

racial

attitudes

in pulaski county

*a study by the
Institute of Government*

U·A·L·R

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

“Race, particularly white-black race relations, has been a major problem, indeed the major problem, the biggest obstacle to progress, in our state since it was founded in 1836,” said University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) Chancellor Joel E. Anderson in his September 30, 2003 inauguration speech.

Anderson made this statement one hundred years after sociologist and civil rights leader W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in 1903, “The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line.” Race relations remain a central issue in the twenty-first century.

In a speech on the UALR campus in November 2003, award-winning documentary filmmaker Ken Burns said that he found himself returning in his work again and again to issues of race, which he sees as central to the larger American narrative. Burns called Little Rock “the beginning of the solution” (Hammer, 2003) to United States race relations because of the courageous action of black students in integrating Central High School in 1957.

Little Rock and Pulaski County continue to seek solutions to issues of race relations. Chancellor Anderson committed UALR to an ongoing role in this endeavor. He announced that UALR would conduct an annual survey of racial attitudes. “This is a difficult issue that in many communities, not just here, has been cloaked by a code of silence, which makes it easier to pretend it does not exist. You have to face it to fix it. . . . I believe this annual survey will help us speed progress in our community on a most fundamental problem.”

This report summarizes the findings of UALR’s first annual survey of racial attitudes in Pulaski County. The study was funded solely by UALR as part of our mission as a metropolitan university to contribute toward solutions of our community’s most pressing problems.

The report begins with a description of the study and continues with the survey findings organized into three sections:

- ◆ Interracial Perceptions;
- ◆ Equality Issues; and
- ◆ Interracial Experiences.

The last sections of the report offer conclusions, references, and an appendix with notes on methodology. The study provides baseline data, which will be supplemented by data from future surveys. It is a study conducted for the purposes of providing good information, enhancing thoughtful discussion, and improving race relations in our community.

The Study

This study of racial attitudes in Pulaski County is based on a telephone survey conducted by the UALR Institute of Government Survey Research Center (SRC) between October 13 and December 13, 2003. A total of 1,611 interviews were conducted with a stratified random sample of residents age eighteen and older living in Pulaski County, Arkansas. Using a combination of screening questions and zip code verifications, the sample was stratified into four geo-racial groups:

- ◆ LR-whites: White respondents living within the city limits of Little Rock
- ◆ LR-blacks: Black respondents living within the city limits of Little Rock
- ◆ OLR-whites: White respondents living outside the city limits of Little Rock
- ◆ OLR-blacks: Black respondents living outside the city limits of Little Rock

At all times during this study, researchers were sensitive to the debate and uncertainty concerning the appropriate label for a racial group and its members. Over the past two decades there has been a shift in terminology with many people using the term “African-American” rather than “black”. However, a national poll conducted by Gallup in 2001 showed that most blacks have no preference for either group label and for those who did indicate a preference, most say they are not offended or made uncomfortable when referred to by the other label (Jones, 2001). These findings were supported by this Pulaski County study in which 67 percent of the black respondents stated they had no preference for either group label. For those who did have a preference, respondents were approximately equally divided between the two terms: “African-American” and “Black” (18 percent v. 14 percent, respectively). Based upon this information and the need to remain consistent with wording used by Gallup in their survey questions, the study team adopted the terms “black” and “white” and utilized these terms throughout the survey and the report.

Approximately 390 interviews were conducted within each geo-racial group. The overall response rate (RR3) for the survey was 45% and the survey had a cooperation rate of 62%.

Research evidence shows that responses to racial issue questions can be influenced by whether interviewers and respondents perceive themselves to be of the same or a different race as one another. In order to mitigate the race-of-interviewer effects, the SRC developed an inventive methodology whereby the races of the respondents and the interviewers were matched for the purpose of conducting the interview.



All but two questions used in this survey were based upon questions developed, tested, and used by The Gallup Organization in a series of studies on Black/White Relations in the United States (c1997-2003 The Gallup Organization. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission from www.gallup.com). In many instances national data from Gallup are presented for comparison purposes. We gratefully acknowledge The Gallup Organization for allowing UALR to utilize questions from their minority relations trend surveys and for allowing their national figures to be incorporated into this report.

The study primarily analyzes black/white relations in Pulaski County. Blacks and whites are the two major racial groups in the county, respectively comprising 32 and 64 percent of the total population.

Although the county has a growing Hispanic population, the percentage of Hispanics is still relatively small at 2.4 percent. Because of the small number of Hispanics in the county, the survey did not yield sufficient interviews with Hispanics to compare their responses with those of blacks and whites. The questionnaire includes several questions about attitudes toward Hispanics and responses to these questions are compared with corresponding questions about other groups.

This report is available at no cost. Copies for viewing and circulation may be obtained at the following web address:

<http://www.ualr.edu/iog/racialattitudes.htm>

Interracial Perceptions

The survey began with a set of questions designed to assess perspectives on the general state of race relations, interracial closeness, levels of trust between racial groups, and attitudes towards integration.

Quality of Relations

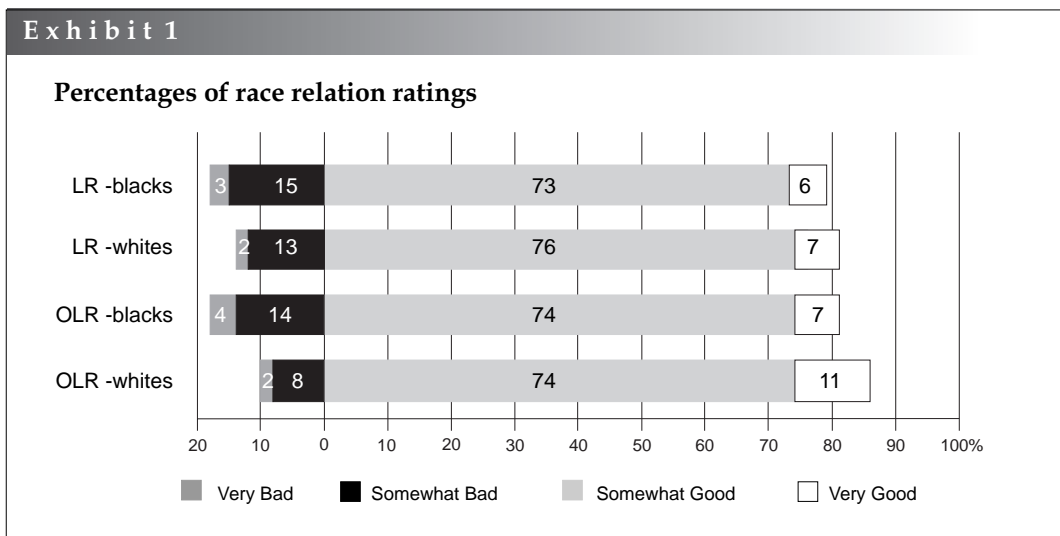


“We’d like to know how you would rate relations between various groups in Pulaski County these days. Would you say relations between whites and blacks are very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, or very bad?”

