

=====
Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 11:20:27 -0700
Sender: AAPORNET@ASU.EDU
From: Shapard Wolf <shap.wolf@ASU.EDU>
Subject: April 1999 archive - one BIG message

This is the USC Listproc archive of AAPORNET messages for this entire month. It is one big message, in chronological order, just the way the USC archive stored it. You can search within this month with your browser's search function (usually Ctrl-F).

Turning this into individual messages that ASU's Listserv software can index and sort means a lot of reformatting. We will do this as time permits.

New messages are of course automatically formatted and indexed correctly, and I have converted November 1994 through January 1995 and June 2002 to the present.

Shap Wolf
Survey Research Laboratory
Arizona State University
shap.wolf@asu.edu
AAPORNET volunteer host

Begin archive:

Archive aapornet, file log9904.
Part 1/1, total size 779704 bytes:

----- Cut here -----
>From lshiman@opiniondynamics.com Thu Apr 1 05:54:59 1999
Received: from odcmail.opiniondynamics.com ([207.221.118.98])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id FAA29197 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 05:54:58 -0800
(PST)
Received: from max17 ([192.168.0.17]) by odcmail.opiniondynamics.com
(Post.Office MTA v3.5 release 215 ID# 0-52003U100L2S100V35)
with SMTP id com for <aapornet@usc.edu>;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 09:01:54 -0500
Message-ID: <007d01be7c48\$9e2b9b20\$1100a8c0@max17>
From: "Larry Shiman" <lshiman@opiniondynamics.com>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 09:04:53 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal

X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.3155.0
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.3155.0

Most of the comments on this topic seem to miss two points. First, the winning response was chosen using a fair and democratic method. The fact that some people do not like the results do not make the results less valid. Second, (as some people have mentioned) the winner was probably chosen because of its humor, not its factual content. All suggestions that have been made to revise the slogan are less funny than the original, and would not have been selected in a contest.

Larry Shiman

.
-----Original Message-----
From: Yen, Wei <Wei.Yen@ofm.wa.gov>
To: 'aapornet@usc.edu' <aapornet@usc.edu>
Date: Wednesday, March 31, 1999 8:03 PM
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

>I think both sides of the debate have merits in their arguments.
>Without changing too much of the original, how about "ASKING AMERICANS
>WHAT THEY THINK SINCE 1947"?
>
>Wei Yen
>
>> -----
>> From: Philippe Ricard[SMTP:pricard@CAM.ORG]
>> Reply To: aapornet@usc.edu
>> Sent: Wednesday, March 31, 1999 2:56 PM
>> To: aapornet@usc.edu
>> Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
>>
>> I agree with those who think that the winning slogan is a little
arrogant.
>> It should have been :
>>
>> TELLING AMERICANS WHAT WE THINK THEY THINK SINCE 1947
>>
>> Philippe
>>
>> >Originally, I sent a private reply to Warren on this topic. But
>> >since
it
>> seems to be heating up, I'll go public.
>> >
>> >The winning slogan is funny precisely because of its faux arrogance.
>> >

>> >Larry McGill
>> >
>> >-----Original Message-----
>> >From: Warren Mitofsky [SMTP:mitofsky@mindspring.com]
>> >Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 1999 3:43 PM
>> >To: aapornet@usc.edu
>> >Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
>> >
>> >I agree with Robert Camin's suggestion for a runoff. And besides,
>> shouldn't
>> >the slogan read:
>> >TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947
>> >
>> >"Telling Americans what they think..." sounds awfully arrogant.
>> >warren mitofsky
>> >
>> >
>> >At 09:45 AM 3/30/99 -0600, you wrote:
>> >>I'm demanding that this count be validated (serious and kidding).
First
>> of
>> >>all, the winning slogan in my opinion is "lame." Not very creative
>> >>in
>> my
>> >>opinion. To resolve this, I suggest a one day run-off.
>> >>
>> >>If not, at least I said my peace.
>> >>
>> >>Look forward to meeting you at the conference.
>> >>rob.
>> >>
>> >>--->>))) ' >
>> >>
>> >>>> Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com> 03/29 9:14 PM >>>
>> >>
>> >>
>> >>I know you all have been waiting for this - so here goes.
>> >>
>> >>(Drum roll please)
>> >>
>> >>It was a very close race - one vote between them, but the winner of
>> >>the 1999 t-shirt slogan contest is:
>> >>
>> >> #5 "AAPOR...TELLING AMERICANS WHAT THEY THINK SINCE 1947"
>> >>
>> >>The first runner up is:
>> >>
>> >> #18 ASKING Y IN 2K
>> >>
>> >>

>> >>See you all in St. Pete's. Don't forget to sign up for the FUN/RUN Walk

>>

>> >>and volleyball.

>> >>

>> >>Susan

>> >>

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>> >>*****

>> >>Susan H. Pinkus

>> >>Los Angeles Times Poll

>> >>Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com

>> >>American Online: spinkus@aol.com

>> >>FAX: 213-237-2505

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(PST)

Received: from mcs.net (P14-Chi-Dial-4.pool.mcs.net [205.253.224.206]) by Kitten.mcs.com (8.8.7/8.8.2) with ESMTP id IAA11752 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 08:11:35 -0600 (CST)
Message-ID: <37032A30.764FCFA@mcs.net>
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 08:11:32 +0000
From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.5 (Macintosh; I; PPC)
X-Accept-Language: en
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
References: <19990331.100609.-505273.0.michael425@juno.com>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii; x-mac-type="54455854"; x-mac-creator="4D4F5353"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Another problem with "Telling Americans What They Think...." is that the subject is not specified.

Is AAPOR telling Americans what AAPOR thinks? I agree with Warren - this time.

Nick Panagakis

Michael A DeCesare wrote:

> I voted for the winner, and now feel I must defend it against these
> attacks! I think it's supposed to sound half-arrogant and
> half-serious.....the AAPOR HAS been telling the public what it thinks
> since 1947! That's what public opinion polling is all about, isn't
> it? To get that idea across on a t-shirt is not only creative, but
> beneficial to the Association in my opinion. Long live the winner!
> Mike!

>
> Michael DeCesare
> Southern Connecticut State University
>

> On Tue, 30 Mar 1999 15:43:10 -0500 Warren Mitofsky
> <mitofsky@mindspring.com> writes:
> >I agree with Robert Camin's suggestion for a runoff. And besides,
> >shouldn't the slogan read:

> >TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947
> >

> >"Telling Americans what they think..." sounds awfully arrogant.

> > warren mitofsky

> >

> >

> >At 09:45 AM 3/30/99 -0600, you wrote:
> >>I'm demanding that this count be validated (serious and kidding).
> >First of
> >>all, the winning slogan in my opinion is "lame." Not very creative
> >in my
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> >>If not, at least I said my peace.
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> >>rob.
> >>
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> >>
> >>>> Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com> 03/29 9:14 PM >>>
> >>
> >>
> >>I know you all have been waiting for this - so here goes.
> >>
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> >>
> >>It was a very close race - one vote between them, but the winner of
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> >>
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> >Walk
> >>and volleyball.
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> >>Susan
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> >>*****
> >>Susan H. Pinkus
> >>Los Angeles Times Poll
> >>Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
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> >>FAX: 213-237-2505

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> >Mitofsky International
> >1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
> >New York, NY 10022
> >
> >212 980-3031 Phone
> >212 980-3107 FAX
> >mitofsky@mindspring.com
>
>

> You don't need to buy Internet access to use free Internet e-mail. Get
> completely free e-mail from Juno at <http://www.juno.com/getjuno.html>
> or call Juno at (800) 654-JUNO [654-5866]

>From mkshares@mcs.net Thu Apr 1 07:34:32 1999
Received: from Kitten.mcs.com (Kitten.mcs.com [192.160.127.90])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id HAA16231 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 07:34:30 -0800
(PST)
Received: from mcs.net (P14-Chi-Dial-4.pool.mcs.net [205.253.224.206]) by
Kitten.mcs.com (8.8.7/8.8.2) with ESMTP id JAA18713 for <aapornet@usc.edu>;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 09:34:28 -0600 (CST)
Message-ID: <37033D9C.25F5B02D@mcs.net>
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 09:34:25 +0000
From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.5 (Macintosh; I; PPC)
X-Accept-Language: en
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: looking for a reference
References: <006501be79fe\$1b929d40\$ddbffa9@uranus>
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
boundary="-----21E483AA13A7F354C6651144"

-----21E483AA13A7F354C6651144
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii; x-mac-type="54455854";

x-mac-creator="4D4F5353"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Given the apparent absence of any references on this subject, why don't you try this:

A "voluntary", or the term we usually see, "self-selected" sample, is not the issue. The real issue is a non-random sample coupled with a low response rate. When the term "self-selected" is used, I believe a low response rate is always assumed.

As you all know, a low response rate regardless of sample method raises the question of how non-respondents may differ from respondents. When respondents volunteer or select themselves in a low response rate survey, the question is how the few people motivated to do so may differ from the many who were not motivated to respond.

As an aside, my observation is that people dissatisfied with the status quo are more motivated to respond. One example: In early 1992 when CBS conducted a random sample survey of a 1,000 while over 100,000 viewers participated in a call-in poll during a show about the economy, viewers calling in were far more negative toward George Bush and his handling of the economy, far more likely to be financially worse off than four years ago, etc., etc. I am sure you have noticed this same bias in call-in "polls" (although here, demographic and other variables are also factors). The same argument could be extended to callers to talk radio shows, MSNBC's internet polls, etc.

We just finished a fax poll of CEOs at 100 of Chicago area's leading companies for the Tribune. We got 69 replies. Of course they volunteered to respond - but with a 69% response rate, the fact that they volunteered is a non-issue. After all, there is even a voluntary element to respondents to random sample/multi call-back survey; i.e., respondents who did not refuse to participate.

"H. Stuart Elway" wrote:

> Colleagues: I am looking for a reference to convince a
> particularly stubborn client that no matter how many people
> participate in a voluntary poll, he will not have "scientific" nor
> "statistically reliable" nor projectable data. Any reference or quote
> or advice will be appreciated. Thank you. Stuart Elway Elway Research,
> Inc. 206/ 264-1500

-----21E483AA13A7F354C6651144
Content-Type: text/html; charset=us-ascii
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

<!doctype html public "-//w3c//dtd html 4.0 transitional//en"> <html> <body
bgcolor="#FFFFFF"> Given the apparent absence of any references on this

Sender: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
From: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
X-Sender: pmeyer@login1.isis.unc.edu
To: aapornet@usc.edu
cc: Nancy Pawlow <Nancy_Pawlow@unc.edu>
Subject: Re: looking for a reference
In-Reply-To: <37033D9C.25F5B02D@mcs.net>
Message-ID: <Pine.A41.3.95L.990401103805.121536H-100000@login1.isis.unc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

I've told Stuart about this, but some of the rest of you might also be interested. In the March 1993 "Science" magazine, editor Daniel Koshland defended his use of self-selected respondent polls with the argument that they are not totally worthless, especially if one is not tempted to take them too seriously.

