



Badger Poll™ #1, Release 4
University of Wisconsin Survey Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
March 28, 2002

NOTE: When using material from this release please cite the Badger Poll™ conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center, sponsored in part by Wisconsin Public Broadcasting and the Capital Times.

PATRIOTISM AND ITS PLACE IN WISCONSIN HEARTS AND SCHOOLS
by G. Donald Ferree, Jr.

Most Wisconsin residents feel a great deal of pride in being an American. At the same time, at least in the abstract, they do not exhibit much anti-foreigner sentiment. Residents feel that teaching patriotism has a place in the schools and deserves a bigger one, but they also embrace a broad agenda ranging from imparting skills and traditional knowledge to helping students be active citizens who can deal with people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. These are some of the findings from the inaugural Badger Poll™, conducted by the University of Wisconsin (Madison) Survey Center and sponsored in part by Wisconsin Public Broadcasting and the Capital Times.

The typical Wisconsinite expresses a good deal of pride in being an American. Overall, more than eight in ten (81%) report that they are "extremely proud" to be an American. Virtually all the remainder (16%) say they are "somewhat proud", leaving just one in one hundred who call themselves "not proud at all". Men are slightly more likely than women as a group to profess themselves extremely proud. Pride tends to rise with age, from a low of seven in ten "extremely proud" among the youngest group to nine in ten in the oldest, with the two middle groups falling between them. Self-described Democrats are less likely than those claiming another partisan affiliation to apply the label "extremely proud" to themselves. Whether this reflects a lower level of feelings of pride per se or a less willingness to label themselves in this way is, of course, impossible to say.

Respondents were asked to imagine that "a foreigner visiting this country were to criticize many things about America" and then to categorize their reaction. Six in ten (60%) said "he has every right to express his own opinion". This contrast with one in four (26%) "he was being insulting", and one in ten (10%) who felt "he is just showing bad manners". This answer naturally cannot exactly predict behavior in specific circumstances, but it does suggest that -- even in the aftermath of September 11 -- there is a predisposition in favor of civil liberties and a refusal to take the "easy way" vis a vis non-citizens. There is little clear pattern by gender or age, but there is decrease in the proportion supporting the foreigner's right to speak out from two in three to just above one as one moves from Democrat to Republican. For all three groups, however, the largest proportion takes the most "pro civil liberty" position.

The situation seems different when it comes to overt signs of respect for the country, specifically how one feels "about Americans who won't rise when the Star Spangled Banner is played". Fewer than one in ten approve (either strongly 4% or somewhat 4%). Conversely, more than eight in ten express disapproval (23%

somewhat, and -- markedly -- 58% strongly).

Once again, the basic stance obtains across gender, age, and even partisan lines, albeit with different strength. Men and women are virtually identical as groups. The proportion disapproving ranges from three in four (just under half strongly) among the youngest to more than nine in ten (three fourths strongly) among the eldest. The comparable proportions across the partisan spectrum range from three in four among Democrats to nine in ten among Republicans.

The national anthem is notoriously hard to sign, but do people know (or at least claim to know) the words? Seven in ten (71%) say they know all the words to the first verse of the Star Spangled Banner (only the first verse of which is virtually ever sung). One in four (25%) know some. No attempt was made to verify the accuracy of the report. By self report, women are ten points more likely to know the words than are men. A similar gap separates Republicans from Democrats (with the former more likely to claim to know the lyrics). Age makes little difference, while the proportion familiar with the words is highest among the youngest group, the distinction is too small to be "statistically significant" (that is, the chance that the observed difference could emerge from the luck of the draw in terms of who happened to be interviewed even if the groups in the population were the same is too high to be comfortable assuming there is a real difference).

Going along with the strong backing in theory for the rights of a visiting non-citizen to criticize the USA, eight in ten (81%) describe it as "a source of strength" for the US "that its citizens come from so many different places". Only one in ten (11%) found it "a source of weakness" while a small group (5%) volunteered that there were both positive and negative aspects to this heritage. With the exception of those over sixty (seven in ten of whom called it a source of strength, compared to seven in eight of other groups).