- ◆ **Eight out of ten blacks and whites in Pulaski County said that race relations were good or very good.**
- ◆ **Both blacks and whites in Pulaski County rate race relations higher than blacks and whites at the national level.**

Between 79 and 85 percent of the four geo-racial groups believed that race relations were good to very good. National survey results were less positive than Pulaski County results. According to a 2003 national survey six out of ten blacks (59 percent) and seven out of ten whites (69 percent) viewed black/white relations as very good or good (Gallup Poll June 12-18, '03).

There were no significant differences between the responses of LR-whites and LR-blacks or between LR-blacks and OLR-blacks on this question, as shown in Exhibit 1. There were small but statistically significant differences between blacks and whites outside of Little Rock. For example, only 10 percent of the OLR-whites cited relations as somewhat bad or very bad as compared to 18 percent of the OLR-blacks.



Perceived Closeness

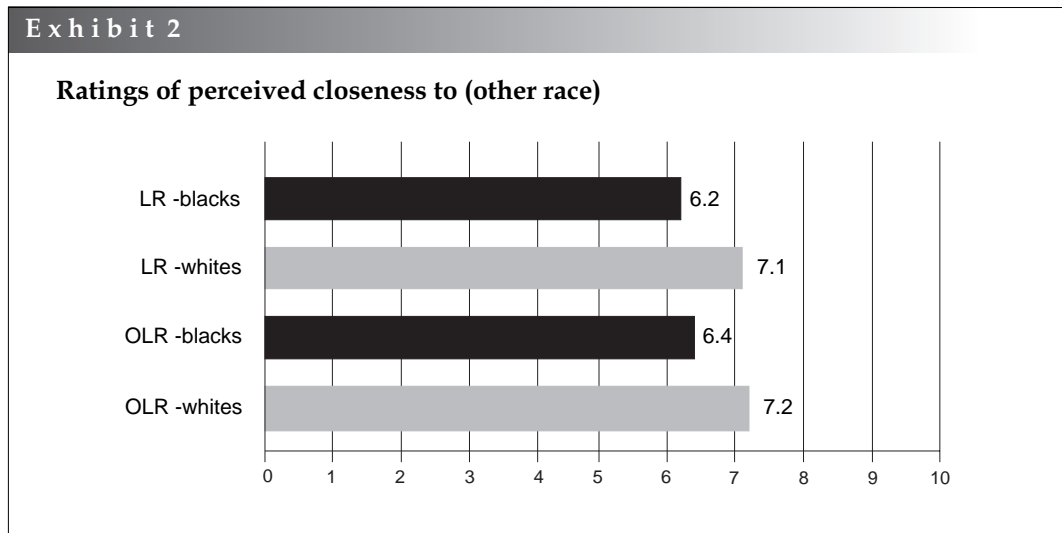


"I'm going to read a list of groups and I'd like you to tell me how close you feel to each group. For each, using a scale of one-to-ten, where "1" means you do not feel at all close to the group and "10" means you feel extremely close to the group, please tell me how close you feel to [each group]."

◆ **Whites feel significantly closer to blacks than blacks feel to whites.**

When blacks were asked to rate how close they felt to whites, the average ratings were from 6.2 to 6.4. When whites were asked to rate how close they felt to blacks, the average ratings were from 7.1 to 7.2. (See Exhibit 2.)

Feelings of closeness to one's own group are used as a point of reference in evaluating closeness to the other group. When asked about closeness to whites as a group, the mean ratings for white respondents were 9.1 to 9.2. When asked about closeness to blacks as a group, the mean ratings for black respondents were 8.6. This shows a significant difference in means between whites' ratings of closeness to other whites and blacks' ratings of closeness to other blacks.



Trust between Races

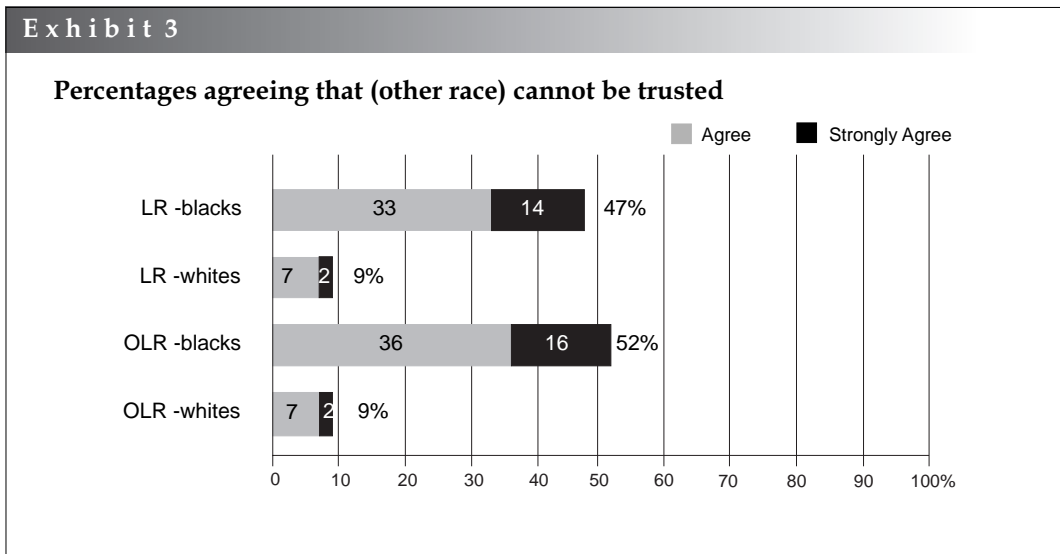
? *“Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Most blacks can’t be trusted to deal honestly with whites.” (White respondents only) or “Most whites can’t be trusted to deal honestly with blacks.” (Black respondents only)*

- ◆ **Large differences exist between whites’ and blacks’ levels of trust in each other.**
- ◆ **Five out of every ten blacks believe that most whites can’t be trusted to deal honestly with blacks.**
- ◆ **One out of every ten whites believes that most blacks can’t be trusted to deal honestly with whites.**

A total of 47 to 52 percent of blacks either agreed or strongly agreed that most whites can’t be trusted to deal honestly with blacks (Exhibit 3). Fourteen (14) to 16 percent of blacks strongly agreed and an additional 33 to 36 percent stated they agreed.