My September 1993 piece in the WAPOR newsletter gives him some support, and Nancy will fax it to you if you ask her at the CC address above. An election, for example, is a very important example of a self-selected respondent poll.

```
=====
Philip Meyer, Knight Chair in Journalism Voice: 919 962-4085
CB 3365 Howell Hall Fax: 919 962-1549
University of North Carolina Cell: 919 906-3425
Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365 http://www.unc.edu/~pmeyer
=====
```

On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Nick Panagakis wrote:

```
> Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 09:34:25 +0000
> From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>
> Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu
> To: aapornet@usc.edu
> Subject: Re: looking for a reference
>
> Given the apparent absence of any references on this subject, why
> don't you try this:
>
> A "voluntary", or the term we usually see, "self-selected" sample, is
> not the issue. The real issue is a non-random sample coupled with a
> low response rate. When the term "self-selected" is used, I believe a
> low response rate is always assumed.
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> raises the question of how non-respondents may differ from
> respondents. When respondents volunteer or select themselves in a low
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> do so may differ from the many who were not motivated to respond.
>
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> status quo are more motivated to respond. One example: In early 1992
> when CBS conducted a random sample survey of a 1,000 while over
> 100,000 viewers participated in a call-in poll during a show about the
> economy, viewers calling in were far more negative toward George Bush
> and his handling of the economy, far more likely to be financially
> worse off than four years ago, etc., etc. I am sure you have noticed
> this same bias in call-in "polls" (although here, demographic and
> other variables are also factors). The same argument could be extended
> to callers to talk radio shows, MSNBC's internet polls, etc.
>
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> companies for the Tribune. We got 69 replies. Of course they
> volunteered to respond - but with a 69% response rate, the fact that
> they volunteered is a non-issue. After all, there is even a voluntary
> element to respondents to random sample/multi call-back survey; i.e.,
> respondents who did not refuse to participate.
>
>
> "H. Stuart Elway" wrote:
>
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> > particularly stubborn client that no matter how many people
> > participate in a voluntary poll, he will not have "scientific" nor
> > "statistically reliable" nor projectable data. Any reference or
> > quote or advice will be appreciated. Thank you. Stuart Elway
> > Research, Inc. 206/ 264-1500
>

>From hochschi@wvs.princeton.edu Thu Apr 1 07:45:15 1999
Received: from outbound.Princeton.EDU (outbound.Princeton.EDU
[128.112.129.74])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id HAA19845 for <aapornet@USC.EDU>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 07:45:14 -0800
(PST)
Received: from IDENT-NOT-QUERIED@outbound.Princeton.EDU (port 62762
[128.112.129.74]) by outbound.Princeton.EDU with ESMTP id <68127-24930>;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 10:44:27 -0500
Received: from mail.Princeton.EDU (mail.Princeton.EDU [128.112.129.14])
by Princeton.EDU (8.9.1/8.9.1) with ESMTP id KAA21339
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 10:44:22 -0500 (EST)
Received: from wvs.princeton.edu (wvs.Princeton.EDU [128.112.44.240])
by mail.Princeton.EDU (8.9.1/8.9.2) with ESMTP id KAA12597
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 10:44:20 -0500 (EST)
Received: from WWS/SpoolDir by wvs.princeton.edu (Mercury 1.31);
1 Apr 99 10:32:06 EST
Received: from SpoolDir by WWS (Mercury 1.31); 1 Apr 99 10:31:47 EST

From: "Jennifer Hochschild" <hochschi@wws.princeton.edu>
To: aapornet@USC.EDU
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 10:31:42 EST
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
In-reply-to: <199903312248.0AA16117@serval.noc.ucla.edu>
References: <705AF639142AD211BCE500104B6A398944C893@PSBMAIL4>
X-mailer: Pegasus Mail for Windows (v2.53/R1)
Message-ID: <16F9B04DCC@wws.princeton.edu>

I concur with Hal K. -- and besides, surely there are more important things to worry about, and surely we all know how elections work... JH

Date: Wed, 31
Mar 1999 14:42:58 -0800 Reply-to: aapornet@usc.edu From:
"H.H.Kassarjian" <HKassarj@ucla.edu> To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

Hey you guys, the T Shirt slogan is supposed to be funny, not arrogant. It is that arrogant twist that makes it funny. If we change it even slightly as Warren suggests, it becomes factual and not funny anymore. Hal Kassarjian

At 10:23 AM 3/31/99 -0500, you wrote:

>I concur with Warren's revision.

>

>Young Chun, BLS

>

>> -----

>> From: Warren Mitofsky[SMTP:mitofsky@mindspring.com]

>> Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 1999 3:43 PM

>> To: aapornet@usc.edu

>> Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

>>

>> I agree with Robert Camin's suggestion for a runoff. And besides,

>> shouldn't the slogan read:

>> TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947

>>

>> "Telling Americans what they think..." sounds awfully arrogant.

>> warren mitofsky

>>

>>

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>> >--->))) ' >
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>> >Susan H. Pinkus
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>> >FAX: 213-237-2505

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>> Mitofsky International
>> 1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
>> New York, NY 10022
>>
>> 212 980-3031 Phone
>> 212 980-3107 FAX
>> mitofsky@mindspring.com
>>

>

Hal Kassarjian
HKassarj@ucla.edu
Phone: 1 (818) 784-5669
FAX: 1 (818) 784-3325

xx

Jennifer Hochschild
Politics Dept/Woodrow Wilson School
Princeton University
Princeton NJ 08544
o: 609-258-5634
fax: 609-258-2809
hochschi@wvs.princeton.edu

xx

>From market.probe.la@juno.com Thu Apr 1 07:46:44 1999
Received: from m4.boston.juno.com (m4.boston.juno.com [205.231.101.198])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTTP
id HAA20850 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 07:46:43 -0800
(PST)
Received: (from market.probe.la@juno.com)
by m4.boston.juno.com (queuemail) id D65NVLVL; Thu, 01 Apr 1999 10:46:12
EST
To: aapornet@usc.edu

Cc: market.probe.la@juno.com
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 07:39:46 -0800
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
Message-ID: <19990401.074404.-442863.6.Market.Probe.LA@juno.com>
X-Mailer: Juno 2.0.11
X-Juno-Line-Breaks: 0-1,4-8,10-14,16-79,81-87,89-157
X-Juno-Att: 0
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
From: Jacquelyn B Schriber <market.probe.la@juno.com>

I enjoy reading messages on AAPORnet but never thought I'd join the fray.

I, too, think the winning slogan is funny: tongue-in-cheek, dry, witty -- and with perhaps more than just one grain of truth in it. I think it speaks more to the shortcomings of our methods than to our arrogance.

=====
Jacquie Schriber
Market Probe, Inc., 915 W. Foothill Blvd., Suite C-488, Claremont, CA
91711-3356 Phone 909.626.6172; Fax 909.626.6072
=====

On Wed, 31 Mar 1999 13:13:33 -0500 Larry McGill <lmcgill@mediastudies.org> writes:

>Originally, I sent a private reply to Warren on this topic. But since
>it seems to be heating up, I'll go public.

>

>The winning slogan is funny precisely because of its faux arrogance.

>

>Larry McGill

>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Warren Mitofsky [SMTP:mitofsky@mindspring.com]

>Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 1999 3:43 PM

>To: aapornet@usc.edu

>Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

>

>I agree with Robert Camin's suggestion for a runoff. And besides,
>shouldn't

>the slogan read:

>TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947

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>"Telling Americans what they think..." sounds awfully arrogant.

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>

>

>At 09:45 AM 3/30/99 -0600, you wrote:
>>I'm demanding that this count be validated (serious and kidding).
>First of
>>all, the winning slogan in my opinion is "lame." Not very creative
>in my
>>opinion. To resolve this, I suggest a one day run-off.
>>
>>If not, at least I said my peace.
>>
>>Look forward to meeting you at the conference.
>>rob.
>>
>>--->>))) ' >
>>
>>>> Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com> 03/29 9:14 PM >>>
>>
>>
>>I know you all have been waiting for this - so here goes.
>>
>>(Drum roll please)
>>
>>It was a very close race - one vote between them, but the winner of
>the
>>1999 t-shirt slogan contest is:
>>
>> #5 "AAPOR...TELLING AMERICANS WHAT THEY THINK SINCE 1947"
>>
>>The first runner up is:
>>
>> #18 ASKING Y IN 2K
>>
>>
>>See you all in St. Pete's. Don't forget to sign up for the FUN/RUN
>Walk
>>and volleyball.
>>
>>Susan
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>*****
>>*

>>*****
>>Susan H. Pinkus
>>Los Angeles Times Poll
>>Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
>>American Online: spinkus@aol.com
>>FAX: 213-237-2505

>>*****

>****

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>
>Mitofsky International
>1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
>New York, NY 10022
>
>212 980-3031 Phone
>212 980-3107 FAX
>mitofsky@mindspring.com
>From robert_putnam@harvard.edu Thu Apr 1 08:00:27 1999
Received: from top.monad.net (root@top.monad.net [204.97.16.3])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id IAA23624 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 08:00:12 -0800
(PST)
Received: from workstation (tcr1-2.keene.monad.net [204.97.23.2])
by top.monad.net (8.8.8/What) with SMTP id KAA18843;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 10:58:55 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <3.0.32.19990401105844.01a51220@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
X-Sender: rputnam@pop.fas.harvard.edu
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 3.0 (32)
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 10:59:02 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
Subject: Re: looking for a reference
Cc: styonish@hbs.edu (Steve Yonish)
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/enriched; charset="us-ascii"

I fear this may sound too much like self-promotion, especially for a newbie in this group, but in a paper to be given at AAPOR in St. Pete, Steve Yonish and I will present [what we believe to be] substantial and surprising evidence that "self-selected" (i.e., low response rate) national samples can match even the very best available random (i.e., high response rate) national samples on a very broad range of topics. As others have said in this thread, the real issue is not *low* response rate, but *biased* response rate. Steve and I argue that all of us (me included) have too often assumed those are identical.

I'd be grateful to learn of other empirical studies that have systematically examined the effects of varying response rates.

Bob

Robert D. Putnam

Kennedy School of Government

Harvard University

<<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>

>From pmeyer@email.unc.edu Thu Apr 1 08:27:54 1999

Received: from smtpsrv1.isis.unc.edu (smtpsrv1.isis.unc.edu [152.2.1.138])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP

id IAA01733 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 08:27:53 -0800
(PST)

Received: from login1.isis.unc.edu (root@login1.isis.unc.edu [152.2.25.131])
by smtpsrv1.isis.unc.edu (8.9.1/8.9.1) with ESMTP id LAA14100
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:27:51 -0500 (EST)

Received: by email.unc.edu id <15372-165680>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:27:43 -0500

Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:27:34 -0500 (EST)

Sender: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>

From: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>

X-Sender: pmeyer@login1.isis.unc.edu

To: aapornet@usc.edu

Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

In-Reply-To: <16F9B04DCC@wws.princeton.edu>

Message-ID: <Pine.A41.3.95L.990401112656.121536K-100000@login1.isis.unc.edu>

MIME-Version: 1.0

Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

Hey, I have an idea! Next time, let's have a committee write the slogan!

=====
Philip Meyer, Knight Chair in Journalism Voice: 919 962-4085
CB 3365 Howell Hall Fax: 919 962-1549
University of North Carolina Cell: 919 906-3425
Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365 <http://www.unc.edu/~pmeyer>
=====

On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Jennifer Hochschild wrote:

> Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 10:31:42 EST

> From: Jennifer Hochschild <hochschi@wws.princeton.edu>

> Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu

> To: aapornet@usc.edu

> Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

>
> I concur with Hal K. -- and besides, surely there are more important
> things to
> worry about, and surely we all know how elections work... JH
>
>
>
>
> Date: Wed, 31
> Mar 1999 14:42:58 -0800 Reply-to: aapornet@usc.edu From:
> "H.H.Kassarjian" <HKassarj@ucla.edu> To: aapornet@usc.edu
> Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
>
> Hey you guys, the T Shirt slogan is supposed to be funny, not
> arrogant. It is that arrogant twist that makes it funny. If we change
> it even slightly as Warren suggests, it becomes factual and not funny
> anymore. Hal Kassarjian
> *****
>
>
> At 10:23 AM 3/31/99 -0500, you wrote:
> >I concur with Warren's revision.
> >
> >Young Chun, BLS
> >
> >> -----
> >> From: Warren Mitofsky[SMTP:mitofsky@mindspring.com]
> >> Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 1999 3:43 PM
> >> To: aapornet@usc.edu
> >> Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
> >>
> >> I agree with Robert Camin's suggestion for a runoff. And besides,
> >> shouldn't the slogan read:
> >> TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947
> >>
> >> "Telling Americans what they think..." sounds awfully arrogant.
> >> warren mitofsky
> >>
> >>
> >> At 09:45 AM 3/30/99 -0600, you wrote:
> >> >I'm demanding that this count be validated (serious and kidding).
> >> >First
> >> of
> >> >all, the winning slogan in my opinion is "lame." Not very
> >> >creative in my
> >>
> >> >opinion. To resolve this, I suggest a one day run-off.
> >> >
> >> >If not, at least I said my peace.
> >> >

> > >Look forward to meeting you at the conference.
> > >rob.
> > >
> > >--->))) ' >
> > >
> > >>> Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com> 03/29 9:14 PM >>>
> > >
> > >
> > >I know you all have been waiting for this - so here goes.
> > >
> > >(Drum roll please)
> > >
> > >It was a very close race - one vote between them, but the winner
> > >of the
> > >1999 t-shirt slogan contest is:
> > >
> > > #5 "AAPOR...TELLING AMERICANS WHAT THEY THINK SINCE 1947"
> > >
> > >The first runner up is:
> > >
> > > #18 ASKING Y IN 2K
> > >
> > >
> > >See you all in St. Pete's. Don't forget to sign up for the
> > >FUN/RUN Walk
> > >and volleyball.
> > >
> > >Susan
> > >
> > >
> > >
> > >
> > >*****
> > >*****
> > >***
> > >*****
> > >Susan H. Pinkus
> > >Los Angeles Times Poll
> > >Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
> > >American Online: spinkus@aol.com
> > >FAX: 213-237-2505
> > >
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 > >
 > > Mitofsky International
 > > 1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
 > > New York, NY 10022
 > >
 > > 212 980-3031 Phone
 > > 212 980-3107 FAX
 > > mitofsky@mindspring.com
 > >
 > >
 > *****
 > Hal Kassarian
 > HKassarj@ucla.edu
 > Phone: 1 (818) 784-5669
 > FAX: 1 (818) 784-3325
 >
 > xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
 >
 > Jennifer Hochschild
 > Politics Dept/Woodrow Wilson School
 > Princeton University
 > Princeton NJ 08544
 > o: 609-258-5634
 > fax: 609-258-2809
 > hochschi@wvs.princeton.edu
 >
 > xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
 >

>From Mark@bisconti.com Thu Apr 1 08:35:01 1999
 Received: from medusa.nei.org (medusa.nei.org [208.158.210.1])
 by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
 id IAA03600 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 08:34:59 -0800
 (PST)
 Received: from jetson.nei.org (unverified) by medusa.nei.org (Content
 Technologies SMTPRS 2.0.15) with ESMTP id <B0000506257@medusa.nei.org> for
 <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 01 Apr 1999 11:33:11 -0500
 Received: from MARK-BRI ([10.2.0.181]) by jetson.nei.org with SMTP
 (Microsoft Exchange Internet Mail Service Version 5.5.2232.9)
 id H044HZWK; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:34:51 -0500
 Received: by mark-bri with Microsoft Mail
 id <01BE7C31.E4E97760@mark-bri>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:22:14 -0500
 Message-Id: <01BE7C31.E4E97760@mark-bri>
 From: Mark Richards <Mark@bisconti.com>
 To: "'AAPORNET'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
 Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:22:12 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable

Funny with a bite is good... Maybe put brackets after it, like (ha, ha, =
ha!). Since we're not mounting a national ad campaign and there's a low =
probability of misinterpretation and backlash (I doubt Madam Huffington =
will show up) we might as well go with the winner. (What was the = response
rate?) Maybe find some way to leave a blank somewhere and pass = out cloth
markers so everybody can edit and personalize. Put it on nice = colors and
fabric, maybe that'll compensate. None of the slogans were = very inspiring
(like candidates in elections?), which suggests we all = need a trip to the
beach. mark richards

From: Jacquelyn B Schriber
Sent: Thursday, April 01, 1999 10:40 AM
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Cc: market.probe.la@juno.com
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

I enjoy reading messages on AAPORnet but never thought I'd join the = fray.

I, too, think the winning slogan is funny: tongue-in-cheek, dry, witty =
--
and with perhaps more than just one grain of truth in it. I think it speaks
more to the shortcomings of our methods than to our arrogance.

=3D=
=3D=
=3D

Jacquie Schriber
Market Probe, Inc., 915 W. Foothill Blvd., Suite C-488, Claremont, CA
91711-3356 Phone 909.626.6172; Fax 909.626.6072
=3D=
=3D=
=3D

On Wed, 31 Mar 1999 13:13:33 -0500 Larry McGill <lmcgill@mediastudies.org>
writes:

- >Originally, I sent a private reply to Warren on this topic. But
- >since=20 it seems to be heating up, I'll go public.
- >
- >The winning slogan is funny precisely because of its faux arrogance.
- >
- >Larry McGill
- >

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Warren Mitofsky [SMTP:mitofsky@mindspring.com]

>Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 1999 3:43 PM

>To: aapornet@usc.edu

>Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

>

>I agree with Robert Camin's suggestion for a runoff. And besides,=20

>shouldn't the slogan read:

>TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947

>

>"Telling Americans what they think..." sounds awfully arrogant.

> warren mitofsky

>

>

>At 09:45 AM 3/30/99 -0600, you wrote:

>>I'm demanding that this count be validated (serious and kidding). =20

>>First of=20

>>all, the winning slogan in my opinion is "lame." Not very creative=20

>>in my=20

>>opinion. To resolve this, I suggest a one day run-off.

>>

>>If not, at least I said my peace.

>>

>>Look forward to meeting you at the conference.

>>rob.

>>

>>--->>))) ' >

>>

>>>> Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com> 03/29 9:14 PM >>>

>>

>>

>>I know you all have been waiting for this - so here goes.=20

>>

>>(Drum roll please)

>>

>>It was a very close race - one vote between them, but the winner of=20

>>the=20

>>1999 t-shirt slogan contest is:

>>

>> #5 "AAPOR...TELLING AMERICANS WHAT THEY THINK SINCE 1947" =20

>>

>>The first runner up is:

>>

>> #18 ASKING Y IN 2K

>>

>>

>>See you all in St. Pete's. Don't forget to sign up for the FUN/RUN=20

>>Walk=20

>>and volleyball.

>>

>
>Mitofsky International
>1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
>New York, NY 10022
>
>212 980-3031 Phone
>212 980-3107 FAX =20
>mitofsky@mindspring.com=20

>From harkness@zuma-mannheim.de Thu Apr 1 08:59:30 1999
Received: from mail.zuma-mannheim.de (mail.zuma-mannheim.de [193.196.10.12])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id IAA10015 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 08:59:19 -0800
(PST)
Received: from zuma-mannheim.de (pc-jh1.zuma-mannheim.de [193.196.10.55])
by mail.zuma-mannheim.de (8.8.7/8.8.7) with ESMTP id SAA29107
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 18:52:28 +0200
Message-ID: <3703A535.AAB29AF2@zuma-mannheim.de>
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 18:56:21 +0200
From: "Dr. Janet Harkness" <harkness@zuma-mannheim.de>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.04 [en] (WinNT; I)
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
References: <4.1.19990330154017.00aefd90@pop.mindspring.com>
Content-Type: multipart/mixed;
boundary="-----D788510E879418AB472263A4"

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.
-----D788510E879418AB472263A4
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Warren Mitofsky wrote: And besides, shouldn't

> the slogan read:
> TELLING WHAT AMERICANS THINK SINCE 1947

That is NEXT year's T-shirt.

-----D788510E879418AB472263A4
Content-Type: text/x-vcard; charset=us-ascii; name="vcard.vcf"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Content-Description: Card for Harkness, Dr. Janet
Content-Disposition: attachment; filename="vcard.vcf"

begin: vcard

fn: Dr. Janet Harkness
n: Harkness;Dr. Janet
org: ZUMA, Mannheim, Germany,
adr: Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen (ZUMA);;PO Box
122155;Mannheim;;68072;Germany
email;internet: harkness@zuma-mannheim.de
title: ISSP Director for Germany
tel;work: + 49-621-1246-284
tel;fax: +49-621-1246-100
tel;home: + 49 6345-919481
x-mozilla-cpt: ;0
x-mozilla-html: FALSE
version: 2.1
end: vcard

-----D788510E879418AB472263A4--

>From dhenwood@panix.com Thu Apr 1 11:06:27 1999
Received: from mail1.panix.com (mail1.panix.com [166.84.0.212])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id LAA23839 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:06:26 -0800
(PST)
Received: from [166.84.250.86] (dhenwood.dialup.access.net [166.84.250.86])
by mail1.panix.com (8.8.8/8.8.8/PanixM1.3) with ESMTP id OAA22716
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 14:06:22 -0500 (EST)
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
X-Sender: dhenwood@popserver.panix.com
Message-Id: <v04011711b32974358fdc@[166.84.250.86]>
In-Reply-To: <3703A535.AAB29AF2@zuma-mannheim.de>
References: <4.1.19990330154017.00aefd90@pop.mindspring.com>
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 14:06:59 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Doug Henwood <dhenwood@panix.com>
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

On the subject of the T-shirt, don't forget Jody Powell's classic statement
- "We can't tell the public what to think but we can tell them what to think
about."

Doug

>From Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com Thu Apr 1 11:42:47 1999
Received: from mail02-lax.pilot.net (mail-lax-2.pilot.net [205.139.40.16])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id LAA06740 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:42:46 -0800
(PST)
Received: from mailgw.latimes.com (unknown-c-23-147.latimes.com
[204.48.23.147] (may be forged)) by mail02-lax.pilot.net with ESMTP id
LAA18435 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:42:45 -0800 (PST)

Received: from latimes.com (bierce.latimes.com [192.187.72.9])
by mailgw.latimes.com (8.9.1/8.9.1) with SMTP id LAA06991
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:42:44 -0800 (PST)
Received: from news.latimes.com (fowler.news.latimes.com [192.187.72.7]) by
latimes.com (8.6.10/8.6.9) with ESMTP id LAA12309 for <aapornet@usc.edu>;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:42:43 -0800
Received: (from pinkus@localhost) by news.latimes.com (8.6.9/8.6.9) id
LAA92461; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:37:57 -0800
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:37:57 -0800 (PST)
From: Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
cc: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
In-Reply-To: <966A8EF58355D211968F00805FEADEAF40B973@OFM001>
Message-ID:
<Pine.A32.3.91.990401113717.83901A-100000@fowler.news.latimes.com>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

r

I cannot believe the energy expended on this - is this all u have to do
with your time. the slogan stands as is! Accept it.

susan

Susan H. Pinkus
Los Angeles Times Poll
Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
American Online: spinkus@aol.com
FAX: 213-237-2505

>From DMMerke@aol.com Thu Apr 1 11:47:14 1999
Received: from imo21.mx.aol.com (imo21.mx.aol.com [198.81.17.65])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id LAA08994 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:47:10 -0800
(PST)
From: DMMerke@aol.com
Received: from DMMerke@aol.com
by imo21.mx.aol.com (IM0v19.3) id 5HLRa08798
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 14:40:15 -0500 (EST)
Message-ID: <6a74c5f.3703cb9f@aol.com>
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 14:40:15 EST
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Mime-Version: 1.0
Subject: Re: looking for a reference

Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7bit
X-Mailer: AOL 4.0 for Windows 95 sub 13

In a message dated 4/1/99 12:20:04 PM Eastern Standard Time,
robert_putnam@harvard.edu writes:

<< I'd be grateful to learn of other empirical studies that have
systematically examined the effects of varying response rates. >>

