

HAMILTON COLLEGE PATRIOTISM POLL: ELEVEN KEY FINDINGS

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March 20, 2003

The Hamilton College Patriotism Poll, a national survey of the high school graduating class of 2003, gauges attitudes toward patriotism, military service, the pending war in Iraq and related topics. The survey of 1,001 high school seniors was conducted from March 12 to March 18, 2003. Before the March 17 polling began, the Bush administration signaled that war with Iraq was likely within days, a message that was strongly reinforced by President Bush's somber speech that evening. Since imminence of war is likely to inflate patriotic feelings, this report pays special attention to the differences between the attitudes expressed during the early polling sessions (on March 12 through 16) and the later (March 17-18) polling period.

The Patriotism Poll was designed and analyzed by Hamilton College researchers and administered by the polling firm Zogby International. The survey was funded by Hamilton's Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center and has an expected margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percent.

Here are 11 key findings from the poll. (*Detailed results can be found in the appendix, which includes question wording and statistics.*)

1. *This year's high school seniors are moderately patriotic by their own descriptions.* When they were asked to place themselves on a 0-to-10 patriotism scale, the average response was 6.4 (Question 16). Given a choice of rating themselves Extremely, Very, Somewhat or Not Patriotic, few chose Extremely Patriotic, 41 percent chose Very Patriotic, but 40 percent chose Slightly Patriotic. (Question 15)
2. *According to self-reports, the students are less patriotic than adults.* In a Gallup Poll conducted in January 2002, 24 percent of adults rated themselves Extremely Patriotic and only 24 percent considered themselves Slightly Patriotic.
3. *Ethnic variation in patriotic feelings is enormous.* Sixty-one percent of white high school seniors rate themselves Extremely or Very Patriotic, compared with 34 percent of blacks, 38 percent of Hispanics and 42 percent of Asians.
4. *There is a large gap in patriotic feelings among high school seniors between Democrats and Republicans.* Seventy-two percent of Republicans consider themselves Extremely or Very Patriotic, compared with 41 of Democrats, and 48 percent of Independents.
5. *The students want others to respect national symbols.* Seventy-two said that they would be offended by someone carrying on a conversation while the national anthem was being played at a sports event. Fifty-nine percent indicated they would be offended by someone refusing to stand while the Pledge of Allegiance was being recited. (Questions 18 and 19)

6. *The apparent imminence of war with Iraq has modestly affected student patriotism.* Polling on Monday and Tuesday of this week (March 17 and 18) reflected the changing atmosphere. The proportion rating themselves Extremely Patriotic rose from 11 to 19 percent from the earlier polling sessions to the Monday-Tuesday polling. Very Patriotic responses dropped from 43 to 37 percent. Slightly Patriotic responses inched from 39 to 40 percent, and Not Patriotic declined from 7 to 4 percent.

7. *Few high school seniors want to join the military. Many would try to avoid service if drafted.* Only nine percent say they plan to join the armed forces within the next year. (Question 24) Asked what they would do if drafted, 58 percent said they would accept induction, 32 percent said they would avoid service if they could do so legally, and 8 percent indicated that they would refuse to serve “no matter what.” (Question 28)

8. *High school seniors are not sympathetic to the idea of restarting the draft, but are more receptive to the concept of national service. If there is a draft, most think that both men and women should be called.* Only 18 percent think that restarting the draft would be a good idea (Question 26). Sixty percent believe that both men and women should be called for service if there is a draft (Question 27). Fifty-six percent say they would support a national service system that allowed young people to choose between military service and “a civilian service job such as working in a hospital or at an airport security checkpoint.”(Question 29)

9. *High school seniors consider protesters against war with Iraq to be “Patriotic.”* Respondents were asked if the anti-war protestors were “Unpatriotic because they are taking the side of another country against the United States” or “Patriotic because they are exercising their rights as citizens to protest policies they believe are wrong.” Sixty-three percent say the protestors are Patriotic. (Question 17)

10. *Most high school seniors support a war against Iraq.* Two-thirds would approve of the U.S. taking military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power. This proportion has barely budged

Appendix

1) SAM_NO

Sample Number

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
TOTAL	1001	9380.082	25373.492

2) HSSenior?

HSSenior?

	Freq.	%
1) YES	1001	100.0
TOTAL	1001	100.0

3) REGION

REGION

	Freq.	%
1) EAST	180	18.0
2) SOUTH	256	25.6
3) CENTRAL	323	32.3
4) WEST	242	24.2
TOTAL	1001	100.0

4) PATRIOTISM

1. [PATRIOTISM] There has been a lot of talk about patriotism lately. How patriotic would you say most Americans are?

1. Extremely patriotic 2. Very patriotic 3. Somewhat patriotic 4. Not patriotic
5. Not sure (Do not read)

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME 47	47	4.7
2) VERY	425	42.5
3) SLIGHT	507	50.6
4) NOT	14	1.4
5) NS	8	0.8
TOTAL	1001	100.0

5) PATFLAG

People have different ideas about what patriotism means. I will read you a list of items that are associated with patriotism. For each one, please tell me if it is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important at all in your idea of patriotism.