A total of 9 percent of whites either agreed or strongly agreed that blacks could not be trusted to deal honestly with whites. Two (2) percent of whites strongly agreed and an additional 7 percent agreed.

There were no significant differences on the issue of trust between the two white geo-racial groups or between the two black geo-racial groups.



Racial Integration



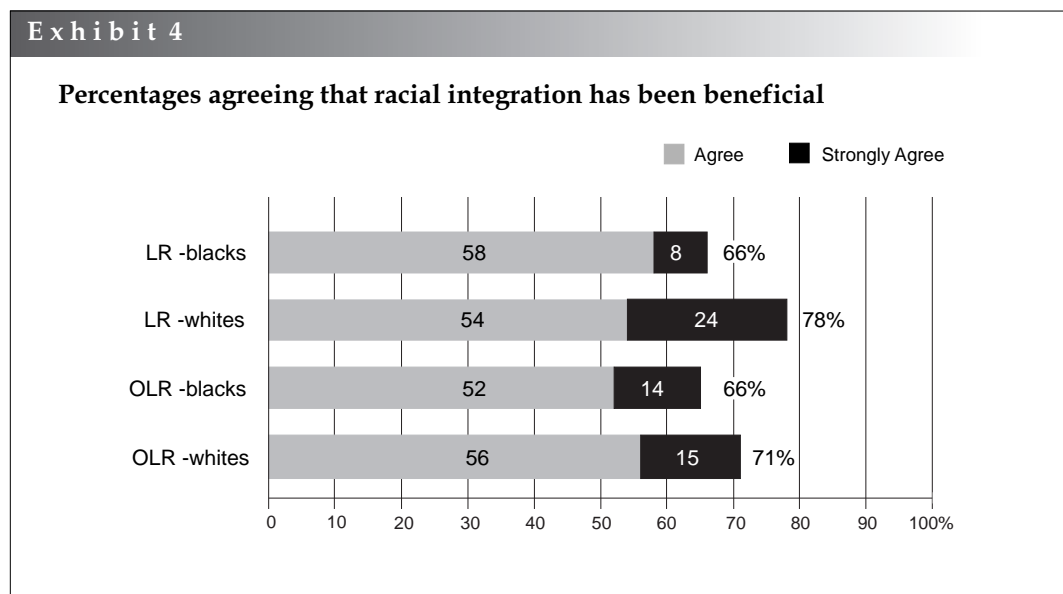
“Racial integration of schools, businesses and residences has benefited both whites and blacks. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?”

- ◆ **Most blacks and whites believed that racial integration has benefited both racial groups.**
- ◆ **In Little Rock, whites were more likely than blacks to feel that integration has been beneficial.**

The majority of both blacks and whites believed that racial integration has benefited everyone regardless of race (Exhibit 4).

In Little Rock, significant differences in perception were seen with whites 12 percent more likely to agree that integration had been beneficial. Seventy-eight (78) percent of LR-whites and 66 percent of LR-blacks strongly agreed or agreed that racial integration has benefited both blacks and whites.

OLR-blacks and OLR-whites had no significant differences in their views, with two-thirds or more feeling that integration has been beneficial. Sixty-six (66) percent of OLR-blacks and 71 percent of OLR-whites strongly agreed or agreed that racial integration has benefited both blacks and whites.



Equality Issues

The survey included a series of questions relating to equal and fair treatment in broad policy areas such as education, housing, and college admissions. In addition, questions were asked to assess perceptions of the treatment of blacks in a variety of local community situations.

- ◆ **The topic of equal treatment is characterized by a very large gap in perceptions between blacks and whites. This gap is seen both in the Pulaski County survey and at the national level.**

Overall Equal Treatment



“Let’s talk about your community. In your opinion, how well do you think blacks are treated in your community – the same as whites, not very well, or badly?”

- ◆ **Whites were significantly more likely to perceive that blacks and whites are treated the same in the community.**

In Pulaski County blacks were united in their perceptions of unequal treatment and held views similar to those of blacks nationally. Only 36 to 37 percent of blacks believed they were treated “the same as whites” in their communities.

A national Gallup Poll conducted Feb. 11, ‘03 had very similar results with 39 percent of blacks saying that blacks in their community were treated the same as whites.

LR-whites and OLR-whites differed significantly from each other in perceptions of equal treatment. Fifty-eight (58) percent of LR-whites compared to 73 percent of OLR-whites believed that blacks were treated “the same as whites” in their communities.

Approximately 11 percent of the blacks stated that blacks are treated “badly” compared to only 1 to 2 percent of whites perceiving that blacks are treated badly. (See Exhibit 5.)

Both blacks and whites had a lower opinion of the treatment of Hispanics than of blacks. Among whites, for example, fifty-eight (58) percent of LR-whites said that blacks were treated the same as whites, while only 38 percent said that Hispanics are treated the same as whites. Seventy-three (73) percent of OLR-whites said that blacks were treated the same as whites, while 50 percent said that Hispanics are treated the same as whites.

Exhibit 5

Treatment of blacks in the community

	LR -blacks	LR -whites	OLR -blacks	OLR -whites
Same as Whites	37%	58%	36%	73%
Not Very Well	45%	35%	47%	20%
Badly	11%	1%	12%	2%

Educational Opportunities for Children



“In general, do you think that black children have as good a chance as white children in your community to get a good education, or don’t you think they have as good a chance?”

- ◆ **Blacks were equally divided on the question of whether or not black children have as good a chance as white children to get a good education.**

Differences in black and white views on educational opportunities for black children are significant, as shown in Exhibit 6. While approximately one-half of the blacks (48 percent of LR-blacks and 56 percent of OLR-blacks) believe black children have as good a chance as whites to receive a good education, a stronger majority of white respondents (63 percent of LR-whites and 83 percent of OLR-whites) believe black children had equal educational opportunities.

There is also a significant gap between LR-whites’ and OLR-whites’ beliefs regarding educational opportunities. Twenty (20) percent more whites outside of Little Rock believe that equal educational opportunities exist than whites living in Little Rock (83 percent versus 63 percent, respectively).