In some circles there is question about the reference to God in the US motto, but relatively few Wisconsin residents appear to share it. Reminded of the motto, "in God we trust", and asked whether this is appropriate or not, almost nine in ten (88%) said it was. One in eight (12%) did not. There is a modest partisan pattern, and a stronger age-related one. Specifically, Democrats and Independents were about ten points less likely than Republicans to back the motto, but the difference is between an overwhelming majority and something more closely approaching unanimity. Looking to age, just under three in four (73%) among the youngest, to 99% among the oldest, with the two middle groups falling between them and quite close to one another.

Another contentious issue has been the pledge of allegiance. Overall seven in ten (70%) believe that "public school students should be required to pledge allegiance to the flag in all U.S. schools, while one in five (21%) do not. There is a relatively weak age pattern, with the proportion favoring requiring the pledge increasing from just above six in ten to just over three in four as one moves from youngest to oldest. Two thirds of Independents and Democrats support this notion by a smaller margin than Republicans, eight in ten of whom feel the pledge should be required. Some 7% had volunteered that the pledge should be an option. Those with children under eighteen in their home (either all the time or part of the time, such as with joint custody) differed scarcely at all, as the detailed tables following this summary reveal.

Respondents were also asked about the amount of emphasis the public schools are putting on various areas. Results are summarized below in Chart I, as well as in the tables at the end of the release.

Perception of Emphasis Schools Place on Goals

	Too Much	Abt Right	Too Little
Prepare students for jobs	2%	41%	52%
Prepare active citizens	3%	39%	50%
Teach patriotism	5%	40%	47%
Teaching basic skills	2%	50%	43%
Teach acceptance of diversity	5%	44%	43%

Overall, each of the five areas is seen as deserving at least as much attention on balance as it is now getting. In three, preparing students for jobs, preparing students to be active citizens and teaching children to be patriotic, those feeling the area is receiving too little attention are the largest group (a plurality ranging from 52% to 47%). Four in ten, plus or minus a percentage point, believe the present emphasis is appropriate. Only a handful (ranging from 2% to 5%) think each of these areas get too much emphasis.

Teaching basic skills, and acceptance of diversity (see tables for detailed wording) are seen by just over four in ten (43%) as getting too little attention. In the former case, half feel it is getting an appropriate amount of focus. In the latter, the group believing more emphasis is due is about the same size as that which is satisfied with the way things are. Still, it is clear that each of these has a substantial constituency, and there is no area where there is substantial sentiment that the area is overemphasized. Moreover, while -- as summarized above -- there are differences from area to area, they are limited, and it is clear that many endorse a broad agenda. It is simply not the case that all the focus is on "academics" nor that a "social agenda" is wholeheartedly endorsed or rejected, nor that practical skills dominate. Rather, the typical resident endorses a broad agenda for the schools, including knowledge, skills, and what might be called preparation for living life in this society. Moreover, there is a sense that the schools should "do more" in at least some areas without "doing less" in others, a mandate which is both enabling and challenging.

The general similarity across areas might well mask very different answers by groups. When it comes to instilling patriotism, Republicans are more likely than either Democrats or Independents to call for increased emphasis, and the desired focus tends to increase with age. Non-parents (those who did not report a child under eighteen living in their households) are at least as enthusiastic about this area as are parents.

Teaching active citizenship also gets somewhat more endorsement, against a context in which all groups show substantial proportions wanting to increase focus, among Republicans than Democrats, with Independents in the middle. Age, however, shows a somewhat flatter pattern than was the case for patriotism. And on this issue, parents and non-parents show a great deal of similarity.

This pattern also persists for partisanship when it comes to basic skills, with about a ten point difference between Republicans and Democrats. Age once again reasserts itself. More than twice as many in the groups from thirty to fifty-nine see this as now receiving too little emphasis than is the case for the youngest group, and this proportion increases to a clear majority among the oldest group. Non-parents are also more clear that this should receive more emphasis (half feel this way) than parents (just over one third of whom do).

Preparing students to get good jobs finds about men somewhat more than ten points more likely to want increased emphasis, the largest difference so far between men and women as a group. Here, Democrats are (modestly) less likely than either Independents or Republicans to want the area increasingly emphasized, although it has a good constituency among all three groups. Age shows a muted pattern. Parental status (in our sense of having a child or children at home) does not divide respondents.

"Teaching students to get along with people from different racial or ethnic backgrounds" also finds groups generally similar to one another. Here, Democrats are most likely to want increased emphasis, Republicans least, but the total difference amount to only around ten points. The three youngest age groups are similar, only the oldest are (a bit) less enthusiastic. This area is also seen similarly by those with children at home and those without.

