This is the USC listproc archive of aapornet messages for this entire month. It is one big message, just the way the USC archive stored it. You can search within this month with your browser's search function.

Turning this into individual messages that Listserv can index and sort means a lot of reformatting. We will do this as time permits. Meanwhile, the search function works, so we have as much functionality as before. New messages are of course automatically formatted correctly--See August & September 2002.

Some of the early months have been completed. Take a look at them for an idea of how AAPORNET got started. (Thanks, Jim!)

Shap Wolf
shap.wolf@asu.edu

Begin archive:

-------------- Archive aapornet, file log9811. 
Part 1/1, total size 1019718 bytes:

-------------- Cut here --------------
Colleagues,

Those who have some interest in the Minnesota gubernatorial race might be interested in checking the latest Minnesota Poll at http:\www.startribune.com.

Cheers.

Rob Daves, director
The Minnesota Poll
Star Tribune
425 Portland Av.
Minneapolis MN 55488
daves@startribune.com

About two months ago, Sid Kraus made a suggestion on AAPORNET that AAPOR gather its resources (both intellectual and financial) and put together a conference that brought the lessons learned from polls in Watergate to the attention of those who are grappling with today's impeachment debate.

The suggestion engendered much discussion on aapornet, and Council made it a priority. We felt a short, half-day session on the subject could be a service to journalists as well as a way of...
publicly staking AAPOR's claim as the appropriate source for understanding public opinion on this and other questions. Council felt strongly that in order to have an impact on the current debate, we needed to act quickly. So next Monday, November 9, as you may already know, AAPOR is co-sponsoring a breakfast discussion with the Media Studies Center. It will take place at the Newseum, just outside of Washington, and the Media Studies Center has already sent invitations to D.C. area journalists.

All AAPOR members are welcome. What follows is the official release and invitation.

This is by no means the full academic review of Watergate that many members envisioned in the aapornet discussions. But we think it is the first step necessary in order to make many of the important points about public opinion then and now to those journalists who may themselves shape elite and public opinion on the subject. We will be providing those who attend with information handouts, as well as a bibliography of public opinion reference sources then and now.

Here is the press release, and information about attending.

Thanks to all for their input.

Kathy Frankovic

MONDAY, NOV. 9, 1998 BREAKFAST DISCUSSION on POLLS AND SCANDAL, FROM WATERGATE TO CLINTON

Dear Colleague:

Poll after poll chronicles the public reaction to the unfolding impeachment investigation, with the numbers studied carefully on Capitol Hill and in the nation's newsrooms. The president's pollsters sample public opinion constantly as his defenders craft the next response.

The year is 1974, the scandal is Watergate and the president is Richard Nixon.
Fast-forward to 1998. The polls once again are playing a major role in the coverage of a scandal and the possible impeachment of a president.

Please join us on Monday, Nov. 9, when the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and the Media Studies Center will co-host a discussion that will provide new insights into the polls of Watergate and fresh analysis of the latest polls in the Clinton scandal. The session will present polling data from the scandals, current and past, and new perspectives on the interaction of polls and journalism.

Monday, Nov. 9, 1998
Breakfast 8:30 a.m.
Program 9 a.m.-12 noon
The Freedom Forum World Center
Rosslyn Metro Stop (orange line)
703-528-0800

AAPOR president Michael Kagay of The New York Times will host the discussion, which features a distinguished roster of the nation’s top pollsters (a program agenda is attached). The session will provide journalists with a wealth of data, public opinion history and current information that will be crucial to informed reporting on the coming impeachment hearings.

Kindly let us know whether you will be able to attend by faxing your interest to 212 317 6572 ... or sending an e-mail to kcollins@mediastudies.org.

Space for the session is limited.

Sincerely,

Lawrence McGill                     Michael Kagay
Media Studies Center                      The New York Times
AAPOR President

POLLS AND SCANDAL, FROM WATERGATE TO CLINTON
Monday, Nov. 9, 1998

8:30 a.m. Breakfast
9 a.m.  Panel I: Polling in the Watergate Era

Pollster Harry O'Neill will talk about polling he conducted for the Nixon White House in 1973 and 1974 at Opinion Research Corporation. David Moore of The Gallup Organization will trace the history of the extensive Gallup polls on Watergate. Cliff Zukin of Rutgers University, director of the Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll, will assess the lessons learned from polling in the Watergate era.

10:30 a.m.  Panel II: Politics and Polling: What Have We Learned?

CBS News pollster and AAPOR past-president Kathy Frankovic will analyze the latest public opinion polls on Clinton and the ongoing impeachment effort. Keating Holland of CNN will examine the exit polls from the Nov. 3 election. Phil Meyer of the University of North Carolina, author of Precision Journalism and past president of AAPOR, will discuss the importance of the polls in the current scandal.

This program is co-sponsored by The Media Studies Center and the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

The Media Studies Center, an operating program of The Freedom Forum since 1985, is devoted to improving understanding between the media and the public. Center programs bring journalists, scholars, media executives and the public together to examine the media's effects on society.

The Freedom Forum is a non-partisan international foundation dedicated to free press, free speech and free spirit for all people. The foundation pursues its priorities through conferences, educational activities, publishing, broadcasting, online services, fellowships, partnerships, training, research and other programs.

AAPOR is a national professional organization of more than 1,500 individuals who are producers and users of all kinds of survey research. They come from academic and commercial organizations, foundations and voluntary groups.
Hi All

Anyone have any suggestions for election news Web sites (votes and/or exit poll results) for Tues. night and after?

Thanks.

Hank Zucker
Creative Research Systems
makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good
http://www.surveysystem.com
mailto:surveys@wco.com
In response to Hans Zucker:

Try http://www.cnn.com

They will cover most everything one can think of. Also the NY TIMES or Washington Post.