The responses to this question are similar to the results of a national survey, where 81 percent of whites and 50 percent of blacks said that blacks had as good a chance at equal educational opportunities (Gallup Poll Feb. 11, ’03).

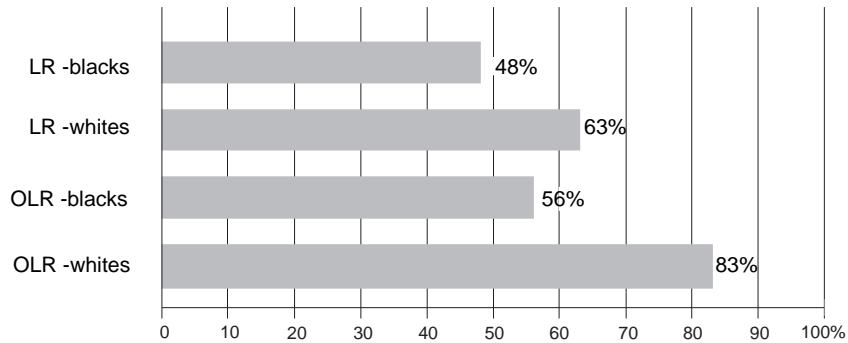
- ◆ **Black respondents are no more optimistic about educational opportunities for black children than they were 40 years ago.**

This perception has been consistent over the past 40 years. When this question was asked nationally in 1962, approximately the same percentages of whites and blacks (85 percent and 53 percent, respectively) thought black children had as good a chance as white children to get a good education (Gallup Poll Aug. 23-28, ’62).

Educational opportunities for Hispanic children were perceived to be lower than those for black children by both blacks and whites.

Exhibit 6

Percentages believing blacks have as good a chance as whites to get a good education



Housing Opportunities



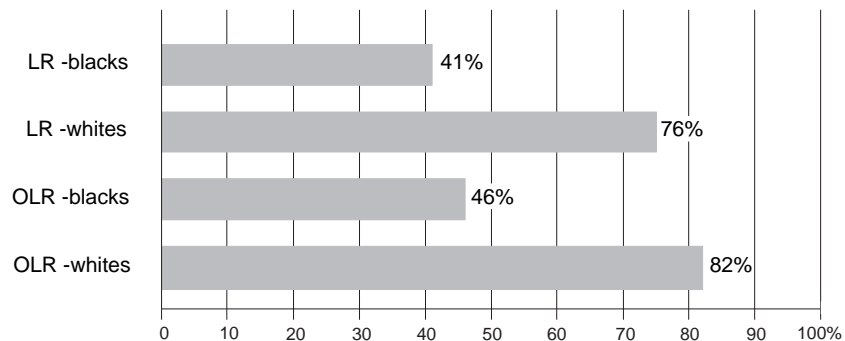
“Again, in general, do you think that blacks have as good a chance as white people in your community to get any housing they can afford, or don’t you think they have as good a chance?”

- ◆ **Most blacks believe that they don’t have as good a chance as whites to get any housing they can afford.**

While 76 percent of the LR-whites and 82 percent of OLR-whites said that blacks and whites have equal chances to get any housing they can afford, only 41 to 46 percent of blacks agreed, showing a significant difference in the perception of fair housing opportunities (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7

Percentages believing blacks have as good a chance as whites to get housing



In a national Gallup survey, 82 percent of whites and 48 percent of blacks said that blacks had as good a chance to get any housing they could afford (Gallup Poll Feb. 11, '03). As on other questions, the national results were similar to the Pulaski County results.

Between housing and educational issues, blacks in Little Rock believe there are greater housing inequalities. Whites in Little Rock believe there are greater educational inequalities.

Affirmative Action



“Do you generally favor or oppose affirmative action programs for racial minorities?”

- ◆ **Blacks were much more likely than whites to favor affirmative action programs for racial minorities.**

Approximately seven out of ten blacks (65 to 69 percent) said they favored affirmative action programs as compared to four out of ten whites (36 to 42 percent) who favored such programs. These differences are significant and are very similar to national data results where 70 percent of blacks, but only 44 percent of whites, favored affirmative action programs (Gallup Poll June 12-18, '03).

Policy preferences on affirmative action are strongly related to personal perceptions of equal educational opportunity (Mason, 2003). Among whites who think black children do not have as good a chance at a good education, 66 percent favor affirmative action programs and only 19 percent oppose such programs. Among blacks who think black children do not have as good a chance at a good education, 72 percent favor affirmative action programs and only 12 percent oppose such programs.

College Admissions Policies



“Which comes closer to your view about evaluating students for admission into a college or university: 1) applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit, even if that results in few minority students being admitted; or 2) an applicant’s racial and ethnic background should be considered to help promote diversity on college campuses, even if that means admitting some minority students who otherwise would not be admitted?”

- ◆ **Blacks were equally divided on the question of whether or not racial and ethnic background should be considered in college admissions to help promote diversity.**

Two questions were asked in order to identify college admission policy preferences and assess perception of current college admission practices. The results show a large gap in beliefs and perceptions between blacks and whites.

Approximately one-half of blacks surveyed felt that college applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit and one-half felt that racial and ethnic background should be considered to help promote diversity. Forty-four (44) percent of LR-blacks and 46 percent of OLR-blacks said admission should be based solely on merit. Forty-eight (48) percent of LR-blacks and 43 percent of OLR-blacks said racial and ethnic background should be considered.

- ◆ **Whites were much more likely to believe that college applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit.**

Approximately three out of four whites felt that college applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit with significantly more OLR-whites favoring merit admission than LR-whites. Eighty-six (86) percent of OLR-whites and 72 percent of LR-whites said admission should be based solely on merit.

National opinions corresponded with Pulaski County opinions. A 2003 Gallup Poll showed that 44 percent of blacks and 75 percent of whites believed that applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit (Gallup Poll June 12-18, '03).

Perceptions of Actual Admissions Practices



“If two equally qualified students, one white and one black, applied to a major U.S. college or university, who do you think would have the better chance of being accepted to the college - the white student, the black student, or would they have the same chance?”

- ◆ **As many as three out of four blacks thought a white college applicant would have a better chance of being accepted than an equally qualified black applicant.**

When asked their views of actual practices in college admissions at major U.S. colleges and universities, black and white Pulaski County residents, like blacks and whites in the U.S., had extremely different beliefs as to actual college admission practices.