Murray Edelman and I are working on a paper for the International Conference
on Survey Nonresponse to be held in Oregon this October that addresses this
issue using exit poll data. In the paper we analyze the relationship between
response rates and error in the vote estimates for the 1992, 1994, 1996 and
1998 general elections. These analyses, which include data from exit polls
conducted in approximately 5000 precincts, finds no relationship between
response rates and survey error. In a separate experimental study, we found
that our experimental manipulation increased response rates but, contrary to
our expectations, also increased the bias in the vote estimates.

Daniel Merkle
Voter News Service

>From s.kraus@csuohio.edu Thu Apr 1 11:49:32 1999
Received: from sims.csuohio.edu (notesmail1.csuohio.edu [137.148.5.16])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id LAA09843 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:49:31 -0800
(PST)
Received: from myhost.csuohio.edu (dialup18-30.csuohio.edu)
by sims.csuohio.edu (Sun Internet Mail Server sims.3.5.1999.01.13.19.49.p4)
with SMTP id <0F9J00LB100BLH@sims.csuohio.edu> for aapornet@usc.edu; Thu, 1
Apr 1999 14:55:25 -0500 (EST)
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 14:55:25 -0500 (EST)
From: "Dr. Sidney Kraus" <s.kraus@csuohio.edu>
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
X-Sender: s.kraus@popmail.csuohio.edu
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Message-id: <0F9J00LB200CLH@sims.csuohio.edu>
MIME-version: 1.0
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Light Version 1.5.2
Content-type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

Sounds like Agenda Setting to me, and if that's the case, credit McCombs not
Powell.

Best,

Sid

At 02:06 PM 4/1/99 -0500, you wrote:

>On the subject of the T-shirt, don't forget Jody Powell's classic
>statement
>- "We can't tell the public what to think but we can tell them what to
>think about."
>
>Doug
>

>From s.kraus@csuohio.edu Thu Apr 1 11:49:33 1999
Received: from sims.csuohio.edu (notesmail1.csuohio.edu [137.148.5.16])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id LAA09855 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:49:32 -0800
(PST)
Received: from myhost.csuohio.edu (dialup18-30.csuohio.edu)
by sims.csuohio.edu (Sun Internet Mail Server sims.3.5.1999.01.13.19.49.p4)
with SMTP id <0F9J00LB100BLH@sims.csuohio.edu> for aapornet@usc.edu; Thu, 1
Apr 1999 14:55:26 -0500 (EST)
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 14:55:26 -0500 (EST)
From: "Dr. Sidney Kraus" <s.kraus@csuohio.edu>
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
X-Sender: s.kraus@popmail.csuohio.edu
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Message-id: <0F9J00LB400DLH@sims.csuohio.edu>
MIME-version: 1.0
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Light Version 1.5.2
Content-type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

Sounds like Agenda-setting to me. If so, credit McCombs, not Powell.

Best,

Sid

At 02:06 PM 4/1/99 -0500, you wrote:

>On the subject of the T-shirt, don't forget Jody Powell's classic
>statement
>- "We can't tell the public what to think but we can tell them what to
>think about."
>
>Doug
>

>From beniger@rcf.usc.edu Thu Apr 1 12:35:32 1999
Received: from almaak.usc.edu (almaak.usc.edu [128.125.19.166])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id MAA22782 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 12:35:31 -0800
(PST)
Received: from localhost (beniger@localhost)

by almaak.usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
id MAA27976; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 12:35:30 -0800 (PST)
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 12:35:30 -0800 (PST)
From: James Beniger <beniger@rcf.usc.edu>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
cc: Steve Yonish <styonish@hbs.edu>
Subject: Reply to Bob Putnam
In-Reply-To: <3.0.32.19990401105844.01a51220@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
Message-ID: <Pine.GS0.4.02.9904010927380.29737-100000@almaak.usc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

Bob,

The two words "can match" hang heavy in your brief message. Even the stopped clock, after all, is precisely correct twice every day, until the end of time, no matter on what time the clock happens to have stopped.

Statistics is the science of how to do the very best one can to know as much as possible about something which is ultimately unknowable, at least exactly or precisely. The real value of the scientific survey is not that its results might approximate those in some larger population (handy though that can be, to be sure); the value of the scientific survey is rather that it allows one to measure precisely the extent to which (not to mention the way in which) the sample results might differ from the unknowable facts about the larger population we long so to know. For this reason, statistical science and its grounding in mathematical probability theory might be seen as a branch--the most scientific branch--of applied epistemology.

That established, no unscientific survey, no matter how it might otherwise be conducted, could ever possibly fill the quite specific and particular if not peculiar function of a scientific survey. Even if one were to find otherwise, as in the evidence you apparently have found, perhaps analogously to the stopped clock, how could we ever know, or be sure? Only by comparison to data on the same population collected in a scientific survey, as you yourself suggest.

I think the circularity here is obvious. We are always--in the end--left to use statistical techniques to tell us *when* unscientific and non-statistical techniques might happen to produce valid findings, in turn defined as findings reasonably similar to our corresponding, statistically valid results.

The really useful question, of course, is not "when" but "why." This is what you and Steve intend to ask, I am sure, and I am all for it. I've long enjoyed hearing from those creative minds who can come up with compelling

reasons why so-called "bad" methods can often produce results comparable to those we achieve via what we have long been certain to be good methods. Our understanding of methods, as distinct from statistics, can only advance as a result of such work. To the extent that statistical analysis might reveal why the formerly "bad" method does as well or possibly better, statistical science might itself also advance (usually a long shot, to be sure).

All of this might seem far off the modest but potentially quite useful finding you report: "substantial and surprising evidence that 'self-selected' (i.e., low response rate) national samples can match even the very best available random (i.e., high response rate) national samples on a very broad range of topics." The reason I bother to reply here at all is that scientific surveys seem to me so under siege these days, under partisan struggles over control of the next Census, and with the new allure of the Internet as a source of cheap data. Under such conditions, nothing can be more important to the free pursuit of objective truths obtained as intelligently as possible, it seems to me, than to work to maintain the integrity of scientific survey research and related scientific methods of data collection. The last thing I think either of us wants would be for anyone to conclude (especially politicians and the popular press) that Putnam and Yonish tell us scientific methods of survey research are no longer necessary because self-selected samples work just as well (even though this might in fact be true in certain special cases).

To assure that the fruits of our pursuit of truth, through the times in which we now find ourselves, are not misunderstood, I think we must all of us be careful to word our conclusions meticulously, and at length and in detail sufficient to meet the new challenges of public misunderstanding and partisan abuse (the "length" part, at least, I do seem to have successfully demonstrated here).

-- Jim

On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Robert D. Putnam wrote:

> I fear this may sound too much like self-promotion, especially for a
> newbie in this group, but in a paper to be given at AAPOR in St. Pete,
> Steve Yonish and I will present [what we believe to be] substantial
> and surprising evidence that "self-selected" (i.e., low response rate)
> national samples can match even the very best available random (i.e.,
> high response rate) national samples on a very broad range of topics.
> As others have said in this thread, the real issue is not *low*
> response rate, but
> *biased* response rate. Steve and I argue that all of us (me
> included) have too often assumed those are identical.
>
> I'd be grateful to learn of other empirical studies that have
> systematically examined the effects of varying response rates.
>

> Bob
>
> Robert D. Putnam
> Kennedy School of Government
> Harvard University
> <<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>

>From SSDCF@UConnVM.UConn.Edu Thu Apr 1 12:55:14 1999
Received: from UConnVM.UConn.Edu (uconnvm.uconn.edu [137.99.26.3])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
id MAA03519 for <aapornet@USC.EDU>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 12:54:55 -0800
(PST)
Received: by UConnVM.UConn.Edu (IBM VM SMTP V2R4a) via spool with SMTP id
2128 ; Thu, 01 Apr 1999 15:54:46 EST
Received: from UConnVM.UConn.Edu (NJE origin SSDCF@UConnVM) by
UConnVM.UConn.EDU (LMail V1.2c/1.8c) with BSMTMP id 7634; Thu, 1 Apr 1999
15:54:46 -0500
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 99 15:54:38 EST
From: Don Ferree <SSDCF@UConnVM.UConn.Edu>
Subject: Re: Reply to Bob Putnam
To: Members of AAPORNET <aapornet@usc.edu>
In-Reply-To: <Pine.GSO.4.02.9904010927380.29737-100000@almaak.usc.edu>
X-Mailer: MailBook 98.01.000
Message-Id: <990401.155446.EST.SSDCF@UConnVM.UConn.Edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7BIT

Amen to Jim.

>From LPollack@psg.ucsf.edu Thu Apr 1 13:14:54 1999
Received: from psg.ucsf.edu (psg.ucsf.EDU [128.218.6.65])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id NAA13473 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 13:14:52 -0800
(PST)
Received: by psg.ucsf.EDU with Internet Mail Service (5.0.1458.49)
id <H3TW7KGR>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 13:15:16 -0800
Message-ID: <71364B64597CD211B02800A0C921A2133F26D4@psg.ucsf.EDU>
From: "Pollack, Lance" <LPollack@psg.ucsf.edu>
To: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 13:15:12 -0800
X-Priority: 3
MIME-Version: 1.0
X-Mailer: Internet Mail Service (5.0.1458.49)
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"

Reminds me of how the Bennets and Huffingtons of the world responded to polls about Clinton's performance in office.

Lance M. Pollack
University of California, San Francisco
lpollack@psg.ucsf.edu

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Pinkus [SMTP:Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 01, 1999 11:38 AM
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Cc: 'aapornet@usc.edu'
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

r
I cannot believe the energy expended on this - is this all u have to do with your time. the slogan stands as is! Accept it.

susan

Susan H. Pinkus
Los Angeles Times Poll
Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
American Online: spinkus@aol.com
FAX: 213-237-2505

>From pmeyer@email.unc.edu Thu Apr 1 13:56:10 1999
Received: from smtpsrv1.isis.unc.edu (smtpsrv1.isis.unc.edu [152.2.1.138])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id NAA08837 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 13:56:09 -0800
(PST)
Received: from login1.isis.unc.edu (root@login1.isis.unc.edu [152.2.25.131])
by smtpsrv1.isis.unc.edu (8.9.1/8.9.1) with ESMTP id QAA27023
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 16:56:06 -0500 (EST)
Received: by email.unc.edu id <15380-87084>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 16:56:01 -0500
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 16:55:50 -0500 (EST)
Sender: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
From: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
X-Sender: pmeyer@login1.isis.unc.edu
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: looking for a reference
In-Reply-To: <3.0.32.19990401105844.01a51220@pop.fas.harvard.edu>

Message-ID: <Pine.A41.3.95L.990401164910.121536L-100000@login1.isis.unc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

I'll go Bob a step further and suggest that we can even live with a biased sample so long as the bias does not correlate with whatever we are measuring. That's why the Chicago Sun-Times shopping center intercept poll and the Columbus Dispatch mail survey usually predict elections correctly. The problem is that we can only hope that the fatal correlation is not present.

The classic case is the Literary Digest poll. It did okay until FDR's New Deal coalition made social class correlate with party choice. Before that their sample of auto owners and telephone subscribers predicted elections well enough.

