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FEINGOLD RATINGS COMPARED TO FEDERAL OFFICEHOLDERS IN SPRING  
by G. Donald Ferree, Jr.

Roughly two residents in three feel they know enough about Feingold to have either a favorable (47%-19%) impression of him. He tends to be better known (measured by the proportion stating an impression) among those residents over forty-five, but except for the forty-five to fifty-nine year olds, the balance of views among those voicing an opinion tends to be two to one favorable. Republicans split evenly while Democrats onesidedly and Independents less so tend to come down on the favorable side.

Feingold's fellow Senator is a bit more widely known, with almost three in four stating an impression. Since 54% view him favorably, contrasted with 18% unfavorable, the balance is also, if anything more favorable. Again older residents are more favorable, and the partisan pattern is at least as clear (Republicans again split, but Democrats are more favorable, and Independents more clearly in the middle.

Awareness of both Senators lags well behind that for President Bush, about whom a parallel question was asked earlier in the survey. Nine residents in every ten are familiar enough with him to come down on one side or the other. Age makes less of a difference in views of Bush than either Senator, but partisanship establishes even clearer lines, with well over nine in ten Republicans viewing Bush favorably, and almost eight in ten Democrats seeing him unfavorably.

It is possible to compare favorability ratings directly to see whether how many view Bush more positively than Feingold, how many take the opposite stance, how many see them the same (either both favorable or both unfavorable) or fail to come down clearly on one or the other.

Many residents view the two differently. One in three fail to rate one or both, and only one in four give them identical favorability ratings. The four in ten who come down differently tend to be a bit more likely to see Feingold more favorable than Bush than vice versa.

With Kohl, the situation is different. To be sure, neither half (44%) fail to rate one or both, but almost all of those who do have an impression of both men tend to view both the same, accounting for just under one resident in two. Fewer than one in ten come down differently on the two.

None of Feingold's rivals is anywhere near as familiar to state residents. Just under one in five residents state an impression of Russ Darrow (7%

favorable, 11% unfavorable). Bob Welch has a similar level of familiarity, and modestly more positive impressions (10% favorable, 8% unfavorable). In no group is either man known to as many as one in four, however. Tim Michels is known to between one in twenty and one in ten (3% favorable, 3% unfavorable overall) and so is even less familiar to residents overall.

Beyond familiarity, residents were also asked to rate the job performance of all three federal officeholders, along with that of the US Congress as an institution. Just under half rate Feingold's performance as either excellent (12%) or good (36%). Less glowingly, four in ten feel fair (28%) or poor (11%) is more like it. Ratings tend to be higher among older residents, and once again, there is a falling off as one moves from Democrat to Independent, and then to Republican, with the former group more than twice as likely to assign a grade of good or better compared to the latter.

Kohl's ratings tend to be similar overall: excellent 7%; good 43%; fair 28% and poor 10%. Ratings of Kohl seem a bit less related to partisanship (the difference between Democrats and Republicans is a bit smaller for him than for Feingold).

Ratings of Bush in March 2004 were a bit lower than those for Feingold. Just under one in two rated him excellent (16%) or good (30%), while 24% chose fair and 30% poor. Partisan patterns are notably more defined for the President than either Senator: 85% of Republicans rate Bush good or excellent, 14% fair or poor. These ratios are just about reversed for Democrats.

Ratings were also taken for the US Congress (NOT, it should be noted, one's own Congressman). The institution does less well than any of the individuals. Only about one in four call Congress's performance either excellent (1%) or good (25%). By contrast, seven in ten opt for fair (56%) or poor (14%). While these ratings tend to be lower than for either Senator or President, it is also noteworthy that they tend to cluster in the middle rankings (good or fair, contrasted to excellent or poor) more than is the case of the individuals. Younger people are modestly more upbeat about Congress, and ratings move up a bit as one moves across the partisan spectrum from Democrat to Republican.