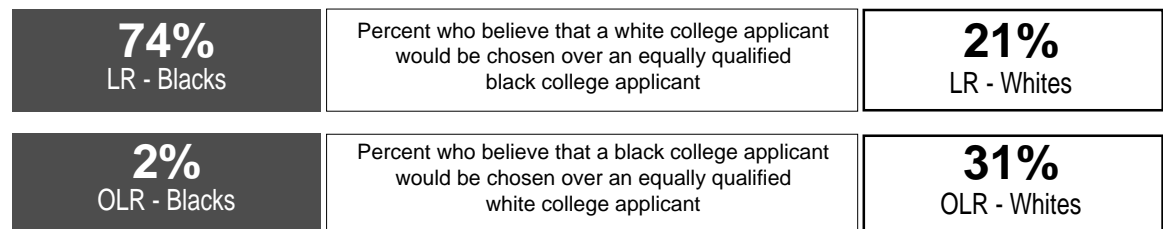
Seventy-four (74) percent of LR-blacks and 66 percent of OLR-blacks thought that a white student would have a better chance of being accepted than an equally qualified black student. Only an extremely small percentage of blacks (one to two percent) thought a black student would have a better chance for admission than an equally qualified white student. The remainder of blacks—less than one-third—believed that students would have the same chances regardless of race.

- ◆ **Whites were far more likely than blacks to believe that equally qualified black and white college applicants would have the same chance of being accepted.**

Whites were equally divided in their views on admission practices. Forty-two (42) to 45 percent of whites believed that equally qualified black and white college applicants would have the same chance of admission. Of the whites who believed that a preference would be given, more whites

believed that a black student would be given preference. Twenty-nine (29) to 31 percent thought a black student would have a better chance. Seventeen (17) to 21 percent thought a white student would have a better chance of being accepted.

Since this question was based upon personal perceptions of college admission practices, the data were analyzed by education level to see whether actual experience might alter perceptions of admission policies. Interestingly there were no significant differences in the perceptions of either white or black college educated respondents compared to white and black respondents as a whole.



Results from a national Gallup Poll were comparable to Pulaski County results. Two-thirds of black respondents (67 percent) thought that a white student would have a better chance of being accepted, five percent thought a black student would have a better chance, and 24 percent thought black and white students would have equal chances (Gallup Poll June 12-18, '03).

Fair Treatment in Community



“Just your impression, are blacks in your community treated less fairly than whites in the following situations . . . How about on the job or at work? In stores downtown or in the shopping mall? In restaurants, bars, theatres, or other entertainment places? In dealings with the police, such as traffic incidents?”

- ◆ **Large differences exist between white and black perceptions of fair treatment for blacks.**

There are significantly large gaps between black and white perceptions of fair treatment for blacks in various community situations. While whites recognize that blacks may receive unfair treatment, blacks are significantly more likely to perceive unfair treatment.

- ◆ **Three-fourths of blacks believe that blacks are treated less fairly than whites in dealings with the police.**

In dealings with the police, three out of four blacks (74 to 75 percent) perceived that blacks were treated less fairly than whites.

- ◆ **White perceptions of unfair practices are held more with regard to dealings with the police than with regard to other situations.**

More whites shared the blacks' perspective about unfairness toward blacks in dealings with the police than in other situations, though differences between the races were still large. Forty-three (43) percent of LR-whites and 31 percent of OLR-whites said that blacks were treated less fairly than whites in dealings with the police, such as traffic stops. The fact that whites show a somewhat higher level of awareness of discrimination against blacks in dealings with the police than in other situations could possibly be a result of the publicity given to incidents of police mistreatment of blacks (Schuman 1997:167).

◆ **Six out of ten blacks said that blacks were treated less fairly than whites on the job and in stores.**

On the job, from 60 to 63 percent of blacks felt blacks were treated less fairly than whites. Typical of the large opinion gaps in equal treatment situations, only small percentages of whites shared this belief (17 percent of LR-whites and 10 percent of OLR-whites).

Similar differences exist between whites' and blacks' assessment of fair treatment in stores or in the shopping malls. Between 58 to 61 percent of blacks felt that blacks were treated less fairly than whites but only 29 percent of LR-whites and 17 percent of OLR-whites believed that blacks were treated less fairly in stores.

On the question of fair treatment in restaurants, bars, theaters, and other places of entertainment, as on fair treatment in other situations, the perceptions of whites differed greatly from those of blacks. In places of entertainment, 54 percent of LR-blacks and 47 percent of OLR-blacks believed blacks were treated less fairly. Unlike the survey results about treatment on the job or in stores, the data show a significant difference between the two black geo-racial groups on the question of treatment in places of entertainment. Blacks living inside of Little Rock perceived significantly more negative treatment of blacks in places of entertainment. There were no significant differences in perception between the white geo-racial groups, with 14 to 17 percent of whites saying that blacks were treated less fairly in places of entertainment.

Exhibit 8 shows the percentages of blacks who stated that blacks in their community were treated less fairly than whites in the four situations mentioned in the survey. The two Pulaski County black geo-racial groups are compared with national results.

Exhibit 8

Percentages of black respondents stating blacks were treated less fairly

	LR -blacks	OLR -blacks	National blacks
In dealings with police	75%	74%	69%
On the job	63%	60%	51%
In stores	61%	58%	50%
In entertainment places	54%	47%	38%

Source: National data based upon Gallup Poll conducted Dec 9 - Feb 11 '03.

Interracial Experiences

Cross-Racial Contact

The survey included a series of questions about contact with members of another race in the workplace, in social situations, and in neighborhoods.

Workplace Contact

“Do you work with many members of another race?”

Most Pulaski County residents work with members of another race. Fifty-seven (57) to 60 percent of whites and 67 to 69 percent of blacks said they worked “with many members” of another race.

Because more than twice as many whites as blacks live in Pulaski County it is not surprising that blacks were more likely to perceive that they worked with many members of another race. (The 2000 U. S. Census showed the county’s adult population as 28 percent black and 68 percent white.)

“Are you uncomfortable working with members of another race?”

- ◆ **Less than one out of ten Pulaski County residents view interracial workplaces as uncomfortable.**

Few Pulaski County residents are uncomfortable in interracial workplaces (2 to 4 percent of whites and 7 to 10 percent of blacks).

“Have you worked for a boss of another race?”

- ◆ **Whites outside of Little Rock were more likely to have worked for a boss of another race.**

A large majority of blacks (91 to 92 percent) said they had worked for a boss of another race. Whites outside of Little Rock were more likely to have worked for a boss of another race than LR-whites. Seventy (70) percent of OLR-whites and 58 percent of LR-whites responded affirmatively to this question.

