

BC LEADERS' DEBATE POLL

Carole James (36%) Narrowly Edges Gordon Campbell (32%) as Debate Winner



Ipsos Reid

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Vancouver, BC – Ipsos Reid conducted an online poll immediately following the May 3rd televised leaders' debate. Survey respondents were pre-recruited to watch the debate and provide their opinions on the performance of the various leaders. The respondents were recruited to be reflective of British Columbia voters, by age, sex, region and party preferences.

Debate Winner: Debate viewers narrowly selected Carole James (36%) as the debate winner ahead of Gordon Campbell (32%). Green Party leader Jane Sterk was a distant third place (15%). Fourteen percent of viewers said there was no winner, while 4% were undecided.

Debate Loser: Viewers were most likely to select Gordon Campbell (35%) as the debate loser. Campbell finished eight points ahead of both Carole James (27%) and Jane Sterk (27%) for this dubious honour. Nine percent said there was no loser and 2% were undecided.

Changing Impressions: Newcomer Jane Sterk did the best job at changing impressions during the debate. Half (51%) of viewers said their impression of Sterk improved compared to 20% worsened (23% no impact, 5% undecided).

Like Sterk, Carole James also had more improved impressions (43%) than worsened impressions (33%). Other viewers either said the debate had no impact on their impression of James (24%) or were undecided (1%).

The results were more negative for Gordon Campbell, who had 12% improved impressions compared to 43% worsened impressions. A substantial proportion (44%) of viewers said the debate had no impact on their impression of Campbell, while 1% were undecided,

Best on Attributes: Gordon Campbell (54%) led Carole James (34%) by 20 points as the leader who “looked and sounded most like a Premier” (2% Sterk, 7% none, 3% undecided).

Carole James (49%) was selected as the leader who “was the best speaker”. Gordon Campbell (36%) placed 13 points behind James on this measure (7% Sterk, 6% none, 3% undecided).

There was essentially a three-way tie for the leader who “had the best ideas and policies”. Jane Sterk led at 29%, followed by both Gordon Campbell and Carole James at 28% each (10% none, 5% undecided).

Jane Sterk (32%) and Carole James (31%) led Gordon Campbell (21%) as the leader who “was the most likeable” (11% none, 5% undecided).

Changing Minds: Overall, 15% of debate viewers said they changed their mind about which party to vote for as a result of the debate.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid online poll conducted with 325 British Columbia voters who watched the leaders' debate. Survey respondents were randomly recruited from Ipsos Reid's proprietary “Voice of the West Interactive Forum” – an online panel of more than 6,200 British Columbians built to match the overall characteristics of adult residents of the province.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls, however, an unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/-5.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 2006 Census data.

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