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## 2003 Governor's Race

Susan Howell  
*University of New Orleans*

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# 2003 Governor's Race



## *Survey Research Center*

**Dr. Susan E. Howell, Director**  
[sehowell@uno.edu](mailto:sehowell@uno.edu)

and

### **Research Assistants**

Stephanie Burchard  
Megan Hubbard

(504) 280-7379

View SRC surveys at: [www.uno.edu/~poli](http://www.uno.edu/~poli)

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## **November, 2003**

## 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<br>or Less | Some<br>College | College<br>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<br>Less | \$26,000 to<br>\$60,000 | \$61,000 or<br>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 4<sup>th</sup> 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<br>Legal | Under Certain<br>Circumstances | Never<br>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<br>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%