and damage to houses and apartments? How did people feel about how power companies, local governments and the governor responded?



To find answers to these and other questions, the Odum Institute and RTI International conducted a telephone survey of 457 randomly selected households in 36 counties between December 21 and December 29, 2002. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.7%.

Nearly four out of five households (78%) in the 36 ice storm counties lost power. About 58% lost heat but only about one out of four of the households (28%) reported losing telephone service. Roughly one out of five households (19%) went without water. Although only about 55% of those with wells were without water, of those households that did lose water, most (92%) rely on wells for their water supply. The majority of households that lost one of these services lost that service for two or more days. While only 14 percent had access to a back-up generator, two-thirds of those surveyed (67%) had alternative ways of heating their household. Slightly more than 80% of those with other sources of heat relied on gas or wood fireplaces, or kerosene heaters.

“There is only so much information that can be collected by utility companies and local governments,” said Dr. Kenneth Bollen, director of the UNC Odum Institute. “The Odum Institute-RTI Ice Storm Survey was designed to collect neglected but important information on households in the affected counties.”

The survey found that about 71% of all full- and part-time working respondents reported missing work, with one day missed being most typical. The most common reason was that their place of employment was closed. But 19% of these respondents reported that they could not get to work. About half of the households reported that downed trees or electric wires were blocking at least some roads in their neighborhood.

Over a quarter of the households (28%) reported spending nights away from home, with a median stay of three nights. Fortunately, only a minority

(14%) had damage to their homes. The average estimate for the cost of repairs was \$400. An even smaller percentage (2%) of households had anyone injured from the storm. Finally, about 50% of those households with no power had spoiled food. The median estimate of the value of the lost food was \$100.

Were households willing to do anything to lessen the damage the next time we have a storm? When asked about proposals to trim back trees further from power lines, 80% expressed a willingness to do so. A substantial minority (47%) was willing to pay extra on their monthly bill to bury the power lines in their communities.

Ratings of the performance of Duke Power and Progress Energy (CP&L) in restoring power after last December's ice storm lagged behind those of smaller utilities. About three-quarters of the households lost power, and the average number of days without power was about two and half days for both Duke Power and Progress Energy households and about one and half days for households that relied on other electric service providers. Most of these other providers are municipal electric companies and electric cooperatives. The differences between smaller utilities and the two larger power companies were statistically significant.

The survey asked people how they felt about the performance of their power company. Using a 10-point scale, they were asked to rate how much they agreed with the statement: ‘I was very satisfied with my electric power company's response to the ice storm.’ Lower numbers indicated disagreement; higher numbers represented agreement. The average scores for all Duke Power and Progress Energy households were 6.6 and 6.5,



respectively. The smaller utilities' average score was about a point higher at 7.6.

"Aside from the significant differences in scores for smaller power companies and the two larger companies," Bollen said, "We found that the fewer days a household went without power, the higher they rated the performance of the power companies. In fact, the days without power

seem to explain why smaller companies came out better on the performance ratings. They were quicker to restore power, on average, than Duke Power and Progress Energy. Being quicker led to higher satisfaction ratings for the smaller companies."

The survey posed similar satisfaction questions on the performance of the governor and local governments. Using the same 10-point scale, those with no loss of power had an average score of about seven for their satisfaction ratings of both local government and the governor. Each day without power led to a decline in the household's rating of government's response to the storm. Bollen noted that "Though most of our attention is directed towards the power companies, there is some fallout for local government officials and the Governor. Longer delays in power restoration mean lower satisfaction with government's response. Both the politicians and the power companies have a strong incentive to expedite repairs."

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS Arizona

*Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory surveyed 405 adult Arizona residents by telephone March 29–April 3, 2002. The overall margin of error was +/- 5%. Copyright, SRL.*

### TECHNOLOGY USE

Over half (54%) of Arizona residents surveyed believed that new technologies make life easier, rather than more complicated (19%). Respondents reported high rates of adoption of new technologies: 90% own a CD player, 84% have a computer at home, 76% have an internet connection at home, 66% have cell phones, 44% own a DVD player, 25% have a satellite television connection at home, and 10% have a personal digital assistant. Fully 81% of respondents reported accessing the internet, and 72% send and receive electronic mail. A large majority (72%) thought that cell-phone use while driving should be prohibited, except in emergencies.

