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2003 Governor's Race

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2003 Governor's Race



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Candidate Preferences

Two weeks before the election Blanco and Jindal are in a statistical tie in a cross-section of registered voters, with fifteen percent remaining undecided. However, when the sample is adjusted to reflect those most likely to vote, Jindal leads Blanco 44% to 40%. Since turnout in the primary was low, and is expected to be low again in the runoff, we conclude that Jindal enjoys a slight lead.

In many ways this election is a typical partisan contest between a Republican and Democrat. It is characterized by the usual racial, partisan, and socio-economic divisions. As we would expect, Jindal, the Republican, has little black support, but he is favored by a majority of white voters.

Candidate Preferences

	Reg. Voters	Whites	Blacks	Likely Electorate*
Blanco	42%	31%	68%	40%
Jindal	44	54	17	44
Undecided	15	15	15	16
N	(731)	(516)	(215)	

* Weighted based on past voting behavior

Among white voters, party, economic status, and gender are all related to voting preferences in the predictable ways. Republicans, as usual, are quite loyal to their candidate. What gives Jindal his overall majority among whites is his fifty-one percent support among white Independents combined with a twenty-five percent cross-over vote from white Democrats. Some interviewers reported that respondents explicitly told them, “I’m a Democrat, but I’m supporting Jindal.”

Party and Vote (Whites Only)

	Republican	Independent	Democrat
Blanco	7%	29%	60%
Jindal	86	51	25
Undecided	6	20	15
N	(191)	(138)	(154)

Most whites in Louisiana are self identified conservatives or moderates, and Jindal leads comfortably in both groups. Although there were only forty-three white liberals in the sample, it is interesting that they were divided evenly between Blanco and Jindal, possibly because both candidates are essentially conservative.

Ideology and Vote (Whites Only)

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Blanco	44%	33%	21%
Jindal	44	49	69
Undecided	12	18	10
N	(43)	(138)	(191)

Among whites, Blanco’s support declines, and Jindal’s increases, as education and income increase. However, Jindal leads Blanco in all categories of education and most categories of income. The only socio-economic group of whites in which a majority favors Blanco is those with family incomes below \$25,000. All other white income groups lean heavily toward Jindal.

Education and Vote (Whites Only)

	High School or Less	Some College	College Degree
Blanco	39%	28%	23%
Jindal	42	59	65
Undecided	19	13	11
N	(198)	(135)	(179)

Income and Vote (Whites Only)

	\$25,000 or Less	\$26,000 to \$60,000	\$61,000 or More
Blanco	45%	33%	23%
Jindal	26	57	66
Undecided	29	10	11
N	(66)	(228)	(169)

The gender gap among whites is also in the usual direction, although the gender gap in Jindal support is a bit larger than typical national gender gaps. Twelve percent more white males than white females support Jindal. Average national gender gaps are about seven to ten percentage points.

There is no difference between the preferences of black males and black females.

The Gender Gap (Whites Only)

	Males	Females
Blanco	27%	34%
Jindal	61	49
Undecided	12	17
N	(247)	(269)

Among black voters, 17% prefer Jindal. This is an unusually high level of support for a Republican candidate among African American voters, and it may well not materialize in the election. A closer look indicates that support for Jindal among blacks is higher in the under-45 age group. This makes sense since it is the younger black voters who have less of a history of voting Democratic. However, younger voters are also less likely to vote. When we make the adjustment for likely voters, the percent of blacks supporting Jindal drops to 12%.

Age and Vote (Blacks Only)

	18 to 44	45 and Over
Blanco	68%	70%
Jindal	23	10
Undecided	9	19
N	(113)	(95)

While both candidates are social conservatives, Bobby Jindal received significant support from the Christian Right in the October 4th primary. Using opinion on abortion as an indicator of social conservatism, Blanco leads among whites who are pro-choice. However, most white voters in Louisiana are either strictly pro-life or somewhere in the middle, and Jindal is clearly favored by both of these groups.

Abortion and Vote (Whites Only)

	Always Legal	Under Certain Circumstances	Never Legal
Blanco	42%	31%	24%
Jindal	38	58	59
Undecided	20	11	16
N	(76)	(282)	(140)

Both candidates are promising efforts to improve economic development, education, and roads, so we thought it would be useful to provide a baseline public evaluation of these three quality of life areas for the new administration. Over the next administration we will periodically measure the public evaluations of economic development, education, and roads to see if the public perceives progress.

Public evaluations of prospects for employment, likelihood of new industry coming into the state, public education and roads are all fairly low. Most notable is the extremely low evaluation of streets and roads; seventy-three percent of respondents rate the roads as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’. Prospects for employment, likelihood of new industry and public education are rated ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ by over forty percent of registered voters.

Perceptions of Quality of Life

	Prospects for Employment	Likelihood of New Jobs and Industry Coming into State
Very Good	4%	3 %
Good	16	15
Fair	33	30
Poor	33	36
Very Poor	12	12
Don't know	2	4
N	(731)	(731)

	Quality of Public Education	Quality of Streets and Roads
Very Good	2%	1%
Good	17	9
Fair	31	17
Poor	28	46
Very Poor	18	27
Don't know	4	1
N	(731)	(731)

Sampling Information

Dates of Interviewing: Oct 25 – Nov 1, 2003

Percent Black: 29

Percent Female: 55

Sampling error: plus or minus 3.7%