Feingold is running for re-election in 2004, of course. While it would appear that the race has scarcely captured the attention of most (as witnessed by the very low familiarity of any of the challengers, the incumbent moves into spring from a reasonably good starting point. Overall, when asked if they would like to see Feingold re-elected or "someone else in the Senate instead", half (51%) would return him, Three in ten (29%) say they would like to see an unspecified "someone else". The former group includes seven in ten Democrats, half of Independents, and one Republican in three. Backing of Feingold's re-election increases modestly with age until one reaches the forty-five to fifty-nine group and then falls back a bit among those sixty and older.

Comparable figures for Bush were more evenly split (45% re-elect, 50% like to see someone else). Of course, Bush has been on the receiving end of the campaigns of the Democrats, while Feingold has yet to be the subject of the kind of partisan charges so prevalent at the presidential level.

Those who want Feingold re-elected (in the abstract) are half as likely as those who want him replaced to rate President Bush good or better, or viewed another way two thirds of the former group, but only one third of the latter limit his grade to no higher than fair.

They view Bush (narrowly) unfavorably while those predisposed to replace Feingold view the President favorably. Those wanting him re-elected not surprisingly view Feingold himself quite favorably, while those who would rather see someone else take an unfavorable stance by three to one. A similar, but somewhat weaker pattern applies to impressions of Kohl.

One measure of how early the race remains is that predisposition to want Feingold returned to the Senate is essentially unrelated to views of Darrow, either in level of familiarity or balance. Michels is essentially unknown among either group. Welch is both slightly more known AND more favorably viewed among those who look to someone other than Feingold, but even among this group fewer than three in ten have an impression of Welch.

There IS a relationship, albeit not perfect between predispositions about the Senatorial incumbent and the President. Those who would return Feingold want to see someone other than Bush in the White House by a margin of 62%-35%. By contrast, those who would replace Feingold are inclined by a 64%-30% margin to return Bush. Again, it should be emphasized that these questions represent openness to challengers' arguments and an interest in exploring alternatives, not a settled vote intention in itself.

Many of these questions were asked on earlier surveys, and the accompanying charts summarize results. Bush's overall rating is lower than on any of the other surveys on which Feingold also appears, but the differences from January are relatively modest. Congressional ratings are at least as clearly also down.

Ratings of Kohl have not moved much in either direction. Those for Feingold himself have tended to move only a few percentage points at most for individual categories, and the overall pattern is quite stable.

When it comes to favorability ratings, Bush has always been familiar to the bulk of residents. The balance has moved from almost two to one favorable in October, to a more closely split outlook now. Feingold has not shifted much in familiarity, but his favorability balance in March 2004 is modestly higher than it was in October, with January between the two (and similar enough that one would have only limited confidence that the poll to poll fluctuations would reflect real shifts in the population. Patterns for Kohl across time are, if anything, weaker. None of the Republicans shows any clear movement (they were only asked about in October, not the middle survey).

Predisposition about re-electing Feingold has moved scarcely at all, and not clearly in any direction, since October. The public was, however, somewhat more torn last May -- the first time this question occurred on a Badger Poll™. Comparable views on Bush have hovered around the 50/50 level, less closely than in October, more closely than in December. But, in contrast to Feingold, he seems a bit weaker on this front now than he did last May.