### INDIAN GAMING

Of those surveyed, 35% reported having gambled in an Indian casino in Arizona in the past year, while 51% had played the lottery in that time period. Most (74%) thought that casino gambling provided more advantages than disadvantages to Arizona Indian tribes. A small majority (51%) of respondents favored increasing the number of slot machines in Arizona Indian casinos, while only 37% supported allowing slot machines in locations in Arizona outside Indian reservations. Raising the legal age for gambling in Arizona Indian casinos from 18 to 21 was favored by 64% of those surveyed.

### GOVERNOR'S RACE

Half (51%) of respondents had not heard anything about the upcoming governor's race. Among the potential Republican candidates for governor, Joe Arpaio was familiar to the greatest percentage of respondents (57%), while Janet Napolitano was the Democrat familiar to the most respondents (64%). Of the Arizona officials assessed, Napolitano had the highest approval rating (55%) for her performance as Arizona Attorney General.



*Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory conducted its Fall 2002 Grand Canyon State Poll in three parts. Copyright, SRL. The SRL surveyed 803 likely Arizona voters by telephone September 12–September 14, 2002. The overall margin of error was +/- 3.5%.*

### CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION

Respondents were evenly split in their support for Democrat George Cordova and Republican Rick Renzi (37% each) in the race for the House seat in newly created Arizona District 1. Over half (55%) said that they were more interested in candidates' stands on issues than their personal qualities. The economy was identified by 19% of respondents as the most important issue facing the district, followed by education (13%).

*The SRL surveyed 569 likely Arizona voters by telephone September 26–September 29, 2002. The overall margin of error was +/- 4.2%. Copyright, SRL.*

### GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION

Republican Matt Salmon was supported by 41% of respondents in the race to become Arizona's next governor. Democrat Janet Napolitano garnered 38% support, making the race a statistical dead heat. More than half (55%) of those surveyed identified the economy as the most important issue facing the state.

*The SRL surveyed 600 likely Arizona voters by telephone October 17–October 20, 2002. The overall margin of error was +/- 4.1%. Copyright, SRL.*

### CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION

Republican Rick Renzi jumped to a 12-point lead over Democrat George Cordova in the Congressional District 1 race.

*Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory surveyed 400 adult Arizona residents by telephone March 6–March 11, 2003. The overall margin of error was +/- 5%. Copyright, SRL.*

### WAR IN IRAQ

More Arizonans (45%) expressed a preference for making diplomatic efforts to resolve the Iraq situation than favored military action even without the support of major allies (39%) or military action only with the support of major allies (8%). Despite the preference of many for diplomacy, 72% of respondents would support military action if the president deemed it necessary to disarm Iraq and 76% would support military action if the president deemed it necessary to end Saddam Hussein's rule.

### ASSISTED SUICIDE

A majority of Arizonans surveyed (57%) believe that physician-assisted suicide should be made legal for terminally ill patients. Forty-seven percent reported that they would personally consider assisted suicide if they were terminally ill and living in severe pain.

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

Senator John McCain received a 70% job-approval rating from Arizonans, and Arizona registered voters strongly favored him over potential candidates Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio and Congressman Jeff Flake (66%, 11%, and 8%, respectively) in the 2004 Republican primary election for McCain's Senate seat. Newly elected Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano received a 47% approval rating, while 15% disapproved and 38% didn't know enough about her performance

to give a rating. Respondents identified “education” (32%) and “the economy” (29%) as the most important issues facing the new governor. Most (58%) respondents thought Napolitano has a clear vision for Arizona’s future, while 19% disagreed. More Arizona registered voters (43%) indicated they were likely to vote for the Republican presidential candidate in the 2004 election than for the

Democrat (29%).

## Georgia

The Spring 2002 Georgia Poll was conducted March 19–April 2, 2002, and was funded by client submissions to the Omnibus Survey. Data collected during the Spring 2002 study included approval ratings of national and Georgia-elected leaders, elections, the war on terrorism, and items about the state flag issue in Georgia. A total of 427 Georgia residents 18 years and older were interviewed using CATI. Respondents were selected randomly using RDD sampling methods. The cooperation for the study was 42.7%.

