

Same-sex relations get record-high approval

by [Adelle M. Banks](#) in the [June 28, 2011](#) issue

Nearly two-thirds of Americans say same-sex relations between consenting adults should be legal—the highest percentage ever recorded by Gallup.

Researchers found that 64 percent of American adults supported the legality of gay relations, an issue that Gallup has included in surveys since 1977.

In 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court's *Lawrence v. Texas* decision struck down state antisodomy laws that had been used to criminalize homosexual activity.

Despite the high rate of support for the legality of gay relations, Americans are less likely to consider them "morally acceptable"—only 56 percent endorsed that view. That figure is the highest since Gallup first asked that question in 2001.

Americans who believe same-sex orientation is inherited are much more likely to think gay relations are morally acceptable, with 81 percent approval, compared to just 33 percent among those who believe a person's sexual orientation is due to environmental factors.

The same poll, taken May 5–8, found that a majority of Americans (53 percent) supported gay marriage for the first time since Gallup started tracking the issue in 1996.

Catholics are more likely than Protestants to support legal same-sex marriage, and it is also favored more by those who attend church less frequently and people who are unmarried.

The findings, based on telephone interviews of 1,018 adults, have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. —RNS