Social Contact



“Do you know many members of another race well?”

- ◆ **In one of the most consistent responses across geo-racial groups, more than three-quarters of Pulaski County residents said they knew many members of another race well.**

From 76 to 79 percent of those who responded to the survey felt that they knew many members of another race well. There were no significant differences between the four geo-racial groups.



“Do you socialize regularly with members of another race?”

- ◆ **OLR-blacks were significantly more likely than any other geo-racial group to socialize regularly with members of another race.**

Two out of every three blacks outside of Little Rock stated they socialized regularly with members of another race (65 percent). OLR-blacks were the most likely to report regular social contact—a significantly higher percentage than LR-blacks (57 percent) or either white geo-racial group (54 percent of LR-whites and 58 percent of OLR-whites).

The demographics and geography of Pulaski County may have a bearing on the higher likelihood of blacks outside of Little Rock socializing with whites. The 2000 census showed approximately 50,000 black adults living in Little Rock (36 percent of the adult population) and 26,000 living outside of Little Rock (20 percent of the adult population). The blacks outside of Little Rock are fewer in number and disbursed over a larger geographic area. This might lead to a greater degree of socialization with whites.

Neighborhood Contact

The survey asked two questions about racial composition of neighborhoods in order to gauge perceptions of the degree of neighborhood integration. The first question asked whether many members of another race lived in the neighborhood. The second question asked how many people of another race lived in the area, with a range of response choices—“Many,” “Some,” “Only a few,” or “None.”



“Do many members of another race live in your neighborhood?”

- ◆ **Most Pulaski County residents feel that their neighborhoods are integrated to some degree.**

A majority of respondents in each of the four geo-racial groups said that “many members of another race” lived in their neighborhood indicating that a majority of residents perceive that they live in an integrated neighborhood. (See Exhibit 9.)

Exhibit 9

Percentages reporting that “many members of another race” live in their neighborhoods

LR -blacks	LR -whites	OLR -blacks	OLR -whites
57%	71%	60%	63%

In the City of Little Rock there is a significant difference in the perceptions of blacks and whites on the question of racial composition of their neighborhoods. Seventy-one (71) percent of LR-whites but only 57 percent of LR-blacks said that many members of another race lived in their neighborhoods.



“How many people of each of the following races or ethnic backgrounds would you say live in your area — many, some, only a few or none? How about whites? Blacks? Hispanics?”

- ◆ **Little Rock whites perceive a much greater level of integration than Little Rock blacks.**

Exhibit 10 shows the percentages who gave each response to the questions regarding the number of blacks and whites living in their area. Again, there are significant differences between the perceptions of blacks and whites with regard to residential integration.

Both white geo-racial groups perceive a significantly greater level of integration in comparison with black geo-racial groups. Seventy (70) percent of LR-whites report “Some” or “Many” as opposed to 55 percent of the LR-blacks selecting “Some” or “Many.” Sixty-four (64) percent of OLR-whites report “Some” or “Many” as opposed to 53 percent of the OLR-blacks selecting “Some” or “Many.”

Exhibit 10

Degree to which (other race) members live in respondents’ area

	LR -blacks	LR -whites	OLR -blacks	OLR -whites
Many	28%	36%	31%	28%
Some	27%	34%	22%	36%
Total	55%	70%	53%	64%
Only a few	34%	24%	37%	32%
None	11%	5%	9%	4%
Total	45%	29%	46%	36%



“If black people came to live next door, would you move?”

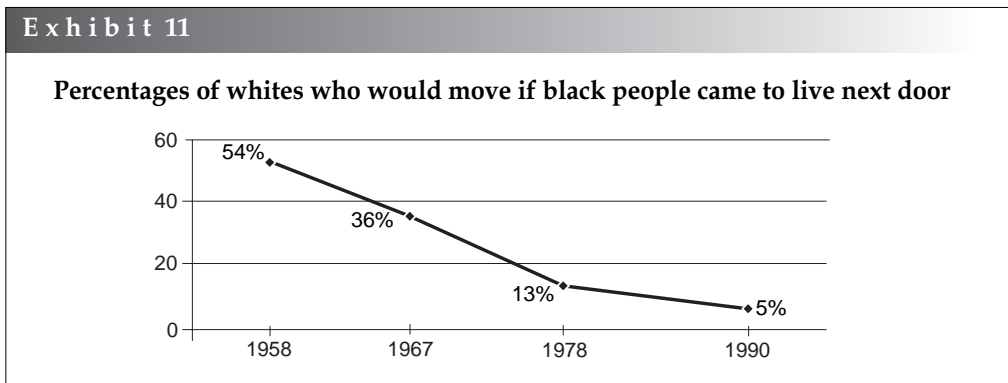
- ◆ **No white respondents said they would definitely move if a black person came to live next door.**

This attitudinal question related to neighborhoods was asked only of whites. If the response was “Yes,” interviewers were instructed to note whether the respondents said they would “definitely” move or “might” move. In the Pulaski County survey no white respondents said they would definitely move if black people came to live next door. A very small percentage (one to two percent) said they might move. This is consistent with national findings where only one percent of whites said they would move (Gallup Poll Feb. 28, ‘97).

In 1958, when the Gallup organization first asked this question, 21 percent of whites said they would definitely move and 23 percent said they might move (Gallup Poll Sept. 24-29, ‘58). Most whites (54 percent) were willing to state that a black family next door might cause them to take the major step of moving from their home. By 1967 the percentage had declined to 12 percent who would definitely move and 24 percent who might move, for a total of 36 percent. In 1978 four percent said they would definitely move and 9 percent said they might move, for a total of 13 percent. In 1990 the percentages had declined to 5 percent who would definitely or might move. This pattern shows a clear upward trend between 1958 and 1990 in the acceptance of neighborhood integration. (See Exhibit 11.)

Sociologists have engaged in considerable discussion concerning the degree to which responses to highly sensitive survey questions can be used to predict behavior. The term “social desirability” is used to describe answers to questions that conform more to current norms rather than to what people truly feel (Schuman 1997:2). Given the implied negative attitude within this question, the responses might be a measure of what whites thought they should report as opposed to what would be their actual behavior.

Even though we cannot predict individuals’ actions based on survey responses, we can assess the changes over the past half-century in social desirability. Between 1958 and 2003 it has become less acceptable to whites to express negative attitudes towards blacks. The changes over time in responses to this question imply that the culture and values prevalent in the United States have changed considerably over the past 45 years.