The Fall 2002 Georgia Poll was conducted October 14–31, 2002, and was funded by client submission to the Omnibus Survey. Data collected during the Fall 2002 study included election questions on the Georgia gubernatorial election, the Georgia U.S. Senate election, and approval ratings for Georgia-elected leaders and national leaders. Additional items included items on the state flag in Georgia, the war on terrorism, and patriotism following the 9/11 attacks. A total of 402 Georgia residents aged 18 or older were interviewed using CATI. Respondents for the study were selected randomly using RDD sampling methods. The cooperation rate for the study was 43.0%.

## Maryland

*This survey was conducted by Gonzales/Arscott Research & Communications Inc. January 16–20, 2003. A total of 807 registered voters in Maryland were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of calls was made into each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns. The margin for error is no more than plus or minus 3.5%. Copyright, Gonzales/Arscott.*

### MOST IMPORTANT STATE ISSUE

Forty-six percent of Maryland voters named the budget deficit as the most important issue facing the governor and the legislature, far eclipsing any other issue in importance. When we last asked Maryland voters to name the most important issue, last September, it took half that—just 23%—to make the looming budget deficit their top concern. Education is a distant second at 12%, followed by the economy at 10%. Lesser concerns were health care/prescription drugs (7%), traffic/transportation (6%), crime/drugs (5%), taxes (3%), environment (3%), slots at racetracks (2%), gun control (1%), and growth/development (1%). The remaining 2% gave no answer.

### SLOTS AT RACETRACKS

There is both good news and bad news for the Ehrlich Administration on the issue of slots. First, the good news: A narrow plurality of Maryland voters continues to support the introduction of slot machines at Maryland racetracks. Favorable sentiment held steady at 46% since our August 2002 survey on this subject.

The bad news for Ehrlich is that the number of those who say they oppose slots inched up three points from 37% to 40% over the last six months, and there have been some dramatic shifts in support in some of the survey’s demographic subgroups, even as the top line numbers held pretty steady.



Democrats, for example, favored slots at racetracks 47% to 36% in August, but oppose them now, 49% to 41%. Ehrlich has been more persuasive with his fellow Republicans, who now favor slots 49% to 32% (43% to 40% in August). Independents were among the biggest boosters of slots in August (50% to 33%); they are even more sold on the idea now, with 63% favoring slots at racetracks. Among the state's regions, the most dramatic shift occurred among Eastern Shore voters. While they still favor slots at racetracks by a narrow margin (37% to 34%), the number of undecided voters has doubled since August (from 14% to 29%), no doubt reacting to news that the owners of Ocean Downs want in on the action despite Ehrlich's declaration that such a notion is a "non-starter." And a slots gender gap is starting to open up: Support among men increased from 45% to 56% in the six months since our last survey on this subject, while sentiment among women flipped completely, from 47% to 39% in favor back in August to 47% to 37% opposed today.

### SLOTS FOR EDUCATION

A second question repeated from our August survey asked if voters would "favor or oppose allowing slot machines at Maryland racetracks if the revenue raised was dedicated to public education." With this caveat, 56% say they favor slots, while 36% are opposed. This is slightly down from the August numbers, when 61% jumped on the "slots for tots" option, while 32% opposed the idea. The fact that Ehrlich's budget, released while this survey was in the field, does not dedicate the revenue may have had some impact on the results.

### CLOSING THE GAP

Compared to any other remedy for bridging Maryland's yawning budget gap, however, slots look pretty good to Free State voters. A third repeated question—this one from our July survey—asked respondents for their preference

among five rotated alternatives for closing the state's budget deficit, and revealed slots at racetracks to be the least distasteful option. Thirty-five percent said that slots at racetracks was the best way to reduce the deficit, followed by increasing the income tax rate for households earning more than \$100,000 (24%), and cutting spending in state programs (23%). Tampering with the sales tax proved to be extremely unpopular, either by raising the tax rate (5%) or by expanding the sales tax to include services (4%). The remaining 9% offered no answer. In July 2002, a combined 60% of voters opted to close the budget deficit via slots and spending cuts. In January 2003, that number was 58%.

### FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE

Governor Ehrlich's thematic inaugural address wasn't heavy on policy, but he did make a point of mentioning his plans for a Maryland faith-based initiative. Forty-five percent of Marylanders surveyed said they favor a plan allowing religious institutions to deliver services once the exclusive province of government, while 30% said they were opposed. A substantial 25% of voters was undecided.

### GEORGE W. BUSH

President George W. Bush's numbers are identical to those he enjoyed when we last questioned voters about him in September 2002. Fifty-four percent have a favorable opinion of Bush, 29% hold an unfavorable opinion, and 17% are neutral.