2. [PATFLAG] Displaying the flag on your home or car? How important is it to your idea of patriotism?
Extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not important.

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	112	11.2
2) VERY	284	28.4
3) SLIGHTLY	439	43.9
4) NOT	166	16.6
TOTAL	1001	100.0

6) PATMIL

Serving in the military?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	207	20.7
2) VERY	311	31.1
3) SLIGHT	339	33.9
4) NOT	140	14.0
5) NS	4	0.4
TOTAL	1001	100.0

7) PATHNONOR

Honoring those who have served in the military in wartime?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	562	56.1
2) VERY	368	36.8
3) SLIGHT	65	6.5
4) NOT	5	0.5
5) NS	1	0.1
TOTAL	1001	100.0

8) PATVOTE

Voting regularly in elections?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	510	50.9
2) VERY	338	33.8
3) SLIGHT	131	13.1
4) NOT	22	2.2
TOTAL	1001	100.0

9) PATPUBLIC

Being informed about public issues?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	401	40.1
2) VERY	435	43.5
3) SLIGHT	146	14.6
4) NOT	19	1.9
TOTAL	1001	100.0

10) PATSING

Singing the national anthem?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	238	23.8
2) VERY	322	32.2
3) SLIGHT	350	35.0
4) NOT	91	9.1
TOTAL	1001	100.0

11) PATPLEDGE

Saying the pledge of allegiance to the flag?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	293	29.3
2) VERY	329	32.9
3) SLIGHT	281	28.1
4) SLIGHT	97	9.7
5) NS	1	0.1
TOTAL	1001	100.0

12) PATPRIDE

Feeling pride in your country?

	Freq.	%
1) EXTREME	538	53.7
2) VERY	347	34.7
3) SLIGHT	108	10.8
4) NOT	8	0.8
TOTAL	1001	100.0

13) FAMFLAG1

Has your family displayed an American flag on your home or car at any time in the last year?

1 Yes 2. No 3. Not Sure (Do not read)

		Freq.	%
1) YES	805	80.4	
2) NO		195	19.5
3) NS		1	0.1
TOTAL	1001	100.0	

14) FAMFLAG2

Did your family display the flag on a home or car prior to the 9-11 attacks? (Asked only of those who answered YES on previous question).

		Freq.	%
0) NO on 13		196	19.6
1) Yes		582	58.1
2) No		218	21.8
3) NS		5	0.5
TOTAL	1001	100.0	

15) PATRIOTU

How patriotic are you? Would you say . . .

1. Extremely patriotic 2. Very patriotic 3. Somewhat patriotic 4. Not patriotic

Freq. %

17) PROTEST

You may have heard about the protest demonstrations around the country in opposition to war with Iraq. Some people say that the demonstrators are UNPATRIOTIC because they are taking the side of another country in opposition to the U.S. Others say that the demonstrators are PATRIOTIC because they are using their rights as citizens to oppose policies they believe are wrong. Which description of the demonstrators comes closest to your views? Do you think the anti-war demonstrators are unpatriotic or patriotic? (Neither and Not Sure were not read)

	Freq.	%
1) UNPATRIOT	280	28.0
2) PATRIOTIC	631	63.0
3) NEITHER	34	3.4
4) NS	56	5.6
TOTAL	1001	100.0

18) OFFEND1

Would it offend you if someone carried on a conversation while the national anthem was being played before a sporting event?

	Freq.	%
1) YES	720	71.9
2) NO	275	27.5
3) NS	6	0.6
TOTAL	1001	100.0

19) OFFEND2

Would it offend you if someone refused to stand while the pledge of allegiance was being recited?

	Freq.	%
1) YES	592	59.1
2) NO	391	39.1
3) NS	18	1.8
TOTAL	1001	100.0

20) MOVED

Some Americans say they feel moved when they hear the national anthem or see the flag. Others say they do not. How do you usually feel?

1. Very moved
2. Somewhat moved
3. Slightly moved
4. Not moved at all
5. Not sure/refuse (Do not read)

	Freq.	%
1) VERY	250	25.0
2) SOMEWHT	428	42.8
3) SLIGHT	227	22.7
4) NOT	92	9.2
5) NS	4	0.4
TOTAL	1001	100.0

21) REGISTER

Some young people register to vote as soon as they are old enough. Others don't bother to register, perhaps because they don't think their vote matters. How likely is it that you will be registered to vote within a year of reaching your eighteenth birthday?

	Freq.	%
1) VERY	844	84.3
2) SOMEWHT	108	10.8
3) S-UNLIKELY	24	2.4
4) V-UNLIKELY	22	2.2
5) NS	3	0.3
TOTAL	1001	100.0

22) SECSTATE

Do you happen to know who is the current Secretary of State? Is it . .