```
=====
Philip Meyer, Knight Chair in Journalism Voice: 919 962-4085
CB 3365 Howell Hall Fax: 919 962-1549
University of North Carolina Cell: 919 906-3425
Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365 http://www.unc.edu/~pmeyer
=====
```

On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Robert D. Putnam wrote:

```
> Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 10:59:02 -0500
> From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
> Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu
> To: aapornet@usc.edu
> Cc: Steve Yonish <styonish@hbs.edu>
> Subject: Re: looking for a reference
>
> I fear this may sound too much like self-promotion, especially for a
> newbie in this group, but in a paper to be given at AAPOR in St. Pete,
> Steve Yonish and I will present [what we believe to be] substantial
> and surprising evidence that "self-selected" (i.e., low response rate)
> national samples can match even the very best available random (i.e.,
> high response rate) national samples on a very broad range of topics.
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> of us (me included) have too often assumed those are identical.
>
>
> I'd be grateful to learn of other empirical studies that have
> systematically examined the effects of varying response rates.
>
>
> Bob
>
```


>
>
> Robert D. Putnam
>
> Kennedy School of Government
>
> Harvard University
>
> <<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>
>

>From robert_putnam@harvard.edu Thu Apr 1 14:14:56 1999
Received: from top.monad.net (root@top.monad.net [204.97.16.3])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id OAA15681 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 14:14:54 -0800
(PST)
Received: from armada7380 (arc1-77.keene.monad.net [208.28.193.77])
by top.monad.net (8.8.8/What) with SMTP id RAA26311;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 17:14:48 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <3.0.32.19990401171436.0091aec0@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
X-Sender: rputnam@pop.fas.harvard.edu
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 3.0 (32)
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 17:15:15 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
Subject: Re: Reply to Jim Beninger
Cc: styonish@hbs.edu (Steve Yonish)
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/enriched; charset="us-ascii"

At 12:35 PM 4/1/99 -0800, Jim Beninger wrote:

>The two words "can match" hang heavy in your brief message. Even the
>stopped clock, after all, is precisely correct twice every day, until
>the

>end of time, no matter on what time the clock happens to have stopped.

I agree with much that you say, Jim. I am, of course, not arguing that
"scientific surveys" are a waste of resources. On our specific arguments, I
suppose I should simply say "read our paper."

However, your "stopped clock" metaphor stung as perhaps slightly unfair, so
here's a preview of what we say. We shall report not merely that one-shot
frequencies are the same between "low" and "high" response rate samples, but
that this is consistently true in annual surveys over a quarter century and

across a dozen different domains (church attendance; military service; leisure time usage; attitudes to feminism, abortion, pot, guns, and communism; economic expectations; "post-material" values, etc.) Moreover, we shall report that it is statistically impossible to distinguish the parameters (regression coefficients) linking each of those outcome variables to a dozen demographic characteristics simultaneously; in other words, one would come to precisely the same conclusions from the two samples about what goes with what at a deep level of analysis. The odds that all this could happen by chance are vanishingly small, unlike your stopped clock.

Our argument will be not that folks in this business should ignore response rates and sampling, of course, but that it may be wrong to dismiss the results of low-response-rate surveys without more careful examination. Another way of putting this is that among all the various sources of error in surveys, low response rates may not be as damaging as some of the others. We intend to follow Andy Kohut's lead in trying to specify the circumstances under which response rates do and do not bias results. Given global trends in response rates, I thought this might seem a hopeful and even useful approach.

But maybe Steve and I have missed something, so we look forward to the debate. :-)

Best,

Bob

Robert D. Putnam

Kennedy School of Government

Harvard University

<<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>

>From robert_putnam@harvard.edu Thu Apr 1 14:54:25 1999

Received: from top.monad.net (root@top.monad.net [204.97.16.3])

by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP

id OAA00834 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 14:54:19 -0800

(PST)

Received: from armada7380 (arc1-77.keene.monad.net [208.28.193.77])

by top.monad.net (8.8.8/What) with SMTP id RAA12971

for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 17:54:17 -0500 (EST)

Message-Id: <3.0.32.19990401175438.01c6faf0@pop.fas.harvard.edu>

X-Sender: rputnam@pop.fas.harvard.edu

X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 3.0 (32)
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 17:54:44 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
Subject: Thanks
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"

Shorter and less polemical than my second post, this is just a note of thanks to all who sent relevant citations (off-list and on-list) in response to my first post. We'll cite all of them in our paper, in case others are interested in the topic.

Bob

Robert D. Putnam
Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138
<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>
>From sullivan@fsc-research.com Thu Apr 1 15:25:25 1999
Received: from web2.tdl.com (root@web2.tdl.com [165.90.3.6])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id PAA12792 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 15:25:19 -0800
(PST)
From: sullivan@fsc-research.com
Received: from toshiba.tdl.com (tdl-dyn152.tdl.com [205.162.12.152])
by web2.tdl.com (8.9.1a/8.9.1) with SMTP id PAA01391;
Thu, 1 Apr 1999 15:25:18 -0800
Message-Id: <199904012325.PAA01391@web2.tdl.com>
To: aapornet@usc.edu, aapornet@usc.edu
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 15:40:05 +0000
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
CC: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
In-reply-to:
<Pine.A32.3.91.990401113717.83901A-100000@fowler.news.latimes.com>
References: <966A8EF58355D211968F00805FEADEAF40B973@OFM001>
X-mailer: Pegasus Mail for Windows (v3.01d)
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7BIT

I agree, this is positively embarrassing.

Date sent: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:37:57 -0800 (PST)
Send reply to: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Copies to: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>

Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

> r
> I cannot believe the energy expended on this - is this all u have to
> do
> with your time. the slogan stands as is! Accept it.
>
> susan
>
> *****
> *****
> Susan H. Pinkus
> Los Angeles Times Poll
> Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
> American Online: spinkus@aol.com
> FAX: 213-237-2505
>
> *****
> ***
>
>
>

>From latibaro@rdc.cl Thu Apr 1 16:05:37 1999
Received: from mailnet.rdc.cl (root@mailnet1.rdc.cl [200.27.2.4])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id QAA28895 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 16:05:34 -0800
(PST)
Received: from Default (dial1-8.rdc.cl [200.27.1.168])
by mailnet.rdc.cl (8.9.2/8.9.2) with SMTP id IAA10429
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 08:04:39 -0400 (CLT)
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 08:04:39 -0400 (CLT)
Message-Id: <199904021204.IAA10429@mailnet.rdc.cl>
X-Sender: latibaro@200.27.2.4
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Light Version 1.5.2
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Latinobarometro <latibaro@rdc.cl>
Subject: Re: Reply to Jim Beninger

I have followed this discussion (maybe not all , I do not know at which point I picked it up)with very much interest. My name is Marta Lagos and I sit in Chile. (director of Latinobarometro, annual survey in 17 countries in Latin America.).

Response rates also do not influence the outcome of quota samples, much criticized in the states and widelyused in Europe. Stability of data over decades, speak in favor of them and against the argument that the "only"

type of representative sample is the purely mathematically random proven. Random parallel control samples with high response rates do not vary significantly in their results with the paralel quota one.

Would de be very interesting to read Prof Putnams paper. Is it possible to get it?

Many Thanks

Marta Lagos

At 05:15 PM 4/1/99 -0500, you wrote:

>At 12:35 PM 4/1/99 -0800, Jim Beninger wrote:

>

>>The two words "can match" hang heavy in your brief message. Even the >>stopped clock, after all, is precisely correct twice every day, until >>the end of time, no matter on what time the clock happens to have >>stopped.

>

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>

>However, your "stopped clock" metaphor stung as perhaps slightly >unfair, so

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>

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>response

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>

>But maybe Steve and I have missed something, so we look forward to the

debate. :-)

>

>Best,

>

>Bob

>

>

>Robert D. Putnam

>Kennedy School of Government

>Harvard University

><<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>

>From mkshares@mcs.net Thu Apr 1 16:07:06 1999

Received: from Kitten.mcs.com (Kitten.mcs.com [192.160.127.90])

by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP

id QAA29603 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 16:06:59 -0800

(PST)

Received: from mcs.net (P45-Chi-Dial-9.pool.mcs.net [205.253.226.45]) by

Kitten.mcs.com (8.8.7/8.8.2) with ESMTP id SAA24436 for <aapornet@usc.edu>;

Thu, 1 Apr 1999 18:06:55 -0600 (CST)

Message-ID: <3703B5B8.F4CB7794@mcs.net>

Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 18:06:51 +0000

From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>

X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.5 (Macintosh; I; PPC)

X-Accept-Language: en

MIME-Version: 1.0

To: aapornet@usc.edu

Subject: Re: looking for a reference

References: <Pine.A41.3.95L.990401164910.121536L-100000@login1.isis.unc.edu>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii; x-mac-type="54455854";

x-mac-creator="4D4F5353"

Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

The last Sun-Times Straw Poll was conducted in 1980. The Straw poll was conducted in 40 sites across the state (not necessarily shopping centers), 40,000 "interviews" over 16 days, concluding about nine days before election day.

I can't vouch for their success in earlier years, but the downfall of the Straw Poll in 1978 and in 1980 was their extended field time as well as concluding nine days out from election day and thus, missing late breaking events.

In 1978, they were out of the field and missed a confrontation on TV between incumbent Charles Percy and his challenger Alex Seith resulted in Percy passing out. In 1980, they missed the final presidential debate which is said to have reassured some Americans about Reagan's ability.

Philip Meyer wrote:

> I'll go Bob a step further and suggest that we can even live with a
> biased sample so long as the bias does not correlate with whatever we
> are measuring. That's why the Chicago Sun-Times shopping center
> intercept poll and the Columbus Dispatch mail survey usually predict
> elections correctly. The problem is that we can only hope that the
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>
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> FDR's New Deal coalition made social class correlate with party
> choice. Before that their sample of auto owners and telephone
> subscribers predicted elections well enough.

>
> =====
> Philip Meyer, Knight Chair in Journalism Voice: 919 962-4085
> CB 3365 Howell Hall Fax: 919 962-1549
> University of North Carolina Cell: 919 906-3425
> Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365 http://www.unc.edu/~pmeyer
> =====

> On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Robert D. Putnam wrote:

>
>> Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 10:59:02 -0500
>> From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
>> Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu
>> To: aapornet@usc.edu
>> Cc: Steve Yonish <styonish@hbs.edu>
>> Subject: Re: looking for a reference

>>
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>>
>>
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>>
>>
>> Bob

>>
>>
>>
>> Robert D. Putnam

> >
> > Kennedy School of Government
> >
> > Harvard University
> >
> > <<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>
> >

>From slosh@garnet.acns.fsu.edu Thu Apr 1 17:47:19 1999
Received: from garnet.acns.fsu.edu (gmhub.acns.fsu.edu [146.201.2.30])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTTP
id RAA03703 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 17:47:17 -0800
(PST)
Received: from garnet2.acns.fsu.edu (garnet2-fi.acns.fsu.edu
[128.186.197.3])
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for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 20:47:16 -0500
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for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 20:47:11 -0500
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 20:47:11 -0500
Message-Id: <199904020147.UAA76914@garnet2.acns.fsu.edu>
X-Sender: slosh@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Light Version 1.5.2
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Susan Losh <slosh@garnet.acns.fsu.edu>
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

No. We are merely expressing our opinions.

Susan

At 03:40 PM 4/1/99 +0000, you wrote:

>I agree, this is positively embarrassing.

>

>Date sent: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:37:57 -0800 (PST)
>Send reply to: aapornet@usc.edu
>From: Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com>
>To: aapornet@usc.edu
>Copies to: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
>Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

>

>> r

>> I cannot believe the energy expended on this - is this all u have to
>> do

>> with your time. the slogan stands as is! Accept it.

>>

>> susan

>>
>>

>> Susan H. Pinkus
>> Los Angeles Times Poll
>> Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
>> American Online: spinkus@aol.com
>> FAX: 213-237-2505
>>

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>

If time were money, I'd be in debtor's prison.

Susan Losh, PhD.
Department of Sociology
Florida State University
Tallahassee FL 32306-2270

PHONE 850-644-1753 Office
850-644-6416 Sociology Office

slosh@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
FAX 850-644-6208

>From rakekay@erols.com Thu Apr 1 18:18:48 1999
Received: from smtp4.erols.com (smtp4.erols.com [207.172.3.237])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id SAA09333 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 18:18:48 -0800
(PST)
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by smtp4.erols.com (8.8.8/smtp-v1) with SMTP id VAA14170
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 21:18:45 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <199904020218.VAA14170@smtp4.erols.com>
Subject: Re: Reply to Jim Beninger
Date: Thu, 1 Apr 99 21:15:13 -0500
From: Kathleen & Ward Rakestraw Kay <rakekay@erols.com>

To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="US-ASCII"

This thread is a good pitch for the AAPOR conference, I bet this session might be overflowing. Maybe some other authors with controversial ideas should start plugging their papers and get a good buzz going about the conference before it starts (since it doesn't look like the T-shirts will be bringing them in :-))

>From joholz@mindspring.com Thu Apr 1 18:40:32 1999
Received: from smtp1.mindspring.com (smtp1.mindspring.com [207.69.200.31])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id SAA14163 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 18:40:31 -0800
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by smtp1.mindspring.com (8.8.5/8.8.5) with SMTP id VAA22655
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 1 Apr 1999 21:40:29 -0500 (EST)
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Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 21:45:01 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Jo Holz <joholz@mindspring.com>
Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST

Right on, Susan! (Or is it write on?) This has been about the silliest discussion on aapornet since I joined the list.

At 11:37 AM 4/1/99 -0800, you wrote:

>r
>I cannot believe the energy expended on this - is this all u have to do
>with your time. the slogan stands as is! Accept it.
>
>susan
>
>*****
>****
>*****
>Susan H. Pinkus
>Los Angeles Times Poll
>

Jo Holz
434 Fifth Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215

Phone: (718) 499-3212
Fax: (718) 499-3606

>From mkshares@mcs.net Fri Apr 2 05:29:48 1999
Received: from Kitten.mcs.com (Kitten.mcs.com [192.160.127.90])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id FAA26491 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 05:29:47 -0800
(PST)
Received: from mcs.net (P62-Chi-Dial-7.pool.mcs.net [205.253.225.190]) by
Kitten.mcs.com (8.8.7/8.8.2) with ESMTP id HAA21416 for <aapornet@usc.edu>;
Fri, 2 Apr 1999 07:29:33 -0600 (CST)
Message-ID: <370471D5.FAABA790@mcs.net>
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 07:29:26 +0000
From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.5 (Macintosh; I; PPC)
X-Accept-Language: en
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
References: <199904020147.UAA76914@garnet2.acns.fsu.edu>
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x-mac-creator="4D4F5353"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

This debate has now validated the slogan: "Telling Americans What They
[AAPOR] Think"

Susan Losh wrote:

> No. We are merely expressing our opinions.
>
> Susan
>
> At 03:40 PM 4/1/99 +0000, you wrote:
> >I agree, this is positively embarrassing.
> >
> >Date sent: Thu, 1 Apr 1999 11:37:57 -0800 (PST)
> >Send reply to: aapornet@usc.edu
> >From: Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com>
> >To: aapornet@usc.edu
> >Copies to: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
> >Subject: RE: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
> >
> >> r
> >> I cannot believe the energy expended on this - is this all u have
> >> to do with your time. the slogan stands as is! Accept it.
> >>
> >> susan
> >>

> >>
> *****
> *****
> *****
> >> Susan H. Pinkus
> >> Los Angeles Times Poll
> >> Internet:susan.pinkus@latimes.com
> >> American Online: spinkus@aol.com
> >> FAX: 213-237-2505
> >>
> *****
> *****
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>
> If time were money, I'd be in debtor's prison.
>
> Susan Losh, PhD.
> Department of Sociology
> Florida State University
> Tallahassee FL 32306-2270
>
> PHONE 850-644-1753 Office
> 850-644-6416 Sociology Office
>
> slosh@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
> FAX 850-644-6208

>From barry@arches.uga.edu Fri Apr 2 05:44:05 1999
Received: from mailgw.cc.uga.edu (mailgw.cc.uga.edu [128.192.1.101])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTTP
id FAA28464 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 05:44:04 -0800
(PST)
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(LSMTTP for Windows NT v1.1b) with SMTP id <0.00ABBACC@mailgw.cc.uga.edu>;
Fri, 2 Apr 1999 8:44:02 -0500
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by archa3.cc.uga.edu (8.9.1/8.9.1) with SMTP id IAA63042
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 08:43:57 -0500
Message-ID: <002f01be7d0e\$6a3ab8c0\$e623c080@Hollarder.Grady.uga.edu>
From: "Barry A. Hollander" <barry@arches.uga.edu>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Re: WINNER OF T-SHIRT SLOGAN CONTEST
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 08:40:47 -0500
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After suffering through this overlong and often
silly discussion, I offer next year's T-shirt slogan possibilities:

- (1) If The First Poll Doesn't Work, Change It!
- (2) We Have Opinions. And They're Better Than Votes.

and finally, my favorite...

- (3) Why Vote When We Can Whine?

Barry A. Hollander
Associate Professor
College of Journalism and Mass Communication
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

Phone: 706.542.5027 | FAX: 706.542.2183
Email: barry@arches.uga.edu <http://www.grady.uga.edu/faculty/~bhollander>

>From pmeyer@email.unc.edu Fri Apr 2 06:19:32 1999
Received: from smtprsv1.isis.unc.edu (smtprsv1.isis.unc.edu [152.2.1.138])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
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by smtprsv1.isis.unc.edu (8.9.1/8.9.1) with ESMTP id JAA03467
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 09:19:16 -0500 (EST)
Received: by email.unc.edu id <63496-30494>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 09:18:59 -0500
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 09:18:54 -0500 (EST)
Sender: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
From: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
X-Sender: pmeyer@login0.isis.unc.edu
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: looking for a reference
In-Reply-To: <3703B5B8.F4CB7794@mcs.net>
Message-ID: <Pine.A41.3.95L.990402085601.36400A-100000@login0.isis.unc.edu>
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Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

I stand corrected on the Sun-Times poll. (Is this how urban legends are born?) But my information on the Columbus Dispatch is good. Here's another contribution, one that should stand up:

A Gallup source told me that Gallup's traditional methodology, a probability sample at the household level, then a combination quota/availability sample within the household (youngest male/oldest female) is their standard except when they are contracting with academic organizations that prefer probability at the individual level, meaning a random selection and a specified number of callbacks. The former is, of course, theoretically unsound, but it has produced the excellent Gallup record of predicting presidential elections since 1952. Perhaps one of you Gallup folks present can verify or clarify this.

At my university, we do a semi-annual statewide poll using callbacks. It is a joint venture of the J-school and a social science institute. Some of us sensation-seeking journalists would like to switch to Gallup's way, but those most schooled in scientific method want to keep the callbacks. So this debate, as Jim rightly notes, is quite topical.