### MOST IMPORTANT NATIONAL ISSUE

Foreign policy issues dominate when voters are asked to name the most important issue facing

the president and Congress. Invading Iraq (32%) and the threat of terrorism (27%) captured the attention of 59% of Maryland voters, while the economy grabbed another 25%. Lesser concerns were health care/prescription drugs (6%), taxes (3%), the budget deficit (2%), the environment (2%), and crime/drugs (1%). The remaining 2% offered no answer.

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*This survey was conducted by Gonzales/Arscott March 14–17, 2003. A total of 838 registered voters in Maryland were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of calls was made into each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns. The margin for error is no more than plus or minus 3.5 %. Copyright, Gonzales/Arscott.*

## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

It looms larger and larger in every survey. Maryland's burgeoning budget deficit is deemed to be the most important issue facing the state today by 51% of voters surveyed, up from 46% in January, and way up from 24% in October. Education continues to hold a distant second place with 12%, with slots at racetracks at 8% (up from 2% in January). All other issues are in the low single digits.

## SLOTS AT RACETRACKS

While the level of support for slots at racetracks continues to hold steady, the level of opposition is growing persistently, from 37% in August, to 40% in January, and to 45% today. Forty-seven percent say they favor allowing slot machines at racetracks, with 8% offering no answer. The plurality favoring slots holds, but by a scant two points. Opposition to slots has crept up across the board—from 37%

to 46% with whites, from 49% to 56% with Democrats, from 34% to 47% on the Eastern Shore, from 45% to 59% in the DC suburbs. The only factor buoying the overall support for slots is party loyalty: Republican support for slots at racetracks jumped from 49% to 62% since January.

## SLOTS FOR EDUCATION

The proposal to dedicate slots revenue to education boosts the percentage favoring gambling expansion to 59%, up three points from the January survey, garnering the support of 24% of voters who said they opposed slots at racetracks in the previous straight-up question.

## CLOSING THE GAP

When asked, for the third time since July 2002, to choose the best way to reduce Maryland's budget deficit, legalizing slots at racetracks (36%) remains the top choice, but barely edges an income tax hike for households earning over \$100,000. An income tax increase for high-wage earners has seen its support double from 16% to 32% since last July, when we first asked this question of Maryland voters. Meanwhile, spending cuts have lost the support of nearly half of the original backers, down to 17% from a high of 31% last summer. Tampering with the sales tax, either by increasing the rate (6%) or by expansion (4%), continues to be a non-starter with Maryland voters.

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*This survey was conducted by Gonzales/Arscott April 19–23, 2003. A total of 402 registered Democratic voters in Baltimore City, Maryland, who indicated they would vote in this September's Democratic mayoral primary election, were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of calls was made into the city to reflect Democratic primary election voting patterns. The margin for error is no more than plus or minus 5 %. Copyright, Gonzales/Arscott.*



### MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

When asked to name, in an open-ended format, the most important issue facing Baltimore today, 31% of city Democratic primary voters named drugs, 20% cited crime, and 1% named the murder rate specifically, a total of 52%. Education or poor schools were named by 18%, economic development by 9%, declining population or tax base by 6%, vacant properties by 6%, high taxes by 2%, and various lifestyle issues by 2%. The remaining 5% offered no answer.

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This survey was conducted by Gonzales/Arscott April 19–23, 2003. A total of 804 registered voters in Maryland were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of calls was made into each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns. The margin for error is no more than plus or minus 3.5 %. Copyright, Gonzales/Arscott.

### GEORGE W. BUSH

President George W. Bush continues to do very well in Democratic-dominated Maryland, with a 55% favorable rating (54% in January). Thirty percent of Maryland voters view him unfavorably, and 15% have a neutral opinion of Bush. Similarly, the president's job approval rating is, so far, rock solid in the Free State. Sixty-two percent approve of the job Bush is doing as president (63% in September 2002), and 31% disapprove, a two-to-one ratio. The remaining 7% offered no answer. Bush's numbers are certainly buoyed by huge figures among Republicans (91% approval), but he also does well with independents (57%), and splits the Democrats down the middle (46% to 45%). Hence, Bush's reelect numbers are not that bad for a candidate who lost Maryland by 17 points in November 2000. Thirty-nine percent said they would vote to reelect Bush, 26% would replace him, and 35% would consider another candidate.

### MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

With the war in Iraq drawing to a conclusion, the economy and jobs (28%) have taken over as the most important issues facing the president and Congress today. The war in, and the rebuilding of, Iraq hold second place with 21%, and the overarching issue of terrorism is third with 16%. Other issues generate single-digit levels of concern: education at 9%, the budget deficit at 8%, health care and prescription drugs at 7%, taxes at 6%, and the environment and crime/drugs at 1% each. The remaining 3% offered no answer.

### IRAQ

Sixty-one percent of Maryland voters surveyed favored the recently conducted military action in Iraq, while 27% were opposed, figures which closely mirror the president's job-performance numbers. Twelve percent gave no answer. Voters were then asked whether they would favor or oppose military action in Syria if there is evidence that Assad's government there possessed weapons of mass destruction. Forty-eight percent said they would favor military action, and 41% were opposed. The remaining 11% offered no answer. Responding to an open-ended question, 41% of survey respondents said that the primary responsibility for the looting of the Museum of Antiquities in Baghdad belonged with the looters themselves. Ten percent assigned primary responsibility to poor or oppressed Iraqis, 9% to Saddam Hussein loyalists, and 4% to museum officials. Just 3% assigned primary responsibility to the American military. Eight percent named others. The remaining 25% said they didn't know.



## U.S. SENATE RACE

Incumbent Senator Barbara Mikulski's name is recognized favorably by 57% of Maryland voters surveyed, unfavorably by 24%, and neutrally by 17%. The remaining 2% didn't recognize Mikulski's name. Sixty-three percent said they approve of the job Mikulski is doing as U.S. Senator, while 22% disapprove. The remaining 15% offered no answer. To test Mikulski's

strength against one of the bigger potential weapons in the Republican arsenal, we matched her against Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele. Mikulski leads Steele 54% to 37% with 9% undecided. To give the GOP any chance in a contest against a candidate as formidable as the diminutive Mikulski, it seems to us, the party is going to have to put forth a nominee with some credibility and stature, such as the recently elected lieutenant governor.

## New Hampshire

Six hundred and ninety-four New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone April 9–18, 2002. The Granite State Poll is a quarterly survey of public opinion in New Hampshire. This study was conducted to determine present attitudes concerning the New Hampshire political environment, crime and consumer confidence in the state. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.7%. Principal investigator: Andrew Smith.

Six hundred and seventy-seven New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone June 23–July 3, 2002. The Granite State Poll is a quarterly survey of public opinion in New Hampshire. This study was conducted to determine present attitudes concerning the New Hampshire political

environment, public policy, consumer confidence, and crime in the state. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.7%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.

Five hundred and ninety-one New Hampshire likely voters were interviewed by telephone August 28–September 3, 2002. This survey was conducted to determine voting behavior in the September primary election in New Hampshire. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4.0%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.

Four hundred and thirty-five New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone September 8–15, 2002. The NH Farm Stand Survey was conducted to determine the types of products bought at farm stands and the frequency of use of local farm stands within the state. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4.9%. Principal investigator: Andrew Smith.

Six hundred and fifty-one New Hampshire likely voters were interviewed by telephone October 3–8, 2002. This survey was conducted to determine voting behavior in the November 4<sup>th</sup> general election in New Hampshire. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.8%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.

Six hundred and seventy-nine (679) New Hampshire likely voters were interviewed by telephone October 23–29, 2002. This survey was conducted to determine voting behavior in the November 4 general election in New Hampshire. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.8%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.



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Six hundred and fifty-eight New Hampshire likely voters were interviewed by telephone October 31–November 2, 2002. This poll was conducted to determine voting behavior in the November 4 general election in New Hampshire. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.8%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.

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Six hundred and fifty-two New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone February 6–12, 2003. The Granite State Poll is a quarterly survey of public opinion in New Hampshire. This study was conducted to determine present attitudes concerning the New Hampshire political environment, public policy and consumer confidence. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.8%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.

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Five hundred and nine New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone April 11–22, 2003. The Granite State Poll is a quarterly survey of public opinion in New Hampshire. This study was conducted to determine present attitudes concerning the New Hampshire public policy concerning abortion, the state's current political environment and consumer confidence. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4.4%. Principal Investigator: Andrew Smith.