Dick Halpern

At 08:48 AM 11/3/1998 -0800, you wrote:

> Hi All
> Anyone have any suggestions for election news Web sites (votes and/or exit poll results) for Tues. night and after?
> Thanks.
> Hank Zucker
> Creative Research Systems
> makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good
> http://www.surveysystem.com mailto:surveys@wco.com
>
The Research Triangle Institute, a leading contract research organization with offices located in the Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, the Washington, D.C., and Chicago, Illinois, areas currently has openings for mid- and senior-level Survey Specialists. These individuals will perform various survey research duties in accordance with their level of experience.

Mid-level Position - requires a B.S. or B.A. degree with a background in social science research methods, and 3+ years of post-graduate experience in survey research, research design, client interaction, budget development, cost control, data collection, report writing, presentation, and task management. Experience with sample surveys involving field or telephone data collection and with managing day-to-day activities of ongoing research studies is required. Activities include working with study collaborators to develop, implement, and monitor research designs; overseeing data collection operations (field or phone); documenting study procedures; implementing quality control procedures; scheduling and delegating of study tasks; preparing and presenting research reports to clients. Strong writing and oral communications, interpersonal, word processing, organizing, and computer spreadsheet skills are required. Periodic overnight travel is required. Marketing and business proposal experience are a plus.

Senior-Level Position - requires B.S. or B.A. degree with a background in social science research methods, plus 10+ years of experience serving as a project director, principal investigator, or in other senior management or scientific roles on research contracts with Federal agencies. Must also have experience in contract research and program management and have a demonstrated ability to deal with clients and manage field study staff, other survey researchers, and computer applications and design staff. Should also be experienced in working closely with staff across a wide variety of substantive and technical fields (epidemiologists, survey
Experience in managing day-to-day activities of ongoing research studies. Activities include working with study collaborators to develop, implement, and monitor research designs; overseeing data collection operations (field or phone); documenting study procedures; implementing quality control procedures; scheduling and delegating of study tasks; preparing and presenting research reports to clients.

Regularly make positive contributions to business development and marketing activities, including planning for research programs, generating research in existing and new market and technical areas, marketing multi-disciplinary concepts. Contribute to and direct the preparation, presentation, and follow-up of research proposals.

Apply on a broad basis principles, theories, and concepts to a scientific field or specialty, and apply a working knowledge of related disciplines. Work on a wide range of problems requiring the use of creative and imaginative thinking. Have gained recognition from peers and clients for technical expertise. Frequently author articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Initiate and carry out appropriate self-development efforts.

Strong oral and written communications skills, project management, administrative abilities, ability to work collaboratively on large project teams, and the ability to manage multiple tasks are essential. Periodic overnight travel is required.

RTI offers competitive salary and excellent benefits.

Interested applicants may submit resume by email to dkp@rti.org, or by mail to:

Mr. Kirk Pate
Research Triangle Institute
PO Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
At 08:48 AM 11/3/98 -0800, Hank Zucker wrote:
...
>Anyone have any suggestions for election news Web sites (votes and/or
>exit poll results) for Tues. night and after?
>
If you want to follow on the web, here are a few links:
http://www.evote.com/
http://www.ncsl.org/statevote98/
Enjoy, M.
>From mkuechle@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu Tue Nov  3 09:47:28 1998
Received: from asa1.asan.com (asa1.asan.com [207.113.83.33]) by
asa1.asan.com (NTMail
3.03.0017/1.aehb) with ESMTP id oao68758 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 3 Nov 1998 12:47:23 -0500
X-Sender: mkuechle@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Pro Version 4.0.2
Date: Tue, 03 Nov 1998 12:46:56 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Manfred Kuechler <mkuechle@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu>
Subject: Re: Election news sites? (PS)
At 08:48 AM 11/3/98 -0800, Hank Zucker wrote:
...
>Anyone have any suggestions for election news Web sites (votes and/or
>exit poll results) for Tues. night and after?
>
And don't forget: http://www.harrisblackintl.com/electionpollresults/

This is the experimental web poll (an availability sample of sorts). Results
for the first two waves
October 19-21 and October 29-31 are already available. The third wave is
currently running and data
collection will end "Tuesday, Nov 4, 11:59pm" -- whenever this may be. Maybe
they get it right, who
knows. Currently, in the second wave, they have Schumer over d'Amato (50.4 to
46.2 percent) in the NY
Senate race. "Statistically significant" with about 2,200 respondents -- if
it
was a random sample.

In Germany, "Wahlstreet" (a mock stock exchange for trading parties, capital
limited to DM 10 per
participant) did better than most professional organizations in predicting
the
final low result for the
CDU .... Not that this approach makes any (conceptual) sense to me, but maybe
scientific sampling has
run its course with respect to voting behavior these days.

>From altschul@Oswego.EDU Tue Nov  3 12:47:15 1998
Received: from oswego-gw.oswego.edu (oswego-g1.oswego.edu [129.3.22.1])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id MAA02069 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 3 Nov 1998 12:47:06 -0800
(PST)
From: altschul@Oswego.EDU
Received: from Altschul.oswego.edu (altschul.oswego.edu [129.3.50.36])
    by oswego-gw.oswego.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8) with SMTP id PAA04775
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 3 Nov 1998 15:46:51 -0500 (EST)
Date: Tue, 3 Nov 1998 15:48:47 -0500 (Eastern Standard Time)
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: Election news sites?
In-Reply-To: <00f501be0749$c79e4d00$ec58fea9@compaq>
Message-ID: <Pine.WNT.3.96.981103154704.-346993B-100000@Altschul.oswego.edu>
X-X-Sender: altschul@oswego.oswego.edu
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
All the networks have websites with updates on election news and polls. I found today's on ABC particularly interesting as they included (if you have Real Player software) a selection of campaign commercials. Bruce Altschuler SUNY Oswego

On Tue, 3 Nov 1998, Hank Zucker wrote:

