



Badger Poll™ #15, Release #1  
University of Wisconsin Survey Center  
University of Wisconsin Madison  
April 30, 2004

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EVOLVING PRESIDENTIAL RACE  
by G. Donald Ferree, Jr.

Ratings of the President are, if anything, slightly higher than last month, with the number limiting their assessment to no higher than fair are no more numerous than those who give a higher grade.

Three in four claim to be paying "a lot" or "some" attention to the campaign, Yet, when they are asked to name someone they would like to be elected, "no one" wins (that is, just shy of four in ten comes up with anything). Bush is named by one in three, including almost three in four GOP adherents. Overall half as many come up with Kerry's name, including almost half of all those who considered themselves Democrats.

On balance, Bush is widely known and seen favorably by about five to three (56%-36%). Partisanship is linked closely to views of Bush, as was the case for his job rating on the excellent to poor scale. Kerry is less well known and views of him come close to being equally balanced between favorable and unfavorable. (Partisanship is linked to views of Kerry as well, but not quite so strongly as is the case for Bush.

Last month, preferences between the two major party candidates was close to evenly split. This month, Bush has emerged with a modest lead. Reminded of the likely threeway ballot (with Nader as an Independent), respondents split Bush 45%, Kerry 33%, and Nader 4%, meaning that eight in ten did come up with a preference. The President does better with his partisan base than Kerry does with his (almost nine in ten versus three in four) and Independents express balanced preferences.

About one in six did not choose one of the three at first, but could be pushed "if you had to make up your mind". This produces a result of Bush 50%, Kerry 38%, Nader 6%. Lastly, anyone who had not opted for either Kerry or Bush was asked which of the two they would prefer. This question produces a 53%-43% Bush edge at this stage. (Realizing that a relatively large proportion of the population IS willing to state an inclination for one man or the other, partisan patterns are similar for this question.

While the election has not yet enraptured Wisconsin, and Bush's "lead" seems to have as much to do with Kerry's weakness as with a resounding endorsement of the incumbent, the public DOES think the election is important. Some six in ten feel it makes a lot of difference who gets elected, and adding in the one in

four who say some accounts for almost seven residents in eight. Bush partisans are at least as likely as those inclined to Kerry to ascribe importance to the contest.

This poll also included a common question asking whether respondents would like to see the President re-elected, or whether they would prefer "someone else" in the White House. The public splits evenly (47%-48%) on this. This is not a "vote prediction" since not only can views here change, but it is possible a challenger might represent an improvement even for those basically satisfied. But it does indicate the degree of openness to a challenger. The fact that Bush does better in the head to head than on this general perception means that for some of those willing to look elsewhere, Kerry has not made the case that he would be at least as acceptable.

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 next two columns show those who wanted to see President Bush re-elected contrasted with those who say they want someone else in the White House instead. The final columns depict those who, when finally asked to choose between the major party candidates, opted for Bush or Kerry, respectively.

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

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
MALE	49%	100%	--%	41%	61%	51%	41%	54%	49%	45%	52%	45%	54%	44%
FEMALE	51	--	100	59	39	49	59	46	51	55	48	55	46	56

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

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
EXCELLENT	15%	17%	12%	2%	9%	34%	14%	13%	12%	21%	31%	1%	27%	1%
GOOD	35	35	34	13	34	54	35	35	37	31	56	12	56	10
FAIR	25	25	25	34	27	11	25	33	24	17	13	36	17	35
POOR	23	20	26	49	27	1	22	16	26	27	--	48	--	51
TOO SOON TO TELL (VOL.)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
DON'T KNOW	1	--	2	1	*	*	4	1	*	1	--	2	--	2
REFUSED	1	2	1	1	2	*	--	2	1	3	*	1	*	2

VOTE01. Up to now, how much attention have you paid to the candidates running for President in 2004? A lot, some, only a little, or none at all?