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## New Jersey

*The latest Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll was conducted April 24–May 4, 2003 with a scientific sample of 1,002 New Jersey residents. The associated sampling error is + 3.1%. Copyright, The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll.*

## STATE BUDGET

As the governor and state legislature hunker down to pass a constitutionally mandated balanced budget, a new *Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll* finds that state residents continue to favor the governor's approach of cutting services instead of raising taxes—it's just a question of which services. The current survey shows that more residents would prefer to cut services (53%) rather than raise taxes (34%) in order to balance this year's budget. In March of last year, far more residents—by a margin of 41 percentage points—favored a service cut (64%) over a tax increase (23%). Two-thirds or more New Jerseyans name prisons (79%), tourism promotion (73%), arts and cultural programs (71%), aid to cities (67%), and public transportation (66%) as candidates for a funding cut. About six out of 10 nominate property tax relief (62%), roads and highways (61%), environmental protection (60%), and open-space preservation (60%) for the budget ax. Just half of all New Jerseyans feel that funds for higher education (51%) can afford to be cut and only a minority of Garden State residents feel that programs for seniors (41%), police and state security (40%), public grade and high schools (35%), and health care for the poor (34%) should suffer any funding cuts at all. New Jerseyans are more negative about the state's economy than they have been for nearly 10 years, when more than two-thirds of state residents classified the economy as bad. In the current survey, more residents—by a 2 to 1 margin—say the Garden State is going through bad (65%) rather than good (28%) economic times right now. This marks a reversal of fortune over the past two years.

## PERSONNEL NEWS

**Carol Arscott**, of **Gonzales/Arscott Research** in Annapolis, Maryland, has accepted a position with the Maryland Department of Transportation. Gonzales/Arscott Research will be phased out, but **Patrick Gonzales** will continue conducting research for **Gonzales**

**Research.**

**Don Ferree** has been at the **University of Wisconsin Survey Center** (as associate director for Public Opinion Research) since June of 2000. In that capacity, he directs the ongoing Badger Poll, which he intends to become the poll of record for Wisconsin, building on the model he pursued for twenty-odd years at the University of Connecticut, where he founded and directed the Connecticut Poll from its inception in 1979 to his departure in August 2000.

The Survey Research Center at the **University of Georgia** filled the position of programmer by hiring **Steve Quinlan**, who graduated from the University of Georgia with a business degree in management information systems.

We are updating contact information for our mailing list. If you need to make any corrections to your mailing address as indicated on the label of this newsletter, please contact Julie Brock by e-mail (jmbroc1@uky.edu) or by phone (859/257.4683).

## NNSP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

**JIM BASON**, director of the Survey Research Center, University of Georgia Institute for Behavioral Research

Dr. Bason is an assistant research scientist and a fellow in the Institute for Behavioral Research. Jim completed a bachelor's and a master's degree in political science at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, and a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Georgia. He has taught courses in political science at Appalachian State University, Young Harris College, and the University of Georgia, and frequently teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in survey research method and practice. Dr. Bason has been affiliated with the Survey Research Center since 1991, and has directly overseen over 300 research studies of varying scope and size. He has served on the NNSP Executive Council since July 1, 2000 and his current term extends through June 2003.

**ASHLEY BOWERS**, operations director of the University of North Carolina Survey Research Unit (SRU)

In this role, Dr. Bowers annually directs 20-25 mail and telephone survey projects and oversees the day-to-day operations of the unit, including the SRU's 20-station CATI facility. The SRU conducts numerous studies at the state and local level, with a focus on assessments of North Carolinians' knowledge related to important public health issues facing the state. Ms. Bowers received a Master of Science degree in survey methodology from the University of Maryland-University of Michigan Joint Program in Survey Methodology in 1998. Prior to assuming her current role as operations director in 1999, Ms. Bowers held the position of data collection director at the Survey

Research Unit. She is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the American Statistical Association. She currently serves as secretary for the Southern Association for Public Opinion Research. Her research interests include the use of advance letters in telephone survey research and interviewer turnover. Her term on the NNSP Executive Council runs from July 2002 through June 2004.