> Hi All
> Anyone have any suggestions for election news Web sites (votes and/or exit poll results) for Tues. night and after?
> Thanks.
>
> Hank Zucker
> Creative Research Systems
> makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good
> http://www.surveysystem.com mailto:surveys@wco.com
>
>Can't come this year. Sorry. Me and family are fine. Hope all is well with you. Have fun; I'll miss seeing you and I'll miss MAPOR. Let me know how it
goes; how you are, etc. Donna

--
Leo G. Simonetta
leos@christa.unh.edu
UNH Survey Center

--
End of Original Message

> From sgoold@unm.edu Tue Nov  3 19:29:23 1998
Received: from kitsune.swcp.com (swcp.com [198.59.115.2])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id TAA11193 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 3 Nov 1998 19:29:22 -0800
(PST)
Received: from [204.134.5.194] (dpm4-28.swcp.com [204.134.5.221]) by
kitsune.swcp.com (8.8.8/1.2.3)
with SMTP id UAA27658 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 3 Nov 1998 20:29:17 -0700
(MST)
Message-Id: <v02130503b2657c8d5ec0@[204.134.5.194]>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Date: Tue, 3 Nov 1998 20:46:52 -0700
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: sgoold@unm.edu (Scott Goold)
Subject: a bit of humor

Spread this around to everyone except for John Glenn:

When John Glenn returns from space, everybody dress in ape costumes.

Pass it on.

*******************************************************************************
Stan Glantz

*******************************************************************************
Scott Goold, Ph.D. (abd)
University of New Mexico
505.293.2504
Web page @ < www.unm.edu/~sgoold >

"I Can't Accept Not Trying"
*******************************************************************************

> From mkuechle@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu Wed Nov  4 07:49:12 1998
Received: from asa1.asan.com (asa1.asan.com [206.20.111.11])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
Now that the results are in, it's even more interesting to look at how the web polls did. Check the Harris/Excite polls at: http://www.harrisblackintl.com/electionpollresults/

I think the second round (collected October 29-31) is the most interesting. As of this morning, the results for the third round are not posted yet, but since this mixes responses from before and after voting it will be difficult to draw conclusions anyway.

Their score card does not look bad, they got all the critical races right (using the standard difference of proportions test -- if you go with the "hypothetical universe" defense of using it with non-random samples):
Schumer in NY, Boxer in CA, Moseley-Brown (def) in IL, Faircloth (def) in NC

All conventional polls I have seen did not call at least the first two races ("too close"). On the other, Moseley-Brown did better (relatively speaking) than what the web poll suggested. Also Harris/Excite did not get enough volunteers in a number of states, so the close Senate races in Kentucky and Nevada are not included.

Still, not a bad score -- given how much cheaper web polls are (especially after procedural routines are developed). Certainly disconcerting for the statistical purist. But, then,

Prof. Noelle-Neumann
claims that her institute has provided the best election predictions in Germany
(ever since WW II) --
as someone on this list recently reminded us -- and the IfD has used quota
sampling for the most part.

Quo vadis, political polling?

>From abider@earthlink.net Wed Nov 4 13:56:48 1998
Received: from avocet.prod.itd.earthlink.net (avocet.prod.itd.earthlink.net
[207.217.120.50])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id NAA12967 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 13:56:46 -0800
(PST)
Received: from alvbynys (sdn-ar-002dcwashP274.dialsprint.net [168.191.22.75])
    by avocet.prod.itd.earthlink.net (8.8.7/8.8.5) with SMTP id NAA27431
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 13:56:40 -0800 (PST)
Message-ID: <000d01be083e$28411120$4b16bfa8@alvbynys>
Reply-To: "Albert Biderman" <abider@earthlink.net>
From: "Albert Biderman" <abider@earthlink.net>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Blair Students Predict
Date: Wed, 4 Nov 1998 16:57:43 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
    boundary="----=_NextPart_000_000A_01BE0814.3D6BDDC0"
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.2106.4
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.2106.4

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

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Content-Type: text/plain;
    charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: base64

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ckJvcyBieSBwbmcVkaWN0aW5nIERJbW9jcmcF0aWm6h591c2UgZ2FpbmFib2xvcmVkaWN0aW5nIERJ
byb2J3sZW0gdG8GZVhcbCB3aXRoLCBJb2J3aW5nOj9iMy50cmFtb29yIHFib2xvcmVkaWN0aW5nIERJ
byb2J3sZW0gdG8GZVhcbCB3aXRoLCBJb2J3aW5nOj9iMy50cmFtb29yIHFib2xvcmVkaWN0aW5nIEJp
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Y29uZ2xlIHNheWJsIHNheWJsIHNheWJsIHNheWJskm91bnQgb2xvcmVkaWN0aW5nIERJbyb2J3sZW0g
Y29uZ2xlIHNheWJsIHNheWJsIHNheWJsIHNheWJskm91bnQgb2xvcmVkaWN0aW5nIERJbyb2J3sZW0g
Y29uZ2xlIHNheWJsIHNheWJsIHNheWJsIHNheWJskm91bnQgb2xvcmVkaWN0aW5nIERJbyb2J3sZW0g
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--------=_NextPart_000_000A_01BE0814.3D6BDDC0
Content-Type: text/html;
    charset="iso-8859-1"
Subject: job opening at Johns Hopkins University
Date: Wed, 4 Nov 1998 23:41:11 -0500
Message-ID: <01be0876$067756c0$ee82accf@uymfdlvk>
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.71.1712.3
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.71.1712.3

--------=_NextPart_000_000A_01BE0814.3D6BDDC0--

>From kbogen@erols.com Wed Nov 4 20:41:14 1998
Received: from smtp3.erols.com (smtp3.erols.com [207.172.3.236]) by usc.edu (8.8.8.8/8) with ESMTP id UAA02904 for aapornet@usc.edu; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 20:41:14 -0800 (PST)
Received: from uymfdlvk (207-172-130-238.s238.tnt3.col.erols.com [207.172.130.238]) by smtp3.erols.com (8.8.8/8.8.5) with SMTP id XAA27177 for aapornet@usc.edu; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 23:41:11 -0500 (EST)
From: "Karen Bogen" <kbogen@erols.com>
To: aapornet@usc.edu