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
A LOT	33%	39%	27%	34%	32%	40%	15%	25%	39%	44%	36%	32%	33%	34%
SOME	39	36	42	41	37	40	40	35	44	37	39	38	40	39
ONLY A LITTLE	20	19	20	17	22	16	32	28	13	11	18	19	20	18
NONE AT ALL	8	6	11	9	8	4	12	11	4	8	7	10	7	9
DON'T KNOW	*	--	*	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	*	--	*
REFUSED	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

VOTE02. Is there any person you would especially like to see elected President this year?

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
NO NAME MENTIONED	37%	32%	42%	33%	49%	23%	51%	40%	32%	31%	28%	43%	32%	39%
GEORGE W. BUSH	33	40	26	4	21	72	24	31	36	36	67	2	62	--
GENERAL WESLEY CLARK	1	1	*	*	1	1	--	2	--	*	1	*	1	*
FRMR GOV HOWARD DEAN	1	*	1	2	*	--	--	1	1	*	--	1	--	2
SENATOR JOHN EDWARDS	2	2	1	4	1	--	3	3	--	2	--	3	--	3
REP. DICK GEPHARDT	*	*	*	1	--	--	--	*	--	*	--	*	--	*
SENATOR JOHN KERRY	16	16	16	43	12	--	16	9	19	20	--	34	*	37
REP. DENNIS KUCINICH	*	*	*	1	*	--	1	1	--	--	--	1	--	1
SENATOR JOE LIEBERMAN	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
THE REV. AL SHARPTON	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SENATOR RUSS FEINGOLD	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SENATOR HERB KOHL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
GOVERNOR JIM DOYLE	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
GOV. TOMMY THOMPSON	*	--	*	--	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	*	--	*
TOM BARRETT	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
BILL CLINTON	*	*	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	--	1
HILLARY CLINTON	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
JOHN MCCAIN	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
OTHER (SPECIFY)	3	3	2	4	5	--	3	3	4	1	--	6	*	6
"REPUBLICAN"	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
"DEMOCRAT"	1	*	1	1	*	--	--	1	--	1	--	1	--	1
ANYBODY BUT BUSH	1	*	1	2	--	--	--	2	1	1	--	2	--	2
COMBINATION (SPECIFY)	*	*	--	*	--	--	--	--	*	--	--	*	--	*
DON'T KNOW	5	3	5	3	7	3	2	6	4	5	3	5	3	7
REFUSED	1	*	2	1	1	1	--	2	2	1	1	1	1	1

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

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
FAVORABLE	56%	61%	51%	21%	47%	94%	60%	63%	53%	51%	95%	18%	93%	14%
UNFAVORABLE	36	33	39	70	42	3	29	30	42	38	3	71	3	76
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	7	5	8	8	9	2	9	6	5	7	3	9	3	9
DON'T KNOW	1	*	2	*	2	*	1	--	*	4	*	2	1	1
REFUSED	*	*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	--	*	--	--

VOTE12. John Kerry (PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
FAVORABLE	36%	34%	38%	63%	41%	14%	47%	29%	35%	38%	12%	60%	13%	66%
UNFAVORABLE	36	41	31	9	29	68	21	36	37	44	62	10	59	7
DON'T KNOW ENOUGH	27	24	30	27	29	17	31	33	28	15	24	29	26	27
DON'T KNOW	1	1	2	*	2	1	1	2	*	3	1	1	1	1
REFUSED	*	*	--	--	--	*	--	--	--	*	*	--	*	--

VOTE24. This November, the ballot for President will probably be George W. Bush as a Republican, John Kerry as a Democrat, and Ralph Nader as an Independent. As of now, which one, if any, do you plan to vote for?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
GEORGE W. BUSH	45%	50%	40%	8%	35%	87%	44%	47%	47%	43%	88%	5%	85%	--%
JOHN KERRY	33	30	36	74	35	2	34	29	35	33	1	68	--	77
RALPH NADER	4	5	3	3	8	2	8	3	4	2	1	7	2	5
NONE OF THEM	5	6	4	4	8	2	1	7	3	7	2	5	3	5
INSISTS ON "OTHER"	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
WILL NOT VOTE	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	*	1	2	1	2
DON'T KNOW	10	8	12	9	12	5	11	10	9	12	5	12	6	12
REFUSED	2	1	2	--	2	2	--	2	1	3	2	1	3	--