## Federal Officeholders at Five Points in Time

	March	January	October	May	February
Rating of George W. Bush					
EXCELLENT	16%	11%	15%	25%	19%
GOOD	30	37	35	35	39
FAIR	24	29	27	25	25
POOR	30	22	21	14	16
TOO SOON TO TELL (vol)	--	--	--	*	--
DON'T KNOW	1	1	1	1	1
REFUSED	*	--	*	1	1
Rating of US Congress					
EXCELLENT	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
GOOD	25	31	34	34	37
FAIR	56	52	48	46	45
POOR	14	14	15	15	12
DON'T KNOW	4	2	2	4	5
REFUSED	*	--	--	1	*
Rating of Herb Kohl					
EXCELLENT	7%	7%	8%	6%	6%
GOOD	43	42	42	39	40
FAIR	28	32	31	32	30
POOR	10	7	9	9	7
DON'T KNOW	12	11	10	14	16
REFUSED	1	*	*	1	1
Rating of Russ Feingold					
EXCELLENT	12%	10%	10%	7%	8%
GOOD	36	36	38	38	40
FAIR	28	31	29	30	27
POOR	11	7	11	11	10
DON'T KNOW	14	15	12	15	15
REFUSED	*	--	--	*	1
Impression of Bush					
FAVORABLE	52%	54%	60%		
UNFAVORABLE	41	39	34		
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	7	6	5		
DK	1	1	2		
REFUSED	*	--	--		
Impression of Feingold					
FAVORABLE	47%	46%	41%		
UNFAVORABLE	19	16	23		
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	34	36	35		
DK	*	2	1		
REFUSED	*	--	*		
Impression of Kohl					
FAVORABLE	54%	58%	50%		
UNFAVORABLE	18	16	19		
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	29	25	30		
DK	*	1	1		
REFUSED	*	--	*		
Impression of Darrow					

FAVORABLE	7%	8%
UNFAVORABLE	11	14
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	80	76
DK	2	2
REFUSED	*	*

## Impression of Michels

FAVORABLE	3%	2%
UNFAVORABLE	3	5
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	92	92
DK	1	2
REFUSED	*	*

## Impression of Welch

FAVORABLE	10%	9%
UNFAVORABLE	8	8
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	80	81
DK	1	2
REFUSED	*	*

## Predisposition to Re-Elect Incumbents

	March	January	October	May
Like to See Feingold re-elected				
LIKE TO SEE FEINGOLD	51%	52%	50%	42%
LIKE SOMEONE ELSE	29	26	30	33
DON'T KNOW	19	22	20	24
REFUSED	1	*	*	1
Like to see Bush re-elected				
LIKE TO SEE BUSH	45%	42%	46%	52%
LIKE SOMEONE ELSE	50	49	45	43
DON'T KNOW	4	9	9	4
REFUSED	1	*	*	1

## Statewide Marginals and Percentages for Key Groups

What follows is the exact question wording for each of the items referred to in the release. All results shown are for the basic sample of state residents. The first column is the percentage of the entire sample giving each response. The second and third reports the percentages for men and women separately. The fourth, fifth, and sixth columns show self-described Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. Columns seven through ten group respondents by age. The final two columns depict two groups of respondents defined by whether or not they would now prefer to see Feingold re-elected ("YES") or would rather see "someone else in the Senate instead" ("NO").

Q01. INTERVIEWER: (DO NOT ASK) Enter respondent's gender

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
MALE	49%	100%	--%	37%	60%	47%	45%	54%	52%	44%	51%	52%
FEMALE	51	--	100	63	40	53	55	46	48	56	49	48

Q02. How would you rate the job George W. Bush is doing as President?  
Excellent, good, fair or poor?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
EXCELLENT	16%	18%	13%	2%	11%	36%	13%	11%	16%	21%	8%	31%
GOOD	30	31	29	11	25	49	32	34	29	25	26	35
FAIR	24	21	26	27	30	12	24	29	24	18	24	17
POOR	30	30	30	61	32	2	29	26	30	35	41	15
TOO SOON TO TELL(VOL.)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
DON'T KNOW	1	--	1	--	2	1	3	--	*	1	--	3
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

VOTE03. I'm going to read you a list of people in public life. For each of them, please tell me if you have a favorable impression of them, an unfavorable impression, or don't know enough to make up your mind. George W. Bush

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
FAVORABLE	52%	55%	49%	18%	42%	94%	50%	50%	55%	51%	40%	72%
UNFAVORABLE	41	37	44	77	47	5	41	37	41	43	55	16
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	7	6	7	5	10	*	9	12	4	4	4	9
DON'T KNOW	1	2	--	1	1	1	--	1	--	2	*	2
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