----------=__nextpart_000_000A_01BE0814.3D6BDDC0--

>From kbogen@erols.com Wed Nov 4 20:41:14 1998
Received: from smtp3.erols.com (smtp3.erols.com [207.172.3.236]) by usc.edu (8.8.8.8/8) with ESMTP id UAA02904 for aapornet@usc.edu; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 20:41:14 -0800 (PST)
Received: from uymfdlvk (207-172-130-238.s238.tnt3.col.erols.com [207.172.130.238]) by smtp3.erols.com (8.8.8/8.8.5) with SMTP id XAA27177 for aapornet@usc.edu; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 23:41:11 -0500 (EST)
From: "Karen Bogen" <kbogen@erols.com>
To: aapornet@usc.edu

----------=__nextpart_000_000A_01BE0814.3D6BDDC0--
Position Announcement

Organization:
The Johns Hopkins University

Position Title:
Project Manager/Associate Research Scientist

Position Description:
Manage key aspects of a four-year study of the effects of welfare reform laws on children and families.
Monitor on-going household surveys by Research Triangle Institute. Assist in questionnaire development and revision, preparation of reports, and presentation of study findings at meetings and conferences. Knowledge of the following: welfare policy, survey research methods, collection and statistical analysis of survey research data, interviewing low-income families and service providers.
Travel to field sites in Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio, and to RTI's headquarters in North Carolina.
Project Manager/Associate Research Scientist will work closely with Professors Andrew Cherlin and Robert Moffitt, Johns Hopkins University, with project based in Baltimore, MD.
Ph.D. or M.A.. Salary range is low to mid-40's, depending upon experience. Johns Hopkins University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action employer. We actively encourage women and minorities to apply. Submit application, including letter of interest and a current resume, to Dr. Andrew Cherlin, Department of Sociology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 21218.

Department of Sociology
Mergenthaler Hall
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Phone: 410 516 7632
Fax: 410 516 7590
cherlin@jhu.edu

From Krosnick.1@osu.edu Thu Nov 5 07:39:37 1998
Received: from mail4.uts.ohio-state.edu (root@mail4.uts.ohio-state.edu [128.146.214.33]) by usc.edu (8.8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id HAA12595 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 5 Nov 1998 07:39:36 -0800 (PST)
Received: from PC342.psy.ohio-state.edu (pc342.psy.ohio-state.edu...
For those interested, the Columbus Dispatch mail poll again out-performed its competitors in forecasting the Ohio Senate and Governor's races (and all other races as well). Here are the average errors for the two major races:

Columbus Dispatch: 0.5%
Ohio State University Survey Research Unit Telephone Poll: 3.5%
Harris/Excite Internet Poll: 2.4%

Here are the average errors for all races predicted by the organizations' final polls (6 for the Dispatch, 4 for OSU, 2 for Harris/Excite):

Columbus Dispatch: 1.8%
Ohio State University Survey Research Unit Telephone Poll: 5.3%
Harris/Excite Internet Poll: 2.4%
With reference to Mitofsky's poll review in this summer's POQ, how are these errors calculated? Best.

Peter

At 10:40 AM 11/5/98 -0500, you wrote:
> For those interested, the Columbus Dispatch mail poll again
> out-performed its competitors in forecasting the Ohio Senate and
> Governor's races (and all other races as well). Here are the average
> errors for the two major races:
> > Columbus Dispatch: 0.5%
> Ohio State University Survey Research Unit Telephone Poll: 3.5%
> Harris/Excite Internet Poll: 2.4%
> > Here are the average errors for all races predicted by the
> organizations' final polls (6 for the Dispatch, 4 for OSU, 2 for
> Harris/Excite):
> > Columbus Dispatch: 1.8%
> Ohio State University Survey Research Unit Telephone Poll: 5.3%
> Harris/Excite Internet Poll: 2.4%
> >
> Peter V. Miller
> Department of Communication Studies
> Northwestern University
> 1881 Sheridan Road, Room 12
> Evanston, IL 60208
> 847-491-5835
> 847-467-1171 (FAX)
p-miller@nwu.edu
> From beniger@rcf.usc.edu Thu Nov  5 11:16:12 1998
Received: from almaak.usc.edu (almaak.usc.edu [128.125.19.166])
  by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMT
  id LAA13441 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 5 Nov 1998 11:16:11 -0800
(PST)
Received: from localhost (beniger@localhost)
  by almaak.usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
  id LAA16582 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 5 Nov 1998 11:16:11 -0800
(PST)
Date: Thu, 5 Nov 1998 11:16:11 -0800 (PST)
From: James Beniger <beniger@rcf.usc.edu>
To: AAPORNET <aapornet@usc.edu>
CODA, Inc., has a position in its Durham, NC office for a Technical Director for a 7-year support services contract with the Epidemiology Branch (EB) of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). Candidates must have Ph.D. or equivalent in epidemiology or related field of health research and minimum 5 years of post-doctoral experience in conduct & management of complex health studies. Must be knowledgeable in all aspects of applied research methodology, including study design, field methodology, data mgt. & data analysis. Exp. in collecting interview and questionnaire data is essential, as is familiarity with state-of-the-art software for survey data collection and data mgt. Exp. in collecting biologic & environmental specimen data is highly desirable.

This is a senior-level mgt. position involving day-to-day technical direction of multiple projects with staff of 20 plus persons providing technical and managerial support to EB staff in all aspects of epi field work: study design; data collection through interviews, specimen collection and record abstracting; data handling and processing; and transporting and processing of biologic and environmental specimens. Individual will also provide general oversight to subcontractor staff of 10 to 12 programmers who provide data management and analysis support on projects conducted under the contract. FAX resume to ATT: Dept KS at 301 588 0417 or send to CODA, 1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 750, Silver Spring, MD, 20910, ATT: DEPT KS.