1. Dick Cheney
2. Colin Powell
3. Jeff Long
4. Madeline Albright
5. Not Sure/Refuse (Do Not Read)

	Freq.	%
1) CHANEY	94	9.4
2) POWELL	650	64.9
3) LONG	12	1.2
4) ALBRIGHT	31	3.1
5) NS	214	21.4
TOTAL	1001	100.0

23) SECDEF

How about the Secretary of Defense? Is it

1. William Cohen
2. Dick Cheney
3. Donald Rumsfeld
4. Dennis Gilbert
5. Not Sure/Refuse (Do Not Read)

	Freq.	%
1) COHEN	56	5.6
2) CHANEY	81	8.1
3) RUMSFELD	484	48.4
4) GILBERT	30	3.0
5) NS	350	35.0
TOTAL	1001	100.0

24) ARMEDF1

Do you plan to join the armed forces within the next year?

	Freq.	%
1) YES	90	9.0
2) NO	890	88.9
3) NS	21	2.1
TOTAL	1001	100.0

25) ARMEDF2

How likely is it that you will join the armed forces within the next five years? (Not asked of respondents who answered YES on Q24)

1.

28) DRAFTED

If the draft were restarted and you were called for military service, which of the following would you do?

1. Go into the military
2. Avoid military service if you could find a legal way to do so.
3. Refuse military service no matter what.
4. Not sure/refuse (Do not read)

	Freq.	%
1) GO	579	57.8
2) AVOID	321	32.1
3) REFUSE	81	8.1
4) NS	20	2.0
TOTAL	1001	100.0

29) NATSERV

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31) WAIT

Should the United States take military action against Iraq fairly soon, or should the United States wait and give the United Nations and weapons inspectors more time? (Not asked of Respondents who answered DISAPPROVE on Q30.)

1. Take action 2. Give United Nations and weapons inspectors more time 3. Not Sure (Do not read)

34) RACE/ETHN

Which category best describes your ethnic or racial background?

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Asian
5. Other or Mixed Race
6. Not sure/Refuse (Do not read)

	Freq.	%
1) WHITE	698	70.3
2) BLACK	88	8.9
3) HISPANIC	92	9.3
4) ASIAN	45	4.5
5) OTHR/MIXED	61	6.1
6) NS	9	0.9

Missing 8

TOTAL 993 100.0

35) PARTY

Which political party do you prefer most?

1. Democratic
2. Republican
3. Independent/Neither Party (Do not read)
4. Other Party (Do not read)
5. Not sure/ Refuse (Do not read)

	Freq.	%
1) DEMS	413	41.6
2) REPS	386	38.9
3) IND/NEITHR	103	10.4
4) OTHR PARTY	9	0.9
5) NS	82	8.3

Missing 8

TOTAL 993 100.0

36) RELIGION

Which of the following best describes your religious preference?

1. Evangelical or born-again Christian
2. Protestant
3. Catholic
4. Jewish
5. Muslim
6. Some other faith
7. No religion
8. "Christian" (not read)
9. Not sure/Refuse (not read)

	Freq.	%
0)	9	0.9
1) BRN AGAIN	212	21.2
2) PROT	139	13.9
3) CATHOLIC	265	26.5
4) JEWISH	14	1.4
5) MUSLIM	7	0.7
6) OTHER	113	11.3
7) NONE	147	14.7
8) "CHRISTIAN"	81	8.1
9) NS	14	1.4
TOTAL	1001	100.0

37) CITIZEN

Are you an American citizen?

	Freq.	%
1) YES	965	97.3
2) NO	26	2.6
3) NS	1	0.1

Missing9

TOTAL	992	100.0
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38) BORN

Were you born in another country?

	Freq.	%
1) YES2	103	10.4
2) NO	888	89.5
3) NS/REF	1	0.1

Missing9

TOTAL	992	100.0
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39) PARENTS

Were either of your parents born in another country?

	Freq.	%
1) YES	226	22.8
2) NO	764	77.0
3) NS/REF	2	0.2

Missing 9

TOTAL	992	100.0
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40) PAED

How much education has your father completed?

1. Did not complete high school
2. High school graduate
3. Some college
4. College graduate
5. Post-graduate education
6. Other (do not read)
7. Not sure/refuse (not read)

	Freq.	%
1) <HS	57	5.8
2) HS GRAD	267	26.9
3) SOME COL	189	19.1
4) COL GRAD	279	28.2
5) POST GRAD	161	16.2
6) OTHER	4	0.4
7) NS	34	3.4

Missing 10

TOTAL	991	100.0
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41) MAED

How much education has your mother completed?

	Freq.	%
1) <HS	50	5.1
2) HS GRAD	254	25.7
3) SOME COL	218	22.0
4) COL GRAD	331	33.4
5) POST GRAD	119	12.0
6) OTHER	1	0.1
7) NS	17	1.7

Missing 11

TOTAL	990	100.0
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42) INCOME

Approximately what is the total annual income of your family?

1. Under \$30,000
2. Between \$30,000 and \$60,000
3. Above \$60,000
4. NS/ Refuse (not read)

	Freq.	%
1) <\$30K	114	11.5
2) \$30-60K	292	29.5
3) \$60+	326	32.9
4) NS/REF	258	26.1
Missing	11	
TOTAL	990	100.0