

# GALLUP POLL

Wednesday  
Release

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PUBLIC SPLIT ON ISSUE OF LAWS  
BANNING INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES

PRINCETON, N.J., March 9 -- The constitutionality of a Virginia law which makes it a crime for a white person and a Negro to marry is now being weighed in the courts. The decision could affect similar laws in eighteen other states.

As the courts wrestle with the constitutionality of the law, the Gallup Poll assigned its staff of interviewers to talk to persons across the nation to see how public opinion stands on the issue.

Nationwide, opinion is nearly evenly split. Forty-eight per cent of adults approve of laws prohibiting interracial marriage, while 46 per cent say they disapprove; 6 per cent are unable to express an opinion one way or the other.

Even Southern Negroes are not entirely opposed to these laws. Nearly three out of ten Negroes in this region say they would like to retain laws making interracial marriage a felony. Outside the South, one Negro in seven holds this view.

To see how the public stands on this issue, Gallup Poll interviewers asked this question of both Negroes and white persons across the nation:

"Some states have laws making it a crime for a white person and a Negro to marry. Do you approve or disapprove of such laws?"

The results:

LAWS MAKING INTERRACIAL  
MARRIAGE A CRIME ...

--Nationwide--

Approve of such a law .....	48%
Disapprove .....	46
No opinion .....	6

Views of  
Southern Whites

Approve of such a law .....	72%
Disapprove .....	24
No opinion .....	4

(MORE)

Views of  
Whites Outside South

Approve of such a law .....	42%
Disapprove .....	52
No Opinion .....	6

An analysis of the results shows that a person's views on this issue depend, to a great extent, on the level of education he has attained, and on his religion.

A large majority (69 per cent) of those with college training disapprove of existing laws which ban marriages between the races. Opinion leans to the opposite side among high school educated persons, but among those with grade school training or less, a large majority approve of laws prohibiting interracial marriages.

A majority of Protestants approve of laws against interracial marriage, while a majority of Catholics hold the opposite view.

The states which have these laws are: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Texas, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia and Wyoming.

(30)

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