Experiences of Discrimination

The survey included two groups of questions about personal experiences of discrimination. In the first series of questions, both whites and blacks were asked whether they had ever been victims of discrimination in education, hiring, housing, or dealings with police. The results are summarized below under the heading "Lifetime Discrimination."

The second series of questions was presented only to black respondents. It addressed unfair treatment in specific situations in the thirty days preceding the survey. Results are summarized under the heading "Discrimination in the Past Thirty Days."

Lifetime Discrimination



"Have you ever been a victim of discrimination or reverse discrimination in . . . Getting an education? Getting a job? Getting a place to live?"

- ◆ **One out of two blacks believed that they had been victims of discrimination in getting a job.**

Almost one-half of all blacks (45 to 48 percent) said they had been victims of discrimination in getting a job. In contrast, only 15 percent of whites believed they had been victims of discrimination in getting a job.

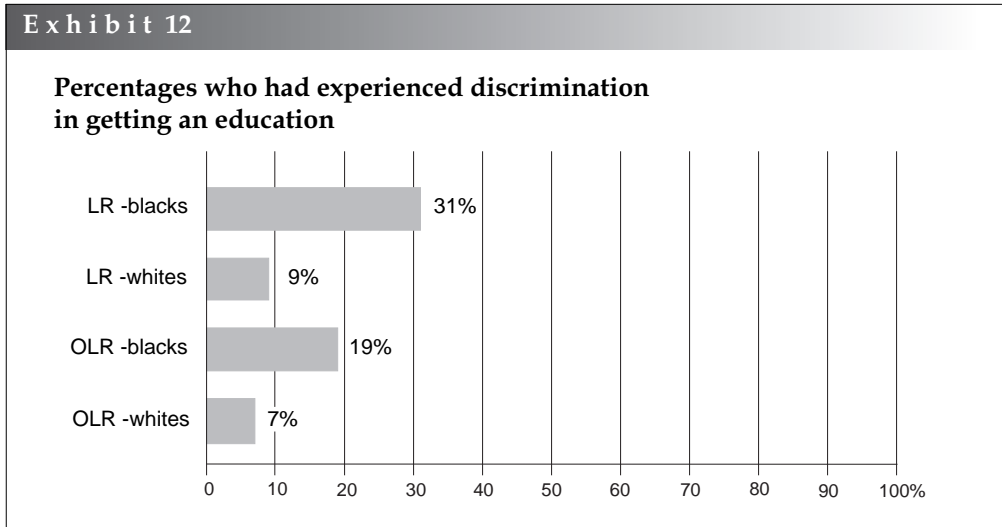
- ◆ **One out of four blacks believed they had been victims of discrimination in housing.**

In getting a place to live, one out of four blacks (24 to 29 percent) believed they had been victims of discrimination. Only three to five percent of whites felt they had been victims of discrimination in housing.

- ◆ **LR-blacks were significantly more likely than OLR-blacks to perceive that they had been victims of discrimination in education.**

The survey results pertaining to discrimination in the areas of employment and housing were consistent inside and outside of Little Rock. In education, however, blacks in Little Rock were significantly more likely to perceive that they had experienced discrimination as compared to outside Little Rock blacks (31 percent vs. 19 percent, respectively).

Only 7 to 9 percent of whites felt they had been victims of discrimination in education. Exhibit 12 displays the percentages who reported having been victims of discrimination in getting an education.



- ◆ **Black perceptions of discrimination are significantly associated with level of education.**

It is of particular note that blacks’ perceptions of discrimination in getting a job, in housing, and in education are all significantly associated with respondent’s education level—the higher the education, the greater the perception of discrimination. Exhibit 13 shows by education level the percentages of blacks who reported discrimination in each of the three areas. Similar findings have been seen in national surveys and as a result analysts urge that the data be kept “ . . . in mind by those who expect blacks who move into the middle class to be less concerned about racial discrimination than blacks who are not as successful. Just the opposite appears to be the case” (Schuman 1997:257).

Exhibit 13

Percentages of blacks who had experienced discrimination, by education level

	Less than High School	High School Graduate	Some Post High School	College Degree or More
Getting a job	35%	37%	50%	62%
Getting an education	13%	17%	26%	41%
Getting a place to live	14%	22%	32%	33%



“Have you ever felt that you were stopped by the police just because of your race or ethnic back ground? How many times do you feel this has happened to you in your lifetime?”

◆ **Four out of ten blacks felt they had been stopped by police because of their race.**

Thirty-eight (38) percent of LR-blacks and 45 percent of OLR-blacks believed that they had been stopped by police because of their race. Of the LR-blacks and OLR-blacks reporting at least one instance of being stopped by police, approximately one-third stated this had occurred 6 or more times in their lifetime. Only 5 percent of both white georacial groups stated they had been stopped by police because of their race or ethnic background.

These results are consistent with a Gallup Poll, which indicated that 44 percent of blacks said they had been stopped by police just because of their race or ethnic backgrounds and a corresponding one-third stated this had occurred 6 or more times in their lifetime (Gallup Poll May 16, '01). Only 7 percent of whites thought they had been stopped because of their race or ethnic background.

Discrimination in Past Thirty Days



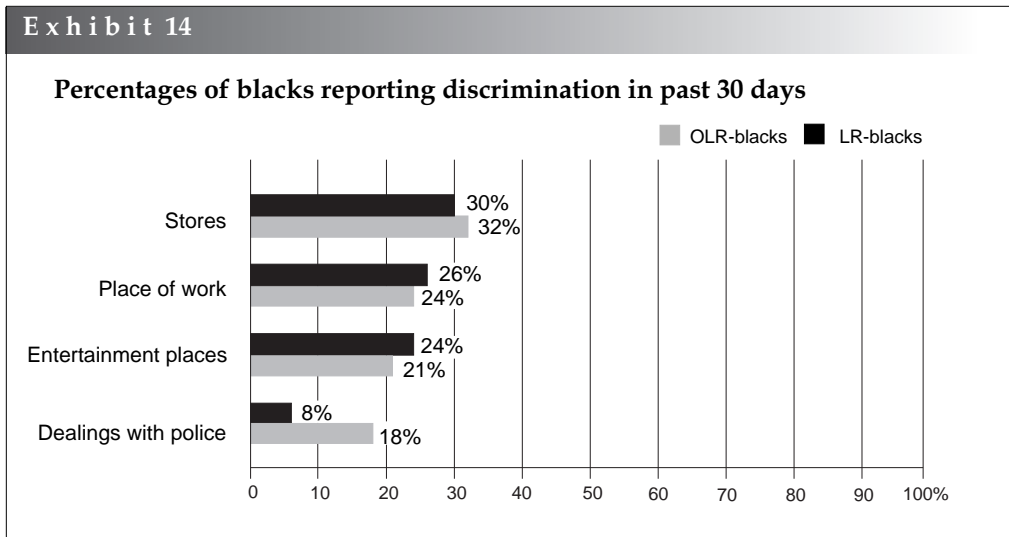
“Can you think of any occasion in the last thirty days when you felt you were treated unfairly in the following places because you were black? How about in a store where you were shopping? At your place of work? In a restaurant, bar, theater, or other entertainment place? In dealings with the police, such as traffic incidents?”