VOTE25. (IF DID NOT NAME ONE OF THREE) If you had to make up your mind among these three, as of now who would you prefer?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
NOT ASKED	82%	84%	80%	85%	78%	91%	86%	79%	86%	78%	90%	80%	87%	82%
GEORGE W. BUSH	5	6	5	2	7	6	4	7	5	4	8	2	10	--
JOHN KERRY	6	5	6	8	6	2	10	6	5	4	*	10	--	13
RALPH NADER	2	3	1	--	6	1	1	2	--	5	1	2	1	2
NONE OF THEM	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
INSISTS ON "OTHER"	1	*	2	2	--	--	--	2	2	1	1	2	1	2
DON'T KNOW	3	2	4	2	2	1	--	1	2	7	--	3	*	1
REFUSED	1	1	2	1	1	1	--	2	1	2	--	1	1	*

VOTE26. (UNLESS NAMED BUSH/KERRY IN VOTE24. OR VOTE25.) Suppose you were choosing just between Bush and Kerry? Which would you prefer?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
NOT ASKED	89%	90%	88%	92%	83%	95%	91%	89%	91%	84%	98%	85%	95%	90%
GEORGE W. BUSH	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	5	--
JOHN KERRY	4	4	5	4	11	--	5	4	5	5	--	8	--	10
NONE OF THEM	2	2	2	2	1	1	--	2	--	5	*	3	--	--
INSISTS ON "OTHER"	*	*	--	--	*	--	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--
DON'T KNOW	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	4	--	2	--	--
REFUSED	*	--	1	--	--	1	--	1	1	--	--	*	--	--

PUSH3WAY. (CONSTRUCTED ITEM FROM VOTE24, VOTE25) ADDING IN LEANERS If you had to make up your mind among these three, as of now

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GW	JK
GEORGE W. BUSH	50%	55%	45%	10%	42%	92%	48%	54%	52%	47%	97%	7%	95%	--%
JOHN KERRY	38	35	42	82	41	3	44	35	39	36	1	78	--	90
RALPH NADER	6	7	5	3	14	3	9	5	4	6	2	9	2	7
NONE OF THEM	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
INSISTS ON "OTHER"	1	*	2	2	--	--	--	2	2	1	1	2	1	2
DON'T KNOW	3	2	4	2	2	1	--	1	2	7	--	3	*	1
REFUSED	1	1	2	1	1	1	--	2	1	2	--	1	1	*

PUSH2WAY. (CONSTRUCTED ITEM, COMBINING VOTE24-25) Choice between Bush and Kerry

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GW	JK
GEORGE W. BUSH	53%	58%	48%	11%	45%	94%	50%	56%	54%	49%	99%	9%	100%	--%
JOHN KERRY	43	39	47	87	51	3	48	39	44	42	1	86	--	100
NONE OF THEM	2	2	2	2	1	1	--	2	--	5	*	3	--	--
INSISTS ON "OTHER"	*	*	--	--	*	--	--	*	--	--	--	*	--	--
DON'T KNOW	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	4	--	2	--	--
REFUSED	*	--	1	--	--	1	--	1	1	--	--	*	--	--

VOTE27. When it comes right down to it, how much difference do you think it makes who gets elected President this year. A lot, some, only a little, or none at all?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GW	JK
A LOT	58%	55%	61%	55%	53%	70%	59%	59%	58%	59%	64%	55%	61%	58%
SOME	27	26	28	33	30	21	20	24	31	23	23	30	25	30
ONLY A LITTLE	11	14	9	11	9	8	18	13	9	10	11	11	11	10
NONE AT ALL	3	5	2	1	8	1	2	3	1	6	2	3	2	3
DON'T KNOW	1	*	1	--	--	*	--	1	--	2	*	*	1	--
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?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GW	JK
LIKE BUSH RE-ELECTED	47%	50%	43%	10%	40%	87%	43%	50%	47%	45%	100%	--%	88%	1%
LIKE SOMEONE ELSE	48	44	51	87	54	8	54	47	48	43	--	100	8	96
DON'T KNOW	5	4	5	3	2	4	2	2	4	10	--	--	4	2
REFUSED	1	2	*	--	4	1	--	2	1	2	--	--	1	1

CAND01. I'm going to read you a brief series of phrases. For each, please tell me if you think it accurately describes George W. Bush, John Kerry, both or neither? "Has been unfairly attacking his opponent" Which one, if either does that accurately describe?