VOTE06. Russ Feingold (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
FAVORABLE	47%	47%	47%	57%	53%	35%	31%	36%	57%	52%	74%	17%
UNFAVORABLE	19	23	16	8	15	39	15	16	18	27	6	51
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	34	30	37	35	31	26	54	47	25	21	19	32
DON'T KNOW	*	1	--	--	1	--	--	1	--	--	--	--
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

VOTE07. Herb Kohl (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
FAVORABLE	54%	52%	55%	70%	58%	41%	43%	43%	60%	61%	71%	36%
UNFAVORABLE	18	20	15	2	13	38	13	14	19	21	7	42
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	29	28	30	28	29	22	44	42	21	17	22	22
DON'T KNOW	*	--	*	*	--	--	--	--	--	*	*	--
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

GBRF2. (CONSTRUCTED ITEM) Comparison of Bush favorability to Feingold

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
BUSH HIGHER	15%	16%	13%	1%	9%	36%	9%	12%	14%	20%	2%	43%
BOTH SAME	25	28	22	13	27	35	25	21	29	23	31	20
FEINGOLD HIGHER	25	24	27	49	31	2	13	17	31	32	46	3
ONE/BOTH DK	35	33	38	37	33	27	54	50	26	25	21	34

HKRF2. (CONSTRUCTED ITEM) Comparison of Kohl favorability to Feingold

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
KOHL HIGHER	5%	6%	4%	4%	5%	8%	4%	2%	5%	8%	4%	10%
BOTH SAME	48	49	47	51	52	49	28	36	54	61	60	49
FEINGOLD HIGHER	3	3	3	*	3	7	2	3	4	2	5	3
ONE/BOTH DK	44	42	46	44	40	36	66	59	36	29	32	39

VOTE17. Russ Darrow (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
FAVORABLE	7%	8%	6%	6%	6%	10%	2%	9%	8%	5%	7%	7%
UNFAVORABLE	11	13	10	7	11	13	20	10	11	9	13	13
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	80	77	83	86	81	76	78	81	79	80	78	77
DON'T KNOW	2	3	1	1	2	2	--	*	1	5	2	3
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

VOTE18. Tim Michels (MIKE-uls) (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
FAVORABLE	3%	3%	3%	1%	5%	3%	--%	2%	3%	4%	2%	6%
UNFAVORABLE	3	5	2	4	4	3	5	2	2	5	2	8
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	92	89	95	94	88	93	95	94	93	88	95	84
DON'T KNOW	1	2	*	1	1	1	--	1	1	2	2	1
REFUSED	*	1	*	--	2	--	--	--	*	1	--	1

VOTE19. Bob Welch (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
FAVORABLE	10%	13%	8%	5%	14%	12%	5%	13%	12%	9%	8%	20%
UNFAVORABLE	8	10	7	12	10	6	6	6	11	9	11	7
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	80	75	85	81	75	80	90	79	76	79	80	72
DON'T KNOW	1	2	1	2	1	2	--	1	1	3	1	2
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

BUSH06. As of now, do you think you would like to see President Bush reelected in 2004, or would you rather see someone else in the White House?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
LIKE BUSH RE-ELECTED	45%	49%	42%	9%	38%	89%	43%	44%	45%	49%	35%	64%
LIKE SOMEONE ELSE	50	47	52	86	59	7	52	50	51	47	62	30
DON'T KNOW	4	3	5	3	3	4	5	6	3	3	2	5
REFUSED	1	1	1	2	1	*	--	1	1	1	1	1

RATE03. Thinking more generally of politics, how would you rate the job the US Congress is doing? Excellent, good, fair, or poor?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
EXCELLENT	1%	2%	*%	2%	*%	1%	--%	1%	2%	*%	*%	1%
GOOD	25	23	26	15	21	36	32	28	21	21	23	28
FAIR	56	57	55	64	57	50	56	56	58	54	57	53
POOR	14	17	12	15	19	9	5	10	17	20	18	16
DON'T KNOW	4	1	7	4	1	4	6	5	2	3	2	2
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	1	--	--	--	--	1	--	--