We have noted that residents tend to endorse a broad agenda for the schools, with little evidence that substantial groups would "pay for" increased focus on one area with decreases at least in the areas about which they were asked. This can also be seen when one looks at the number of areas cited for changed emphasis. Seven in eight (85%) said that NONE of the five areas deserved less emphasis than it was currently getting. Virtually all the others named only one, and literally not one respondent named more than three.

Conversely, only about one respondent in six (15%) failed to name at least one area as deserving MORE attention. Another one in six named one, one in five named two, another one in five named three, the same size group named four, and almost one in ten cited all five areas. This means that the "typical" respondent named between two and three areas for increased focus, without designating any area for a reduction. This means that efforts to improve the job the schools are doing in almost any of the areas cited are likely to meet with positive reaction, provided this is not seen as short-changing another. As noted, this is both an enabling and challenging public opinion context.

Statewide Marginals and Percentages for Key Groups

What follows is the exact question wording for each of the items referred to in the release. 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 their age group (calculated from year of birth: 18-29; 30-44; 45-59; sixty and older.) Finally, those with a child or children at home (including cases of shared custody) are shown in column eleven, while those without children at home are shown in column twelve.

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

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
MALE	49%	100%	--%	43%	52%	53%	51%	51%	50%	43%	47%	50%
FEMALE	51	--	100	57	48	47	49	49	50	58	53	50

PRIDE05: Generally speaking, is it a source of strength, or a source of weakness for the United States that its citizens come from so many different places?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
STRENGTH	81%	83%	80%	79%	87%	82%	84%	85%	84%	69%	85%	79%
WEAKNESS	11	12	11	12	9	10	7	10	9	21	8	14
BOTH, DEPENDS (VOL.)	5	4	7	6	3	7	7	3	5	7	4	7
DON'T KNOW	2	1	3	3	--	1	2	2	2	3	3	1
REFUSED	*	*	*	--	*	--	--	*	1	--	1	*

PRIDE06: Right now, the official motto of the United States, which appears on all our coins and currency is "In God we Trust". Do you think this is appropriate for our country's official motto, or not?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
YES	88%	86%	89%	86%	85%	96%	73%	87%	87%	99%	88%	87%
NO	12	13	10	14	13	5	25	12	12	1	11	12
DON'T KNOW	1	1	1	--	1	--	1	1	1	--	1	1
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	*	--	--	--	--	*	--	*

PRIDE07: Do you think public school students should be required to pledge allegiance to the flag in all U.S. schools or not?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
YES	70%	70%	69%	65%	66%	81%	61%	65%	73%	77%	70%	70%
NO	21	21	21	25	26	12	25	26	21	12	22	21
SHOULD BE OPTION (VOL)	7	7	8	7	9	7	11	7	6	9	6	9
DON'T KNOW	2	1	2	2	--	1	3	2	--	2	2	1
REFUSED	*	--	*	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	*	--

SCHL01: Do you think that our public schools are putting too much emphasis, too little emphasis, or about the right amount of emphasis on teaching children to be patriotic Americans?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
TOO MUCH	5%	4%	5%	6%	7%	*%	1%	6%	6%	4%	5%	4%
TOO LITTLE	47	49	46	42	43	57	37	45	50	53	45	49
ABOUT RIGHT	40	41	39	42	40	37	58	43	35	28	45	36
DON'T KNOW	8	7	10	10	9	6	5	6	9	14	5	10
REFUSED	1	--	1	1	--	--	--	1	1	1	1	*

SCHL02: How about making sure children are prepared to be active citizens? Are the public schools putting too much emphasis on this, too little, or about the right amount of emphasis?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
TOO MUCH	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%	7%	2%	4%	3%
TOO LITTLE	50	52	49	46	50	57	48	51	50	50	51	50
ABOUT RIGHT	39	38	40	45	36	34	45	40	38	34	40	37
DON'T KNOW	7	7	8	7	11	5	4	6	6	13	4	10
REFUSED	1	*	1	1	--	1	--	2	--	1	1	*