Doris Northrup
President, CODA, Inc.
coda89@aol.com or northrup@codares.com

*****

>From rhickson@monmouth.com Thu Nov  5 15:06:32 1998
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 PAA14307 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 5 Nov 1998 15:06:29 -0800
(PST)
Received: from rachel (tr-ppp13.monmouth.com [209.191.24.45]) by
shell.monmouth.com (8.8.5/8.7.3) with
SMTP id SAA26054 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 5 Nov 1998 18:05:46 -0500 (EST)
Message-ID: <36423083.127D@monmouth.com>
Date: Thu, 05 Nov 1998 18:10:59 -0500
From: Rachel Hickson <rhickson@monmouth.com>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 2.01 (Win95; I)
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: [Fwd: job opening at Johns Hopkins University]
Content-Type: message/rfc822
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Content-Disposition: inline

Received: from usc.edu (usc.edu [128.125.253.136]) by shell.monmouth.com
(8.8.5/8.7.3) with ESMTP id
XAA25911 for <rhickson@monmouth.com>; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 23:40:59 -0500 (EST)
Received: from usc.edu (localhost [127.0.0.1])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
id UAA02947; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 20:41:20 -0800 (PST)
Received: from smtp3.erols.com (smtp3.erols.com [207.172.3.236])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id UAA02904 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 20:41:14 -0800
(PST)
Received: from uymfdlvk (207-172-130-238.s238.tnt3.col.erols.com
[207.172.130.238])
    by smtp3_erols.com (8.8.8/8.8.5) with SMTP id XAA27177
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 4 Nov 1998 23:41:11 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <01be0876$067756c0$ee82accf@uymfdlvk>
Date: Wed, 4 Nov 1998 23:37:41 -0500
Reply-To: aapornet@usc.edu
Sender: owner-aapornet@usc.edu
Precedence: bulk
From: "Karen Bogen" <kbogen@erols.com>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: job opening at Johns Hopkins University
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
    charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Position Announcement

Organization:
The Johns Hopkins University

Position Title:
Project Manager/Associate Research Scientist

Position Description:
Manage key aspects of a four-year study of the effects of welfare reform laws on children and families.
Monitor on-going household surveys by Research Triangle Institute. Assist in questionnaire development and revision, preparation of reports, and presentation of study findings at meetings and conferences. Knowledge of the following: welfare policy, survey research methods, collection and statistical analysis of survey research data, interviewing low-income families and service providers.
Travel to field sites in Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio, and to RTI's headquarters in North Carolina.

Project Manager/Associate Research Scientist will work closely with Professors Andrew Cherlin and Robert Moffitt, Johns Hopkins University, with project based in Baltimore, MD.

Ph.D. or M.A.. Salary range is low to mid-40's, depending upon experience. Johns Hopkins University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action employer. We actively encourage women and minorities to apply. Submit application, including letter of interest and a current resume, to Dr. Andrew Cherlin, Department of Sociology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 21218.

Department of Sociology
Mergenthaler Hall
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland 21218
Phone: 410 516 7632
Fax: 410 516 7590
cherlin@jhu.edu
The posting announcing the time and place of this event mentioned two slightly different locations near the Rosslyn Metro station in Arlington, Virginia: the Newseum and the Freedom Forum. As far as I know, the correct location is the Freedom Forum, on the 22nd floor of 1101 Wilson Boulevard,

Rob Simmons
DMDC
1600 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22209

The following is brought to you courtesy of the Washington Evaluators and the Eastern Evaluation Research Society.
There is an immediate opening for an evaluator (Planner IV) in Delaware Health and Social Services' Division of Management Services.

The employee will provide training and practical skills development in conducting program evaluation to a small group of Department program managers. The training will combine both class sessions (on the topics of evaluation design, sampling methods, data collection, survey design and implementation, cost analysis, data analysis using statistical packages, and performance measurement) and hands-on technical assistance to staff who are evaluating health and social programs.

The ideal candidate will have skills in evaluation methodology and training, and knowledge of governmental programs.

This is a part-time (22.5 hours per week), temporary position (December 1, 1998 through June 30, 1999). The salary will be approximately $20.00 per hour. Since it is a temporary, part-time position, no benefits are included.

For more information, potential applicants should call Celeste Anderson at (302) 577-4633 or e-mail her at Canderson@State.de.us.

From jwerner@jwdp.com Thu Nov 5 18:34:16 1998
Received: from vger.vgernet.net (root@vgernet.net [205.219.186.1]) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id SAA25471 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 5 Nov 1998 18:34:15 -0800 (PST)
Received: from jwdp.com (plpm3-13.vgernet.net [207.51.117.13]) by vger.vgernet.net (8.8.8/8.8.5) with ESMTP id BAA07174 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 01:23:45 -0500 (EST)
Message-ID: <36426025.EBB47550@jwdp.com>
Date: Thu, 05 Nov 1998 21:34:13 -0500
From: Jan Werner <jwerner@jwdp.com>
Reply-To: jwerner@jwdp.com
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.5 [en] (Win98; U)
X-Accept-Language: en
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: AAPORNET <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: It only counts if you call it BEFORE the election
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Today's (11/5) NY Times special section on Tuesday's elections contains an article discussing the lack
of accuracy of the polls in predicting the NY Senate race titled: "The Polling: The Experts Examine Their Miscalculations" which may be read online at: http://www.nytimes.com/library/politics/camp/110598ny-polls.html

The article contains the following statement:

One of the final polls in the race, by Quinnipiac College, came closest to predicting the outcome, showing Schumer ahead by eight percentage points. Its pollsters credited the survey's accuracy to the fact that they were able to detect the late movement of undecided voters.