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
BUSH	16%	14%	18%	30%	21%	5%	17%	9%	22%	17%	5%	30%	4%	33%
KERRY	26	33	19	11	24	43	25	21	26	32	45	9	43	7
BOTH	31	30	32	32	31	30	24	41	32	25	27	32	30	31
NEITHER	19	18	19	17	20	17	30	19	16	15	18	20	18	20
DON'T KNOW	7	4	10	9	5	5	5	10	5	9	5	8	5	8
REFUSED	1	*	1	1	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	1	1	1

CAND02. "Understands the problems ordinary people face" (PROBE FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
BUSH	29%	30%	28%	8%	23%	57%	24%	28%	27%	38%	57%	5%	52%	4%
KERRY	28	27	30	56	28	7	30	23	28	31	7	52	8	55
BOTH	14	10	17	9	9	17	20	17	13	7	16	10	17	9
NEITHER	24	28	20	20	34	17	22	26	29	17	20	26	22	23
DON'T KNOW	4	3	5	6	4	1	4	7	2	4	1	7	1	7
REFUSED	1	2	--	1	2	--	--	--	1	3	--	1	--	2

CAND03. "Can be counted on to keep campaign promises" (PROBE FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
BUSH	32%	38%	26%	8%	24%	63%	24%	35%	36%	31%	61%	6%	57%	4%
KERRY	17	15	18	39	15	2	24	10	19	18	3	32	3	36
BOTH	6	5	7	5	8	5	7	8	3	6	5	7	6	6
NEITHER	36	36	36	35	45	26	39	40	36	32	28	42	30	42
DON'T KNOW	8	4	12	11	7	3	6	8	4	11	2	11	4	11
REFUSED	1	2	*	1	1	1	--	--	1	2	*	1	*	1

CAND04. "Has a consistent record on the issues" (PROBE FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
BUSH	43%	50%	37%	15%	43%	73%	40%	39%	45%	48%	75%	14%	71%	11%
KERRY	13	11	14	29	8	5	20	9	11	15	3	24	3	26
BOTH	7	6	8	10	5	3	9	9	5	6	3	10	3	9
NEITHER	25	26	23	31	34	10	22	26	29	19	10	36	14	37
DON'T KNOW	12	6	18	14	9	9	8	17	8	11	9	15	9	15
REFUSED	1	1	*	1	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	1	--	1



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

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
DEMOCRAT	29%	25%	34%	100%	--%	--%	27%	30%	29%	28%	6%	54%	6%	59%
REPUBLICAN	32	34	31	--	--	100	34	32	33	32	60	5	58	2
INDEPENDENT	23	29	18	--	100	--	22	18	27	26	20	27	20	28
OTHER	11	9	12	--	--	--	16	15	7	9	10	10	12	8
NONE	3	3	3	--	--	--	2	4	3	3	2	4	2	2
DON'T KNOW	1	*	1	--	--	--	--	1	--	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)

	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				RE-ELEC		TWOWAY		
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO	GWB	JK
18-29	13%	11%	15%	12%	12%	14%	100%	--%	--%	--%	12%	15%	12%	15%
30-44	27	30	24	27	21	27	--	100	--	--	29	26	29	24
45-59	31	31	31	31	36	32	--	--	100	--	32	31	32	32
60 and over	26	24	28	25	29	26	--	--	--	100	26	24	25	25
DK/REFUSED	3	4	2	5	2	1	--	--	--	--	2	4	2	4

\* 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 511 randomly chosen state residents were interviewed for this survey by telephone between April 20 and 28, 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".