◆ **Being treated unfairly because of their race is a common occurrence for blacks.**

This series of questions was presented to black respondents only. The survey mentioned four situations where people interact in the community—while shopping, in the work place, in a place of entertainment, and in dealings with the police.

In the 30 days before the survey date, one out of three blacks (30 to 32 percent) believed they had been treated unfairly when they were shopping. One-fourth (24 to 26 percent) felt they had been treated unfairly at their place of work. More than one-fifth (21 to 24 percent) felt they had been treated unfairly in a place of entertainment. In these percentages for a 30-day period there was no significant difference between LR-blacks and OLR-blacks. (See Exhibit 14.)

The Pulaski County numbers reflect perceptions of blacks nationally about fair treatment in the 30 days before the survey. A Gallup Poll showed that 28 percent of blacks felt they were treated unfairly while shopping; 23 percent at work; and 24 percent while in a place of entertainment (Gallup Poll Dec 9-Feb. 11, '03).



OLR-blacks were significantly more likely to feel that they had been treated unfairly in dealings with the police as compared to LR-blacks. Eighteen (18) percent of OLR-blacks and 8 percent of LR-blacks said the police had treated them unfairly in the past 30 days.

One-half of the blacks surveyed had experienced discrimination in at least one of the four community situations in the 30 days preceding the survey. One-quarter of blacks had experienced discrimination in at least two of the situations. Approximately one-tenth had experienced discrimination in at least three of the situations, and a small percentage had experienced discrimination in all four situations. (See Exhibit 15.)

Exhibit 15

Number of discrimination situations experienced by blacks in past 30 days

	No situations	At least one situation	At least two situations	At least three situations	All four situations
LR -blacks	49%	51%	22%	11%	2%
OLR -blacks	48%	52%	29%	9%	2%

Conclusion

Blacks and whites view interracial relations from unique perspectives. The attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of each race contribute to the complex issues encompassed in race relations. Studying these perspectives can be a useful approach to gaining a greater understanding of these issues.

UALR will conduct this survey on an annual basis, which will allow for the development of trend data for Pulaski County using the 2003 results as baseline data. These data will provide a body of high quality information to aid in understanding race relations in the metropolitan community.

Findings from this initial study point both to areas of concern and areas for optimism for Pulaski County.

Areas of Concern

- ◆ Very large differences exist between white and black perceptions of fair treatment of blacks. Whites are significantly more likely to believe that blacks and whites are treated the same.
- ◆ Very large differences exist between blacks' and whites' levels of trust in each other.
- ◆ In the thirty days before the survey, five out of ten blacks felt they had been treated unfairly in a community situation because they were black.
- ◆ Seven out of ten blacks thought a white college applicant would have a better chance of being accepted than an equally qualified black applicant.
- ◆ Most blacks believe that they don't have as good a chance as whites to get any housing they can afford.
- ◆ In their lifetimes, five out of ten blacks believed they had been victims of discrimination in getting a job.

Areas for Optimism

- ◆ Eight out of ten blacks and whites in Pulaski County said that race relations were good or very good.
- ◆ Both blacks and whites in Pulaski County rate race relations higher than blacks and whites rate race relations nationally.
- ◆ More than three-quarters of Pulaski County residents, black and white alike, said they knew many members of another race well.

The study is intended to enhance thoughtful discussion and increase the likelihood that issues of race relations can be addressed effectively. Chancellor Anderson in his inaugural speech said, "I have an educator's faith that people, particularly people of good will, with the benefit of good information and thoughtful discussion, stand a chance of addressing a problem successfully."

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Appendix

Notes on questionnaire and data

All questions (except the two trust-related questions) used in the Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County survey were obtained from questionnaires used in the Gallup Poll Social Audit Series.

Dates and Sample Sizes

Jun 12-18, 2003. Sample Size: n/a
 Dec 9 – Feb 11, 2003. Sample size: 1,044.
 Mar 23- May 16, 2001. Sample size: 2,004.
 Sep 24 – Nov 16, 1999. Sample Size: 2006.
 Jan 4 – Feb 28, 1997. Sample size: 3,036.
 Jun 7-10, 1990. Sample Size: 1,062.
 Jul 7-10, 1978. Sample Size: 1,336.
 Aug 3-8, 1967. Sample Size: 1,496.
 Aug 23-28, 1962. Sample Size: 1,499.
 Sep 24-29, 1958. Sample Size: n/a.

The two trust-related questions were originally presented by Brigham in two 1993 surveys: Attitudes towards Whites and Attitudes Towards Blacks (as cited in Biernat & Crandall, 1999).

Notes on methodology

A total of 1,611 interviews were conducted with a stratified random sample of residents age eighteen and older living in Pulaski County, Arkansas. Each geo-racial group had between 388 and 397 respondents, which provide a potential for sampling error of ± 5 percent at the conventional 95 percent confidence interval. In theory, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results of surveying a sample of a geo-racial group differ no more than five percent in either direction from results that would have been obtained by interviewing all Pulaski County residents within a geo-racial group. In addition to sampling error, the wording of the questions and practical issues associated with conducting surveys can introduce bias into the findings of any public opinion survey.

The data were weighted in order to bring the representations in line with the proportions in Pulaski County for age and gender for each geo-racial group. There were a total of twenty weighted groups. Weighting factors ranged from .52 for "Black women, age 40-54, living outside the city limits of Little Rock" to 3.75 for "Black males, age 18-24, living outside the city limits of Little Rock."

Descriptive data analysis included frequency distributions and cross-tabulations. Statistical significance was determined by chi-square analyses and t-tests for difference of means. All data analysis was conducted using SPSS 10 software. Because of the size of the data set, the level of statistical significance was designated to be .05.

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