RATE04. How would you rate the job Herb Kohl is doing as Senator from Wisconsin? (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
EXCELLENT	7%	7%	7%	15%	6%	3%	3%	4%	8%	10%	10%	4%
GOOD	43	42	44	50	47	35	58	36	41	44	55	29
FAIR	28	28	28	26	29	31	14	36	30	26	23	36
POOR	10	13	7	*	6	21	6	9	13	9	5	24
DON'T KNOW	12	10	14	8	12	11	18	15	8	10	6	8
REFUSED	1	1	1	1	1	--	--	--	*	2	*	--

RATE05. How about the job Russ Feingold is doing as US Senator from Wisconsin? (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY).

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
EXCELLENT	12%	13%	11%	23%	11%	5%	6%	8%	12%	18%	22%	--%
GOOD	36	35	36	47	33	28	32	36	42	30	57	9
FAIR	28	26	29	18	33	31	30	30	28	25	17	46
POOR	11	15	7	2	10	23	10	7	9	16	*	35
DON'T KNOW	14	11	17	10	11	14	22	18	9	12	3	10
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--

FEING01. As of now, do you think you would like to see Senator Feingold re-elected in 2004, or would you rather see someone else in the Senate instead?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
LIKE TO SEE FEINGOLD	51%	54%	49%	70%	51%	35%	37%	43%	63%	53%	100%	--%
LIKE SEE SOMEONE ELSE	29	31	27	8	33	48	36	32	23	30	--	100
DON'T KNOW	19	14	23	21	16	17	28	25	14	16	--	--
REFUSED	1	1	1	2	*	--	--	1	*	1	--	--



QD05. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
DEMOCRAT	27%	21%	34%	100%	--%	--%	20%	27%	27%	32%	37%	7%
REPUBLICAN	30	29	32	--	--	100	32	27	29	33	20	50
INDEPENDENT	27	33	21	--	100	--	29	27	26	27	27	30
OTHER	11	15	7	--	--	--	9	14	14	4	11	9
NONE	3	2	4	--	--	--	4	4	2	2	3	3
DON'T KNOW	1	1	2	--	--	--	5	--	1	*	1	1
REFUSED	1	--	1	--	--	--	--	1	--	1	1	*

QD11. In what year were you born? (ENTER FOUR-DIGIT YEAR) (Calculated and grouped as below)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				FEINGOLD	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
18-29	15%	14%	16%	11%	16%	16%	100%	--%	--%	--%	11%	18%
30-44	23	26	21	23	24	21	--	100	--	--	19	25
45-59	34	36	31	34	33	33	--	--	100	--	41	27
60 and over	26	24	29	31	27	29	--	--	--	100	28	27
DK/REFUSED	1	--	3	1	*	2	--	--	--	--	1	2

\* denotes less than .5%

-- denotes 0%

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

This BADGER POLL™ was conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center as part of its ongoing program of research designed to benefit the research community and the people of Wisconsin, under the direction of G. Donald Ferree, Jr., Associate Director for Public Opinion Research of the Center. The media sponsors of the survey are the (Madison) Capital Times, and the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. The BADGER POLL™ is intended to be a "poll of record" for the state, investigating matters of concern to Wisconsinites including politics, culture, and their daily lives, adhering to the highest standards of polling methodology and rigorous independence.

A total of 500 randomly chosen state residents were interviewed for this survey by telephone between March 23 and 31, inclusive. Telephone numbers were generated by computer in proportion to the number of adults living in each area of the state. Theoretically, results from this survey have a "margin of error" of a little over +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every eligible resident in Wisconsin, exactly these questions at the time the survey was conducted, there is only a one in twenty chance that the answers would differ by more than that in either direction from what we report here. There could be differences because of changes in question wording, events occurring in the meantime, or any of the practical difficulties involved in taking a scientific survey. Results based on subgroups are subject to a larger "margin of error".