```
=====
Philip Meyer, Knight Chair in Journalism Voice: 919 962-4085
CB 3365 Howell Hall Fax: 919 962-1549
University of North Carolina Cell: 919 906-3425
Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365 http://www.unc.edu/~pmeyer
=====
```

On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Nick Panagakis wrote:

```
> Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 18:06:51 +0000
> From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>
> Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu
> To: aapornet@usc.edu
> Subject: Re: looking for a reference
>
> The last Sun-Times Straw Poll was conducted in 1980. The Straw poll
> was conducted in 40 sites across the state (not necessarily shopping
> centers), 40,000 "interviews" over 16 days, concluding about nine days
> before election day.
>
> I can't vouch for their success in earlier years, but the downfall of
> the Straw Poll in 1978 and in 1980 was their extended field time as
> well as concluding nine days out from election day and thus, missing
> late breaking events.
>
> In 1978, they were out of the field and missed a confrontation on TV
> between incumbent Charles Percy and his challenger Alex Seith resulted
```

> in Percy passing out. In 1980, they missed the final presidential
> debate which is said to have reassured some Americans about Reagan's
> ability.
>
>
> Philip Meyer wrote:
>
> > I'll go Bob a step further and suggest that we can even live with a
> > biased sample so long as the bias does not correlate with whatever
> > we are measuring. That's why the Chicago Sun-Times shopping center
> > intercept poll and the Columbus Dispatch mail survey usually predict
> > elections correctly. The problem is that we can only hope that the
> > fatal correlation is not present.
> >
> > The classic case is the Literary Digest poll. It did okay until
> > FDR's New Deal coalition made social class correlate with party
> > choice. Before that their sample of auto owners and telephone
> > subscribers predicted elections well enough.
> >
> >
> > =====
> > Philip Meyer, Knight Chair in Journalism Voice: 919 962-4085
> > CB 3365 Howell Hall Fax: 919 962-1549
> > University of North Carolina Cell: 919 906-3425
> > Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365 http://www.unc.edu/~pmeyer
> > =====
> >
> > On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Robert D. Putnam wrote:
> >
> > > Date: Thu, 01 Apr 1999 10:59:02 -0500
> > > From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
> > > Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu
> > > To: aapornet@usc.edu
> > > Cc: Steve Yonish <styonish@hbs.edu>
> > > Subject: Re: looking for a reference
> > >
> > > I fear this may sound too much like self-promotion, especially for
> > > a newbie in this group, but in a paper to be given at AAPOR in St.
> > > Pete, Steve Yonish and I will present [what we believe to be]
> > > substantial and surprising evidence that "self-selected" (i.e.,
> > > low response rate) national samples can match even the very best
> > > available random (i.e., high response rate) national samples on a
> > > very broad range of topics. As others have said in this thread,
> > > the real issue is not *low* response rate, but *biased* response
> > > rate. Steve and I argue that all of us (me included) have too
> > > often assumed those are identical.
> > >
> > >
> > > I'd be grateful to learn of other empirical studies that have
> > > systematically examined the effects of varying response rates.

> > >
> > >
> > > Bob
> > >
> > >
> > >
> > > Robert D. Putnam
> > >
> > > Kennedy School of Government
> > >
> > > Harvard University
> > >
> > > <<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>>
> > >
>
>

>From mkshares@mcs.net Fri Apr 2 06:26:33 1999
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by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id GAA04369 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 06:26:32 -0800
(PST)
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Kitten.mcs.com (8.8.7/8.8.2) with ESMTP id IAA23648 for <aapornet@usc.edu>;
Fri, 2 Apr 1999 08:26:28 -0600 (CST)
Message-ID: <37047F2D.B930C81F@mcs.net>
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 08:26:25 +0000
From: Nick Panagakis <mkshares@mcs.net>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.5 (Macintosh; I; PPC)
X-Accept-Language: en
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: looking for a reference
References: <006501be79fe\$1b929d40\$dldbffea9@uranus>
<37033D9C.25F5B02D@mcs.net>
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I want to expand on my earlier comments below.

I agree with many of the other comments on this issue - especially Phil Meyer's observation that low response rate bias is a particular problem when the bias correlates with whatever we are measuring.

I believe low response rate bias becomes a particular problem when a SINGLE ISSUE is being measured - such as call-in polls which are typically limited to a single issue and ask just a few questions due to limited time. They are subject to the bias of self-selection as in the CBS poll example I described below. (I published an article on this CBS experiment in 1992 which is available by fax.)

Speculatively, other examples of single issue call-in polls which productively attract more respondents on one side of an issue than the other are: abortion, Clinton, U.S. military involvement in the Balkans. I think we can all predict which side of these issues would be overstated in a self-selected sample.

On the other hand, non-response bias may be mitigated in MULTI-ISSUE polls asking MANY questions - when the choice of whether or not to respond does not rest on how strongly you feel about a single subject. This includes exit polls - the subject of the Edelman/Merkle analysis - which cover many election contests and related issues.

The Tribune CEO poll described below covered a variety of issues, from the economy to current business issues which I can't talk specifically about now. We even said something like "we tried to avoid any questions of a sensitive nature - but if you find one, just skip it". Despite this suggestion to not respond, our no answers did not exceed 2 on any one question.

The foregoing discussion does not mean, however, that we would be happy with a response rate under 50%, just that what little non-response we had, 31%, did not bias results. Nor does it mean that self-selected samples should be used generally - only in special cases when high response can be expected.

So I think Meyer hit the nail on the head about correlation between non-response bias and the survey subject.

So, I think there should be some analysis of single-issue vs. multi-issue self-selected sample poll bias using random sample survey outcomes as the standard as CBS did below. The outcome of the Edelman/Merkle analysis will not apply to all cases of non-response.

Nick Panagakis wrote:

- > Given the apparent absence of any references on this subject, why
- > don't you try this:
- >
- > A "voluntary", or the term we usually see, "self-selected" sample, is
- > not the issue. The real issue is a non-random sample coupled with a
- > low response rate. When the term "self-selected" is used, I believe a
- > low response rate is always assumed.
- >
- > As you all know, a low response rate regardless of sample method

> raises the question of how non-respondents may differ from
> respondents. When respondents volunteer or select themselves in a low
> response rate survey, the question is how the few people motivated to
> do so may differ from the many who were not motivated to respond.
>
> As an aside, my observation is that people dissatisfied with the
> status quo are more motivated to respond. One example: In early 1992
> when CBS conducted a random sample survey of a 1,000 while over
> 100,000 viewers participated in a call-in poll during a show about the
> economy, viewers calling in were far more negative toward George Bush
> and his handling of the economy, far more likely to be financially
> worse off than four years ago, etc., etc. I am sure you have noticed
> this same bias in call-in "polls" (although here, demographic and
> other variables are also factors). The same argument could be extended
> to callers to talk radio shows, MSNBC's internet polls, etc.
>
> We just finished a fax poll of CEOs at 100 of Chicago area's leading
> companies for the Tribune. We got 69 replies. Of course they
> volunteered to respond - but with a 69% response rate, the fact that
> they volunteered is a non-issue. After all, there is even a voluntary
> element to respondents to random sample/multi call-back survey; i.e.,
> respondents who did not refuse to participate.
>
>
> "H. Stuart Elway" wrote:
>
>> Colleagues: I am looking for a reference to convince a
>> particularly stubborn client that no matter how many people
>> participate in a voluntary poll, he will not have "scientific" nor
>> "statistically reliable" nor projectable data. Any reference or
>> quote or advice will be appreciated. Thank you. Stuart Elway
>> Research, Inc. 206/ 264-1500
>

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<!doctype html public "-//w3c//dtd html 4.0 transitional//en"> <html> <body  
bgcolor="#FFFFFF"> I want to expand on my earlier comments below. <p>I agree  
with many of the other comments on this issue - especially Phil Meyer's  
observation that low response rate bias is a particular problem when the  
bias correlates with whatever we are measuring. <p>I believe low response  
rate bias becomes a particular problem when a SINGLE ISSUE is being measured  
&nbsp; such as&nbsp; call-in polls which are typically limited to a single  
issue and ask just a few questions due to limited time. They are subject to  
the bias of self-selection as in the CBS poll example I described below. (I  
published an article on this CBS experiment in 1992 which is available by  
fax.) <p>Speculatively, other examples of single issue call-in polls which  
productively attract more respondents on one side of an issue than the other
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no matter how many people participate in a voluntary poll, he will not have "scientific" nor "statistically reliable" nor projectable data. Any reference or quote or advice will be appreciated. Thank you.Stuart ElwayElway Research, Inc.
206/264-1500</blockquote></blockquote>

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>From mcohen@inet.ed.gov Fri Apr 2 06:32:13 1999
Received: from inet.ed.gov (inet.ed.gov [165.224.217.64])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id GAA05420 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 06:32:11 -0800
(PST)
Received: from localhost (mcohen@localhost)
by inet.ed.gov (8.9.3/8.9.3) with ESMTP id JAA09675;
Fri, 2 Apr 1999 09:32:29 -0500 (EST)
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 09:32:28 -0500 (EST)
From: "Michael P. Cohen" <mcohen@inet.ed.gov>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
cc: Steve Yonish <styonish@hbs.edu>
Subject: Re: Reply to Jim Beniger
In-Reply-To: <3.0.32.19990401171436.0091aec0@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
Message-ID: <Pine.GS0.4.10.9904020851280.6050-100000@inet.ed.gov>
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On Thu, 1 Apr 1999, Robert D. Putnam wrote:

>
> [snip] ... so here's a preview of what we say. We shall report not
> merely that one-shot frequencies are the same between "low" and "high"
> response rate samples, but that this is consistently true in annual
> surveys over a quarter century and across a dozen different domains
> (church attendance; military service; leisure time usage; attitudes to
> feminism, abortion, pot, guns, and communism; economic expectations;
> "post-material" values, etc.)

This is contrary to my own experience. Do you do a weight adjustment? Typically there is, for example, an under-representation of young Black males that would affect, say, your survey on military service.

> Moreover, we shall report that it is
> statistically impossible to distinguish the parameters (regression
> coefficients) linking each of those outcome variables to a dozen
> demographic characteristics simultaneously;

> in other words, one would come to precisely the same conclusions from
> the two samples about what goes with what at a deep level of analysis.

This would not be too surprising if you have a rich set of regression variables that "explain" the non-response.

> The odds that all this could happen by chance are vanishingly small,
> unlike your [Jim Beniger's] stopped clock.

You are arguing that the data are missing at random. What I, and I think Jim Beniger, find missing is a proof of this.

>
> Our argument will be not that folks in this business should ignore
> response rates and sampling, of course,...

But good non-response follow-up can be costly. You do seem to be making it harder to justify the expense.

> but that it may be wrong to diss
> the results of low-response-rate surveys without more careful
> examination.

I agree here.

> Another way of putting this is that among all the various sources of
> error in surveys, low response rates may not be as damaging as some of
> the others. We intend to follow Andy Kohut's lead in trying to
> specify the circumstances under which response rates do and do not
> bias results. Given global trends in response rates, I thought this
> might seem a hopeful and even useful approach.

>
> But maybe Steve and I have missed something, so we look forward to the
> debate. :-)
>

Michael P. Cohen phone 202-219-1917
National Center for Education Statistics fax 202-219-2061
555 New Jersey Avenue NW #408 Internet mcohen@inet.ed.gov
Washington DC 20208-5654 USA

>From kdonelan@hsph.harvard.edu Fri Apr 2 08:51:15 1999
Received: from hsph.harvard.edu (hsph.harvard.edu [128.103.75.21])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTTP
id IAA27664 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 08:51:14 -0800
(PST)

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by hsph.harvard.edu (8.8.8+Sun/8.8.8) with ESMTTP id LAA02329

for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 11:51:16 -0500 (EST)
Message-ID: <3704F5D3.7707ADDB@hsph.harvard.edu>
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 11:52:35 -0500
From: Karen Donelan <kdonelan@hsph.harvard.edu>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.05 [en] (Win95; I)
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: more on response rate and data quality
References: <3.0.32.19990401171436.0091aec0@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=iso-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable

In the spirit of shameless self-promotion, note that Craig Hill, Marty Frankel and I are presenting a paper in a miscellaneous methods section on Sat at 1:45 which reports on a randomization of a youngest male/oldest female respondent selection approach versus most recent birthday in an RDD survey. We'll look at level of effort, response/completion rates, respondent demographics and comparative survey responses for the two approaches for a study where we worked 17,000 cases.

Karen Donelan
Harvard School of Public Health

Robert D. Putnam wrote:

> At 12:35 PM 4/1/99 -0800, Jim Beninger wrote:
>
> >The two words "can match" hang heavy in your brief message. Even the
> >stopped clock, after all, is precisely correct twice every day, until
> >=
the
> >end of time, no matter on what time the clock happens to have
> >stopped.=

>
> I agree with much that you say, Jim. I am, of course, not arguing that
> =
"scientific surveys" are a waste of resources. On our specific arguments, I suppose I should simply say "read our paper."
>