SCHL03: Teaching basic skills, such as math, English, and science? (Are the public schools putting too much emphasis, too little, or about the right amount of emphasis on this?)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
TOO MUCH	2%	1%	2%	3%	*%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%
TOO LITTLE	43	47	40	39	43	49	22	42	45	56	36	48
ABOUT RIGHT	50	49	51	52	51	46	71	52	47	37	57	45
DON'T KNOW	5	3	7	5	5	4	7	4	5	5	4	6
REFUSED	*	--	*	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	*	--

SCHL04: Preparing students to get good jobs? (Are the public schools putting too much emphasis, too little, or about the right amount of emphasis on this?)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
TOO MUCH	2%	1%	3%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
TOO LITTLE	52	59	46	43	56	55	52	49	59	46	52	52
ABOUT RIGHT	41	37	44	49	35	39	43	41	37	44	41	40
DON'T KNOW	5	2	7	4	7	3	2	5	2	9	4	5
REFUSED	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	--	1	1

SCHL05: Teaching students to get along with people from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. (Are the public schools putting too much emphasis, too little, or about the right amount of emphasis on this?)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
TOO MUCH	5%	7%	4%	2%	5%	9%	3%	5%	6%	7%	4%	6%
TOO LITTLE	43	43	43	47	43	38	47	42	46	36	42	43
ABOUT RIGHT	44	43	46	46	42	46	46	44	43	44	48	42
DON'T KNOW	7	7	7	4	10	8	4	8	4	14	5	9
REFUSED	1	*	1	1	--	--	--	1	1	--	1	*

SCHL2MCH: (CONSTRUCTED ITEM from SCHL01 - SCHL05) Number of areas schools giving too much attention to.

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
None	85%	85%	85%	84%	86%	86%	93%	85%	81%	83%	83%	86%
One	12	13	10	13	12	9	4	10	16	14	13	11
Two areas	2	1	3	1	1	4	2	2	3	1	2	2
Three areas	*	*	--	--	1	--	--	1	--	--	--	*
Four areas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Five areas	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
DK/REF to all	1	1	2	2	--	1	1	3	--	2	2	1

SCHL2LTL: (CONSTRUCTED ITEM from SCHL01 - SCHL05) Number of areas schools giving too little attention to.

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
None	15%	14%	15%	18%	12%	14%	13%	15%	15%	14%	16%	14%
One	17	16	19	20	18	14	20	20	16	15	20	15
Two areas	19	15	22	16	25	16	28	15	18	19	17	20
Three areas	20	20	19	18	18	21	24	18	20	19	20	19
Four areas	20	25	16	18	20	25	14	21	21	25	18	22
Five areas	8	8	8	8	6	9	1	9	11	7	8	8
DK/REF to all	1	1	2	2	--	1	1	3	--	2	2	1

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

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
Democrat	32%	28%	35%	100%	--%	--%	26%	28%	36%	36%	28%	35%
Republican	28	31	26	--	--	100	32	33	23	31	30	27
Independent	22	23	21	--	100	--	22	18	27	20	21	23
Other	11	14	8	--	--	--	8	16	10	5	14	8
None	4	2	6	--	--	--	10	4	3	3	4	4
DON'T KNOW	1	*	2	--	--	--	2	1	1	*	1	1
REFUSED	2	1	3	--	--	--	1	2	2	3	2	2

QD07: Are there any children, younger than eighteen years of age, living in your household at the present time?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
Yes	42%	41%	44%	38%	40%	44%	44%	75%	37%	1%	99%	--%
No	57	59	56	62	60	55	56	24	63	99	--	100
Sometime/shared (Vol)	*	*	*	--	--	1	--	1	*	--	1	--
DON'T KNOW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	--	1	--	1	--	--	--	--

QD11: In what year were you born? (ENTER FOUR-DIGIT YEAR)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				KID HOME	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	YES	NO
18-29	15%	16%	15%	12%	15%	17%	100%	--%	--%	--%	16%	15%
30-44	31	32	29	27	25	35	--	100	--	--	54	13
45-59	32	33	32	37	39	26	--	--	100	--	28	36
60 and over	20	17	22	23	18	22	--	--	--	100	1	34
DON'T KNOW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
REFUSED	2	1	2	2	4	--	--	--	--	--	1	2

* denotes less than .5%

-- denotes 0%

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

This inaugural 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 poll was sponsored in part by Wisconsin Public Broadcasting and the Capital Times newspaper of Madison. 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 597 randomly selected adult residents of Wisconsin were interviewed over the telephone from March 5-17, 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 about +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every eligible adult 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".