This sounds impressive, but the day before the election, Maurice Carroll, director of the Quinnipiac poll, was interviewed by Albany public radio station WAMC and was asked to call various state contests.

With respect to the NY senate race, he said:

"That one is just too close to call. If you put a gun to my head and told me to pick D'Amato or Schumer, I'd just have to say: 'Go ahead and pull the trigger.'"

Bang!

The NY Times article on the predictive value of preelection polls in NY raises the question of evaluation of results again. Although the polls were on target for Governor Pataki's big win, they were
far less accurate for the Senate and Attorney General races. Most picked Vacco by a big margin (the result was a virtual tie with Spitzer slightly ahead at the moment) while claiming that the Schumer-D'Amato race was too close to call. From the Times article and my own observations I would suggest some of the following reasons which people might wish to discuss:

1. One problem was less with the data than with the analysis. As another post mentioned, the Quinnipiac Poll came closest to the actual results but its analysis discounted the 8 point margin, stating it was too close to call. Other polls with smaller Schumer leads made the same statement.

2. Turnout seems to have confounded many of these surveys. Most apparently used some kind of filter but this year's results appear not wholly consistent with the past. Turnout in NY City, especially among minority voters was higher than expected, confounding filters based on past turnout. This is hard to judge as the polls rarely discussed their filter methods.

3. Many of the polls showed about 20% undecided. Clearly during the last week, especially after D'amato's "putzhead" remark, the undecided broke Schumer's way. It would be interesting to hear any suggestions for dealing with this issue in general.

Bruce Altschuler
SUNY Oswego

>From Krosnick.1@osu.edu Fri Nov  6 07:24:52 1998
Received: from mail3.uts.ohio-state.edu (root@mail3.uts.ohio-state.edu [128.146.214.32])
     by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id HAA28305 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 07:24:51 -0800 (PST)
Message-Id: <4.1.19981106094513.01163740@pop.service.ohio-state.edu>
X-Sender: krosnick@pop.service.ohio-state.edu
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Pro Version 4.1
Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 10:25:11 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Jon Krosnick <Krosnick.1@osu.edu>
An update on the Columbus Dispatch mail poll's performance in Ohio:

Adding additional results that were not published by the news media (and therefore not available to me when I sent yesterday's message), here are the average errors for various polls, all attempting to forecast the outcomes of the same 7 races:

Columbus Dispatch mail poll (20% response rate): 1.9% average error
The Ohio Poll (telephone): 6.1%
The Ohio State University Survey Research Unit Poll (telephone, undecideds dropped): 5.3%
The Ohio State University Survey Research Unit Poll (telephone, undecideds allocated): 5.4%

Another interesting result: The polls yielded biased predictions, just as we have seen previously: they overestimated the winner's margin of victory. Across the six races for public office, the winner's actual margin of victory was 14%. The telephone polls predicted the winner's margin of victory to be 21% on average (over-predicting by 7%), and the Dispatch predicted the winner's margin of victory to be 17% (over-predicting by 3%).

Because the winners of these races were all Republicans, this might appear to be a bias in favor of Republicans in these polls. But our own research on past election forecasting polling shows that the winner's margin of victory is usually over-predicted, regardless of whether the winner is a Republican or a Democrat.

If you're curious about why the Dispatch poll works so well, see our 1996 POQ article on the Dispatch poll.

And for those interested: I have never had anything to do with designing or running any of these polls.
I'm just a fascinated observer who wonders why more organizations don't follow the Dispatch's lead if we're all really pursuing accuracy in this game.

PS - The average errors shown above are calculated the same way we calculated average errors in our 1996 POQ article on the Dispatch poll: For each race, I subtracted the actual percentage of votes each candidate received from the percentage he/she was predicted to receive by the poll. Then I took the absolute value of that number. Then I averaged the resulting numbers for all candidates in a race to get an average error for that race. Then I averaged all the race average errors to yield an overall average error for each polling method.
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--=====================_3890382==_.ALT--

>From M.SCHULMAN@srbi.com Fri Nov  6 09:11:56 1998
Received: from srbi.com ([12.14.34.4]) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP id JAA04253 for aapornet@usc.edu; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 09:11:55 -0800 (PST)
Received: from SRBI_NEW_YORK-Message_Server by srbi.com with Novell_GroupWise; Fri, 06 Nov 1998 12:08:29 -0500
Message-Id: <s642e6bd.001@srbi.com>
X-Mailer: Novell GroupWise 5.2
Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 12:08:44 -0500
From: "MARK SCHULMAN " <M.SCHULMAN@srbi.com>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable
Content-Disposition: inline

We all know that the Literary Digest Poll had a great track record too...until 1936. I'm not sure why we're examining the so-called = "accuracy" of polls that use flawed methods. Why not compare our polls to = the pre-election gleanings of political commentators make as well?
This would make just as much sense!

>>> Jon Krosnick <Krosnick.1@osu.edu> 11/06/98 10:25AM >>>
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warren mitofsky

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method.

Mitofsky International
1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
New York, NY 10022

212 980-3031 Phone
212 980-3107 FAX
mitofsky@mindspring.com

Can anyone point to a good description of the Columbus Dispatch's
methodology?