> However, your "stopped clock" metaphor stung as perhaps slightly
> unfair=
, so here's a preview of what we say. We shall report not merely that one-shot frequencies are the same between "low" and "high" response rate samples, but that this is consistently true in annual surveys over a quarter-century and across a dozen different domains (church attendance; military service; leisure time usage; attitudes to feminism, abortion, pot, guns, and communism; economic expectations; "post-material" values, etc.) Moreover, we shall report that it is statistically impossible to distinguish the parameters (regression coefficients) linking each of those outcome v=

variables to a dozen demographic characteristics simultaneously; in other words, one would come to precisely the same conclusions from the two samples about what goes with what at a deep level of analysis. The odds that all this could happen by chance are vanishingly small, unlike your stopped clock.

>
> Our argument will be not that folks in this business should ignore response rates and sampling, of course, but that it may be wrong to dismiss the results of low-response-rate surveys without more careful examination. Another way of putting this is that among all the various sources of error in surveys, low response rates may not be as damaging as some of the others. We intend to follow Andy Kohut's lead in trying to specify the circumstances under which response rates do and do not bias results. Given global trends in response rates, I thought this might seem a hopeful and even useful approach.

>
> But maybe Steve and I have missed something, so we look forward to the debate. :-)

>
> Best,
>
> Bob
>
> Robert D. Putnam
> Kennedy School of Government
> Harvard University
> <<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>

>From salthaus@uiuc.edu Fri Apr 2 09:06:58 1999
Received: from mx1.cso.uiuc.edu (mx1.cso.uiuc.edu [128.174.5.37])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id JAA02753 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 09:06:56 -0800
(PST)
Received: from asbestos.spcomm.uiuc.edu (asbestos.spcomm.uiuc.edu
[128.174.166.160])
by mx1.cso.uiuc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8) with SMTP id LAA19529
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 11:06:25 -0600 (CST)
Message-Id: <3.0.1.32.19990402110440.0129ea50@staff.uiuc.edu>
X-Sender: salthaus@staff.uiuc.edu
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 3.0.1 (32)
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 11:04:40 -0600
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Scott Althaus <salthaus@uiuc.edu>
Subject: Nonresponse Rates and Nonresponse Bias
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"

I am in complete agreement with the concerns Jim Beniger posted on AAPORNET, and I thank him for stating his position so eloquently. My question is, What is going on here? How can it be that the best minds in opinion polling seem so ready to give up on the only statistically reliable method to gather data on the attitudes of populations? I agree with others who have responded on this topic that the important issue is response bias, not response rates, but surely the two must be related at least some of the time in a meaningful way.

I fear that the systematically increasing nonresponse rates we all know so well may be inclining otherwise solid researchers to become overly dismissive of the nonresponse problem. Obviously a tremendous amount of money is at stake for many survey practitioners, who are professionally invested in the method, and I can imagine that these high stakes might encourage dissonance-reducing reactions to the nonresponse problem. Given that there is as yet no solid evidence to allay historical concerns about nonresponse bias (the Pew study perhaps being one exception), I am increasingly amazed that the lessons of the Literary Digest fiasco are being lost on the current generation of survey researchers.

Stranger still, here I am saying all of this while remaining skeptical of the notion that opinion polling can be casually equated with the larger concept of public opinion! In spite of such reservations, which primarily apply to the uses of opinion surveys in the political process rather than the soundness of the method itself, I remain convinced of the utility and value of scientific, random-probability survey data. When a method's constructive critics start becoming its stauncher defenders, something must be rotten in the state of Denmark. Go figure.

Scott Althaus

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-----  
Scott Althaus                               Mail: Dept. of Speech Comm.  
Assistant Professor                         244 Lincoln Hall  
Depts. of Speech Communication              702 S. Wright St.  
and Political Science                       Urbana, IL 61801  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign    Office:(217) 333-8968  
                                             Fax: (217) 244-1598  
-----
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>From rhickson@monmouth.com Fri Apr 2 10:37:58 1999  
Received: from shell.monmouth.com (shell.monmouth.com [205.231.236.9])  
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP  
id KAA06968 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 10:37:56 -0800  
(PST)  
Received: from rachel (tr-ppp18.monmouth.com [209.191.24.50])  
by shell.monmouth.com (8.9.0/8.9.0) with SMTP id NAA26204  
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 13:37:44 -0500 (EST)  
Message-ID: <37050F89.1BDE@monmouth.com>  
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 13:42:17 -0500  
From: Rachel Hickson <rhickson@monmouth.com>  
X-Mailer: Mozilla 2.01 (Win95; I)
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MIME-Version: 1.0

To: aapornet@usc.edu

Subject: Re: Job Opportunity - Washington DC area

References: <19f81daf.2436608b@aol.com>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

>
> MAXIMUS, a consulting firm that specializes in providing services to
> federal, state, and local governments, seeks a full-time research
> assistant/associate to provide data programming and statistical
> support on state-level welfare reform evaluation projects. The
> candidate will be responsible for merging administrative data,
> developing longitudinal datasets from cross-sectional data, developing
> tickler files to support survey research, and processing data to
> support statistical analysis. Familiarity with the areas of welfare
> reform, child welfare, and child support enforcement are a plus.
>
> The candidate should have at least two years of experience using SPSS
> or SAS in a research or consulting environment; course work alone will
> not be sufficient. However, MAXIMUS is a SPSS shop. The salary range
> for this position is \$35-45k, depending on experience. The ideal
> candidate will
> possess:
>
> o two years experience working in a research or consulting
environment,
> preferably with a Master's Degree with a quantitative focus;
> o strong experience in managing, processing, and analyzing data
using
> SPSS for Windows; this includes knowledge of SPSS procedural
> statements, ability to develop and debug syntax, and familiarity with
> various types of report formats;
> o ability to program another PC database, such as Access, Paradox,
or
> Fox Pro;
> o familiarity with data analysis and statistical analysis using SPSS
or
> other statistical package;
> o good interpersonal skills to conduct site visits;
> o good organizational skills to manage multiple tasks;
> o excellent writing skills; and
> o strong self-motivation to excel in a fast-paced environment.
>
> MAXIMUS is an excellent employer offering:
> o a congenial, non-smoking office environment;
> o career growth; and
> o a comprehensive benefits package, including 401k (with matching
> corporate contributions) and Flexible Benefits Account (Section 125)
> plans.

>
> FAX or mail cover letter and resume to (no phone calls):
>
> R. Bleimann, Ph.D.
> 7927 Jones Branch Drive, Suite 600 S
> McLean, VA 22102
> FAX: (703) 827-2641
>
> Check out our web site!! www.maxinc.com
>From robinson@bss1.umd.edu Fri Apr 2 11:34:32 1999
Received: from oacs (grpwise.bsos.umd.edu [129.2.168.56])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
id LAA25847 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 11:34:21 -0800
(PST)
Received: from bss1.umd.edu
by oacs; Fri, 02 Apr 1999 14:33:33 -0500
Received: from LEFRAK/SpoolDir by bss1.umd.edu (Mercury 1.21);
2 Apr 99 14:33:33 +1100
Received: from SpoolDir by LEFRAK (Mercury 1.21); 2 Apr 99 14:33:17 +1100
From: "John Robinson" <robinson@bss1.umd.edu>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 14:33:12 EDT
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
Subject: Re: Reply to Jim Beninger
CC: styonish@hbs.edu (Steve Yonish)
In-reply-to: <3.0.32.19990401171436.0091aec0@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
X-mailer: Pegasus Mail for Windows (v2.54)
Message-ID: <656D12910EE@bss1.umd.edu>

Bob. Sorry I missed you at your talk at College Park. Hope to meet up at AAPOR if not before.

If you're looking for a reason to go with higher response rates, you should check my review in POQ 1989, 55, p397-414, where there are consistent 15-20 point differences in a low response rate vs. Census Bureau survey -- that are not explained by other sloppy data collection and analytic work done by the low response rate firm.

>From ratledge@UDel.Edu Fri Apr 2 12:06:51 1999
Received: from copland.udel.edu (copland.udel.edu [128.175.13.92])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id MAA08333 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 12:06:35 -0800
(PST)
Received: from murphy2.udel.edu (exchange.chep.udel.edu [128.175.63.18])
by copland.udel.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8) with SMTP id PAA04138
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 15:06:41 -0500 (EST)
Received: by murphy2.udel.edu with SMTP (Microsoft Exchange Server Internet Mail Connector Version 4.0.994.63)
id <01BE7D1C.03763F70@murphy2.udel.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 15:18:08

-0500

Message-ID: <c=US%a=%p=CUAPP%l=MURPHY2-990402201807Z-3614@murphy2.udel.edu>
From: "Ratledge, Edward" <ratledge@UDel.Edu>
To: "'aapornet@usc.edu'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: RE: Nonresponse Rates and Nonresponse Bias
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 15:18:07 -0500
X-Mailer: Microsoft Exchange Server Internet Mail Connector Version
4.0.994.63

I agree completely. The problem is that we never know whether the sample that has responded is random or not. It is conceivable that a sample with a 10% reponse rate could be random. However we have no way of knowing. The higher the response rates get, we feel more comfortable i.e 70, 80, 90%, the lower the probability of bias. If we can't say that it is indeed random then the whole concept of inferential statistics is in trouble. We can't really say what the precision of the survey is i.e., how close to the population mean we have come. For that reason, we will continue to use 15-20 callbacks, 2nd refusals, replicates, zero bank numbers, time of day strategies and all those other things we have learned. I guess you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Scott Althaus [SMTP:salthaus@uiuc.edu]
>Sent: Friday, April 02, 1999 12:05 PM
>To: aapornet@usc.edu
>Subject: Nonresponse Rates and Nonresponse Bias
>

> I am in complete agreement with the concerns Jim Beniger posted on
>AAPORNET, and I thank him for stating his position so eloquently. My
>question is, What is going on here? How can it be that the best minds
>in opinion polling seem so ready to give up on the only statistically
>reliable method to gather data on the attitudes of populations? I agree
>with others who have responded on this topic that the important issue
>is response bias, not response rates, but surely the two must be
>related at least some of the time in a meaningful way.

> I fear that the systematically increasing nonresponse rates we all
>know so well may be inclining otherwise solid researchers to become
>overly dismissive of the nonresponse problem. Obviously a tremendous
>amount of money is at stake for many survey practitioners, who are
>professionally invested in the method, and I can imagine that these
>high stakes might encourage dissonance-reducing reactions to the
>nonresponse problem. Given that there is as yet no solid evidence to
>allay historical concerns about nonresponse bias (the Pew study perhaps
>being one exception), I am increasingly amazed that the lessons of the
>Literary Digest fiasco are being lost on the current generation of survey
researchers.

> Stranger still, here I am saying all of this while remaining skeptical

>of the notion that opinion polling can be casually equated with the
>larger concept of public opinion! In spite of such reservations, which

subjects we've found variability on attitudinal questions can be quite large between samples, so we wouldn't consider using this approach to measure attitudes. However, as a qualitative tool, on our subjects we have found that people across demographic groups respond and react in a similar way when examining concepts, messages, advertisements, etc., and for this purpose it has proven quite useful.

Perhaps if \$ is an issue, a small quota sample is a better-than-nothing alternative, and more reliable than focus groups for getting a sense of weights. I guess it depends on what is at stake, the purpose of the study. If the data is to be used to make important public policy or business decisions where an accurate measure of opinion is important, stick with the tested and true methods. And use qualitative methods where they work best.

Mark Richards, mark@bisconti.com

From: Scott Althaus
Sent: Friday, April 02, 1999 12:05 PM
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Nonresponse Rates and Nonresponse Bias

I am in complete agreement with the concerns Jim Beniger posted on AAPORNET, and I thank him for stating his position so eloquently. My question is, What is going on here? How can it be that the best minds in opinion polling seem so ready to give up on the only statistically reliable method to gather data on the attitudes of populations? I agree with others who have responded on this topic that the important issue is response bias, not response rates, but surely the two must be related at least some of the time in a meaningful way. I fear that the systematically increasing nonresponse rates we all know so well may be inclining otherwise solid researchers to become overly dismissive of the nonresponse problem. Obviously a tremendous amount of money is at stake for many survey practitioners, who are professionally invested in the method, and I can imagine that these high stakes might encourage dissonance-reducing reactions to the nonresponse problem. Given that there is as yet no solid evidence to allay historical concerns about nonresponse bias (the Pew study perhaps being one exception), I am increasingly amazed that the lessons of the Literary Digest fiasco are being lost on the current generation of survey researchers. Stranger still, here I am saying all of this while remaining skeptical of the notion that opinion polling can be casually equated with the larger concept of public opinion! In spite of such reservations, which primarily apply to the uses of opinion surveys in the political process rather than the soundness of the method itself, I remain convinced of the utility and value of scientific, random-probability survey data. When a method's constructive critics start becoming its stauncher defenders, something must be rotten in the state of Denmark. Go figure. Scott Althaus