**JUDY CALDER, director of the Center for Applied Research at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)**

Dr. Calder has directed the center since 1993, where she oversees a staff of 70 full- and part-time survey researchers and interviewers. She has previously served a three-year term on the NNSP Executive Board. She is a tenured associate professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at UNR and has been honored by the Board of Regents of the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) as the recipient of its highest academic award (1997-98) as "Outstanding Faculty" for academic excellence. She has served as the principal investigator on multiple federal- and state-funded research grants exceeding \$5 million. Prior to joining the UNR faculty, she served as president and chief executive officer of Calder, Conger & Associates, Incorporated, a private sector survey research firm. She has held academic positions at UCLA and Pepperdine University, where she taught graduate-level courses in research methods, quantitative methods, statistics, and evaluation theory and methods. At UNR she teaches graduate-level courses in research methods and undergraduate statistics. As a senior academic researcher at the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, she was instrumental in helping to develop one of the first nationally recognized needs-assessment-based evaluation paradigms. For many years, Dr. Calder's primary

research interests have been focused on high-risk health behaviors, as well as on methodological issues in survey research. Dr. Calder will serve on NNSP's executive council through June 2003.

**PATRICIA A. GWARTNEY, director of the University of Oregon's Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL)**

Dr. Gwartney founded OSRL (<http://osrl.uoregon.edu/>) in 1993. As founding director, she coordinates all aspects of 30 to 40 research projects yearly, conducts basic methodological research, and supervises 45 to 50 staff members, faculty fellows, and postdocs. Dr. Gwartney joined the University of Oregon's Sociology Department as assistant professor 1981-88, became associate professor in 1988, and has been a full professor since 1996. In 1986, she had a research Fulbright Fellowship to the University of Auckland, New Zealand. She has been nominated to six other positions since 1997, most recently director, Center for Survey Methods and research/assistant division chief, Statistical Research Division, United States Census Bureau, Washington D.C. She earned an M.A. in 1979 and a Ph.D. in 1981 from the graduate program in sociology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In the program, she was a National Institute on Mental Health trainee at the Center for Research on Social Organization (1977); research assistant, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research (1978-79); and research assistant, Population Studies Center (1980). Dr. Gwartney's areas of competence include survey research methodologies, statistical methods, field methods, social demography, labor force, occupations, organizations, and alternative



dispute resolution. Her refereed publications include 29 articles and book chapters. Most often cited are her findings on premarital cohabitation and alternative dispute. Dr. Gwartney's term with NNSP's executive council expires in June 2004.

### JOHN KENNEDY, director of the Indiana University Center for Survey Research

Dr. Kennedy has directed the center since August 1987. He is also the associate director of the Institute of Social Research and an adjunct associate professor of sociology. John was previously employed as a statistician in the Research and Evaluation Branch of the Housing Division of the U.S. Census Bureau and as an assistant professor of sociology and director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Hartford. From 1990-1993, he was a member of the NNSP Executive Council. In 1997, he served as the president of the Society for Applied Sociology. John received his Ph.D. in sociology from Penn State in 1986. Dr. Kennedy's areas of expertise include survey research methods, demography and gerontology. He is the author or co-author of approximately 25 articles, 40 papers, and 40 research reports. His current term on the executive council runs through June 2004.

### FREDERIC SOLOP, director of the Northern Arizona University Social Research Laboratory

Dr. Solop is a professor of political science and founding director of the Grand Canyon State Poll, a biannual public affairs telephone survey of

Arizona residents. Recent research clients include the National Park Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Arizona Department of Health Services, the Navajo Nation and Hopi Head Start. Dr. Solop publishes regularly in the areas of public opinion, election reform, digital democracy and social movements. He has served on the NNSP Executive Council since July 1999 and will serve through June 2003.

### NNSP CHAIRPERSON

Ronald E. Langley, Ph.D., joined the University of Kentucky Survey Research Center as the research development coordinator in 1996. He was appointed interim director in October 1997 and assumed the director's position full-time in June 1998. Prior to joining SRC, Dr. Langley was a faculty member in UK's Department of Political Science and jointly appointed to the Martin School of Public Policy and Administration. Dr. Langley earned his Ph.D. in 1990 at Michigan State University with his main areas of concentration being in public administration and policy, American institutions, public opinion, and quantitative research methods. His research interests are heavily tied to investigating the effects of public opinion on public policy, particularly macroeconomic policy. Dr. Langley is currently the chairman of the National Network of State Polls, has served as a principal investigator on dozens of projects at UK-SRC and has published book chapters and several articles in scholarly journals such as *Political Behavior*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Southeastern Political Review*, and *Studies in Comparative International Development*.



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