Original Text
From: "Warren Mitofsky" <mitofsky@mindspring.com>, on 11/6/98 12:26 PM: I am
not sure I agree with
Mark. When a polling method consistently estimates elections accurately we
should have enough curiosity
to learn if there is an underlying reason. The Columbus Dispatch has been too right for too long to
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Mitofsky International
1 East 53rd Street - 5th Floor
New York, NY 10022
In Response to Schulman re: Literary Digest accuracy. It seems to me that the quota control polls that emerged in 1936 also had a pretty good track record until 1948. In actuality, the best predictor has always been height. At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this country, the taller candidate has always won (although I have not yet checked the elections in the past 20-25 years, I am confident it would hold up then also.). Schulman's point is well taken! Nevertheless, off-beat methods can be sorta right some of the time, according to statistics course I once taught. And that's the stuff that's fun to compare. And Bill is taller than Newt, ... afterall... I think! Hal Kassarjian

************

At 12:08 PM 11/6/98 -0500, you wrote:
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>
>*********
Hal Kassarjian
hkassarj@ucla.edu
Phone 1-818 784-5669
FAX 1-818 784-3325

>From beniger@rcf.usc.edu Fri Nov 6 10:50:09 1998
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 KAA17633 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 10:50:06 -0800
(PST)
Received: from localhost (beniger@localhost)
    by almaak.usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
    id KAA22327 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 10:50:07 -0800
(PST)
Date: Fri, 6 Nov 1998 10:50:06 -0800 (PST)
From: James Beniger <beniger@rcf.usc.edu>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
In-Reply-To: <199811061726.MAA05191@camel8.mindspring.com>
Message-ID: <Pine.GSO.4.02.9811061022030.25238-100000@almaak.usc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

Although I agree with Warren on the Columbus Dispatch polling record, which
does seem interesting
enough to warrant further investigation, I also agree with Mark Schulman's
larger point (implied
earlier by Al Biderman in his report on the poll of high school students)
about
the folly of working
backward from successes in a stochastic world.

Consider: If all lawyers were *equally* good (i.e., had precisely a .5
probability of winning any
given case against any other lawyer), 1 lawyer out of every 1,024 lawyers
would
win 10 cases in a
row--a stunning record. What folly it would be, however, to study only these
particular lawyers in the
hope of learning the secrets of courtroom success. As folk wisdom makes the same point: Even the stopped clock is correct twice each day.

Until a few days ago, I thought everyone in AAPOR had long ago learned the lessons of the Literary Digest. Now, like Al and Mark, perhaps, I am getting just a little nervous...

-- Jim Beniger

On Fri, 6 Nov 1998, Warren Mitofsky wrote:

> I am not sure I agree with Mark. When a polling method consistently estimates elections accurately we should have enough curiosity to learn if there is an underlying reason. The Columbus Dispatch has been too right for too long to dismiss its work even though it does not use recognized scientific methods of polling. If we ignore their work we run the risk of missing something important. I would not put the Literary Digest Poll in the same class. There was a pretty good article in POQ on the subject.

> warren mitofsky

> From pmeyer@email.unc.edu Fri Nov  6 13:32:33 1998
Received: from listserv.oit.unc.edu (listserv.oit.unc.edu [152.2.25.17]) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id NAA15828 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 13:32:31 -0800 (PST)
Received: from root@login6.isis.unc.edu (port 1368 [152.2.25.136]) by listserv.oit.unc.edu with ESMTP id <222445-23623>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 16:30:14 -0500
Received: by email.unc.edu id <9242-68170>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 16:31:23 -0500
Date: Fri, 6 Nov 1998 16:31:11 -0500 (EST)
Sender: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
From: Philip Meyer <pmeyer@email.unc.edu>
X-Sender: pmeyer@login6.isis.unc.edu
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
In-Reply-To: <Pine.GSO.4.02.9811061022030.25238-100000@almaak.usc.edu>
Message-ID: <Pine.A41.3.95L.981106162213.5322B-100000@login6.isis.unc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

I, too, was skeptical about the Dispatch poll. In fact, in 1982, if memory serves, I advised them to drop it. But there are some theoretical justifications that we may have overlooked. Don Dillman reminded me of them when I interviewed him for a USA Today op-ed piece (Nov. 2). The self-administered
format means that:
1. You can ask a truly unbiased question by presenting a sample ballot.
2. The bias that comes from the social interaction with the interviewer (leading to non-attitudes passed off as genuine attitudes) is absent.
3. The respondent has time to think about his/her answer.
4. Identifying registered voters is no problem because that is the source of the sample.
It's true that the response rate is poor, but at least it can be calculated.
With RDD, you have to guess whether the phones that never answer had eligible respondents behind them or not.
    Don will have a piece on this in the forthcoming Gallup Research Journal.
Don, if you are guarding this channel, would you like to enlighten us?

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

>From Krosnick.1@osu.edu Fri Nov  6 13:53:29 1998
Received: from mail3.uts.ohio-state.edu (root@mail3.uts.ohio-state.edu [128.146.214.32])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id NAA25906 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 13:53:25 -0800 (PST)
Received: from PC342.psy.ohio-state.edu (pc342.psy.ohio-state.edu [128.146.254.42])
    by mail3.uts.ohio-state.edu (8.9.1a/8.9.1) with SMTP id QAA26888
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 16:53:22 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <4.1.19981106164705.013c3810@pop.service.ohio-state.edu>
X-Sender: krosnick@pop.service.ohio-state.edu
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Pro Version 4.1
Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 16:53:59 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Jon Krosnick <Krosnick.1@osu.edu>
Subject: Fwd: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
    boundary="="_27222256==_.ALT"

--_27222256==_.ALT
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Can anyone point to a good description of the Columbus Dispatch's methodology?


Phil Meyer's summary of Don Dillman's observations includes only some of the reasons why the Dispatch Poll works better. Our article lists and empirically documents the impact of many others.

And our forthcoming chapter in Paul Lavrakas and Mike Traugott's book shows how the conventional methodology of telephone polls can be significantly improved to substantially increase accuracy, making them nearly as good as the Dispatch Poll results (I am happy to send people electronic copies of the chapter).