```

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  Scott Althaus                               Mail: Dept. of Speech Comm.
  Assistant Professor                          244 Lincoln Hall
  Depts. of Speech Communication              702 S. Wright St.
  and Political Science                       Urbana, IL 61801
  University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign   Office:(217) 333-8968
                                               Fax: (217) 244-1598
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>From robert_putnam@harvard.edu Fri Apr  2 12:40:54 1999
Received: from top.monad.net (root@top.monad.net [204.97.16.3])
  by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTTP
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(PST)
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  Fri, 2 Apr 1999 15:40:26 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <3.0.32.19990402153949.00928c70@pop.fas.harvard.edu>
X-Sender: rputnam@pop.fas.harvard.edu
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 3.0 (32)
Date: Fri, 02 Apr 1999 15:40:30 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: "Robert D. Putnam" <robert_putnam@harvard.edu>
Subject: Re: Reply to Jim Beniger
Cc: styonish@hbs.edu (Steve Yonish)
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"

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At 09:32 AM 4/2/99 -0500, Michael P. Cohen wrote:

```

>This is contrary to my own experience. Do you do a weight adjustment?
>Typically there is, for example, an under-representation of young Black
>males that would affect, say, your survey on military service.

```

I've learned much for this discussion (including Cohen's thoughtful point-by-point response), and I propose to postpone further debate until St. Pete. However, I need to clarify two factual points about our work before clamming up for now (with apologies for taking up so much air time in the last 24 hours, particularly insofar as I am apparently, though out of ignorance, revisiting old theological debates).

First, our low-response-rate sample comes from what commercial pollsters term a "mail panel." (The archive has been generously made available by DDB Needham and originally gathered by Market Facts; N=85k.) In this technique, massive mailing lists are trolled by mail, inviting recipients to join a "panel" (NOT in the standard survey sense) of people who will respond to subsequent commercial inquiries. Roughly 1%-2% of those contacted in this way respond favorably, so that by conventional measures this is an extremely

low response rate, although the sample is weighted by a few standard demographics. In effect, this is a quota sample with very low response rates. Our conventional "high response rate" sample, by contrast, is the General Social Survey (c. 80% response rate, extreme methodological care, N=35k). So we're talking about enormous differences in response rate and thus enormous potential response bias.

Second, an important qualification: the low-response-rate sample is not entirely without bias. Given the way the sample is constructed, it excludes all respondents not literate in English and severely underrepresents the homeless and the highly mobile. One way of putting this is that the sample severely underrepresents the minority underclass and slightly underrepresents the very young. (Strictly speaking, these are sampling frame problems, not response rate problems, and they are not unique to mail panels, of course, but they are much more severe in this case.) So I am confident that this sample would be biased with respect to topics on which the underclass are "unusual" (education, certainly! mental health? drug usage? disposable income?), although we have found no such anomalies in the available questions (including military service). In short, this is definitely not a good sample for studies of Black poverty!

On the other hand, having been raised myself 35 years ago on the post-Literary Digest, post-1948 debates, and given the enormous difference in raw response rates (1%-2% vs. 80%), I had expected substantial bias even apart from the underclass problem. One can think of dozens of other ways in which the sample should be biased, as well. That, puzzlingly, is what we failed to find.

Michael P. Cohen added:

>But good non-response follow-up can be costly. You do seem to be
>making
>it harder to justify the expense.

I have not thought through the implications for survey design, since I'm a consumer, not a producer of surveys. However, assuming that our results hold up under scrutiny, one implication might be (given fixed resources) to shift resources marginally toward attacking other sources of error besides response rate.

Bob

Robert D. Putnam
Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

<<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguaro/>>

>From Mark@bisconti.com Fri Apr 2 13:54:13 1999

Received: from medusa.nei.org (medusa.nei.org [208.158.210.1])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTTP

id NAA19624 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 13:54:11 -0800
(PST)
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<aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 02 Apr 1999 16:52:32 -0500
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id <01BE7D27.A69790E0@mark-bri>; Fri, 2 Apr 1999 16:41:26 -0500
Message-Id: <01BE7D27.A69790E0@mark-bri>
From: Mark Richards <Mark@bisconti.com>
To: "'AAPORNET'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: RE: Reply to Jim Beniger
Date: Fri, 2 Apr 1999 16:41:25 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable

I believe Sid Groeneman at Market Facts presented a study at AAPOR a few =
years ago in which they compared the outcome from their panel samples to =
the outcome from randomly selected samples-don't remember the response =
rate. Sid can speak to this.

We used the Market Facts panel for longitudinal studies, comparing = opinion
changes of the same individuals over time. We found the panel = to be
slightly more favorable to the subject we were studying (nuclear = energy),
but we found that wasn't important for what we were = doing--gauging
advertising impact by comparing those who had seen the = ads to those who
had not. (Fascinating parts of the study for me: = individuals changed
their opinions over time but claimed not to have = done so; and there were
massive attitudinal changes that were masked = within the aggregate-we'd
come out with the same distributions, stable = over time, but they were
formed of different people.) Ann Bisconti and = Sid presented a paper on
this at AAPOR so