Jon Krosnick
Professor of Psychology and Political Science
Ohio State University
1885 Neil Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210
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Jon Krosnick
Professor of Psychology and Political Science
Ohio State University
1885 Neil Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210

--=====================_27222256==_.ALT--

>From surveys@wco.com Fri Nov  6 15:22:40 1998
Received: from mailhub2.ncal.verio.com (mailhub2.ncal.verio.com [204.247.247.54])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id PAA28635 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 15:22:40 -0800
(PST)
Received: from compaq (sextans126.wco.com [209.21.28.126])
    by mailhub2.ncal.verio.com (8.8.7/8.8.7) with SMTP id PAA28884
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 15:22:36 -0800 (PST)
Message-ID: <008b01be09dc$60dffe20$6a7afea9@compaq>
From: "Hank Zucker" <surveys@wco.com>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
Date: Fri, 6 Nov 1998 15:16:43 -0800
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
>In actuality, the best predictor has always been height.  
>At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this country, 
>the taller candidate has always won (although I have not yet checked the 
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>also.).

It does. For example, in '92 Clinton was tallest candidate in either party 
& Bush was tallest Republican. Only one candidate in either party was less 
than 6'0" (Tsongas - one of the first to drop out).

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far more often than could be attributed to chance.

This could be an interesting public opinion investigation. Why is the 
public so prejudiced in favor of tall men?

Hank Zucker  
Creative Research Systems  
makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good  
http://www.surveysystem.com  
mailto:surveys@wco.com

-----Original Message-----
From: H. H. Kassarjian <hkassarj@ucla.edu> 
To: aapornet@usc.edu <aapornet@usc.edu> 
Date: Friday, November 06, 1998 10:52 AM 
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy

> In Response to Schulman re: Literary Digest accuracy. It seems to me that 
> the quota control polls that emerged in 1936 also had a pretty good track 
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> the taller candidate has always won (although I have not yet checked the 
> elections in the past 20-25 years, I am confident it would hold up then 
> also.). Schulman's point is well taken! Nevertheless, off-beat methods 
> can be sorta right some of the time, according to statistics course I once 
> taught. And that's the stuff that's fun to compare. And Bill is taller 
> than 
> Newt, ... afterall... I think! 
> Hal Kassarjian
> ************
Speaking of predicting elections, we have found nine ways - some serious, some rational, some peculiar:

1) Incumbents presidents who coast to renomination, without a challenger from within their own party, win. Incumbents whose renominations are seriously challenged lose.

2) Incumbent presidents with positive performance ratings in the polls win. Those with negative ratings lose.

3) The candidate who is ahead in the first polls after Labor Day wins.

4) The party of the incumbent president wins if consumer confidence index (from the Conference Board) is 100 or higher and loses if it is below 100.

5) If real disposable income increases by 3.8% in the year before an election, the incumbent party wins; if not, it loses.

6) If unemployment is falling the incumbent party wins; if unemployment is rising the challenging party wins.

7) The taller of the two candidates win.

8) No left-handed president has ever been elected and reelected for a second term.

9) If the Yankees win the World Series, the Republican candidate wins; when the Yankees lose the World Series the Democrat wins.

If anyone has any others, we'd love to hear 'em.
dWx0aS1jaXR5IGRpZGdjGljIHN1bW0uYIXgdG91ciAoUmVnaX0cmF0aW9uIE1ZQ3AtLSQ1MDApLg0KDQpBbCBCaWR1cm1hbiAgDQphYmlkZXJAYW1lcmljYW4uZWR1DQo=

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Content-Transfer-Encoding: base64

PCFET0NUWVFIEhUTUwggUFVCTEIDICItLy9XM0VwaXQmIA0KE1lEUxIF</code>

>From dhenwood@panix.com Fri Nov  6 17:31:05 1998
Received: from mail2.panix.com (mail2.panix.com [166.84.0.213]) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP

------=_NextPart_000_000C_01BE09C1.CEE980A0--
I developed a little regression model of presidential elections that retrospectively predicted 10 of the last 12 elections (through 1992) and prospectively the 1996 election. Inputs are the presidential approval rating (from Gallup) and the year-to-year change in real disposable personal income per capita, both as of the second quarter of the election year; outcome is the percentage point gap between the incumbent and challenging parties. The only 2 it missed were 1960 (which Nixon would have won, if it hadn't been for all those dead Chicago voters) and 1976, which was clouded by Watergate. It was quoted in Barron's in June 1996, and I wrote it up in LBO shortly thereafter, so I'm not making this up!

Doug

--

Doug Henwood
Left Business Observer
250 W 85 St
New York NY 10024-3217 USA
+1-212-874-4020 voice +1-212-874-3137 fax
email: <mailto:dhenwood@panix.com>
web: <http://www.panix.com/~dhenwood/LBO_home.html>
In a message dated 11/6/98 6:24:45 PM, surveys@wco.com wrote:

<<This could be an interesting public opinion investigation. Why is the public so prejudiced in favor of tall men?
>>

A correlate of this finding: the taller the business executive, the more likely the person will achieve more. All this may be related to an ability to stand out in a crowd and exert leadership ability, etc. [I've read this somewhere]

Milton Goldsamt
Research Statistician
U. S. Dept. of Justice
miltgold@aol.com

From Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com Fri Nov  6 17:46:23 1998
Received: from mail-lax-2.pilot.net (mail-lax-2.pilot.net [205.139.40.16]) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id RAA15174 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:46:21 -0800 (PST)
Received: from mailgw.latimes.com (unknown-c-23-147.latimes.com [204.48.23.147] (may be forged)) by mail-lax-2.pilot.net (Pilot/) with ESMTP id RAA06769; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:46:20 -0800 (PST)
Received: from latimes.com (bierce.latimes.com [192.187.72.9]) by mailgw.latimes.com (8.9.1/8.8.5) with SMTP id RAA19300; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:46:20 -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 ESMTPT id RAA16536; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:46:19 -0800
Received: (from pinkus=localhost) by news.latimes.com (8.6.9/8.6.9) id RAA97311; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:48:42 -0800
Date: Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:48:42 -0800 (PST)
From: Susan Pinkus <Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com>
To: Hank Zucker <surveys@wco.com>
cc: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
In-Reply-To: <008b01be09dc$60dffe20$6a7afea9@compaq>
Message-ID: <Pine.A32.3.91.981106174746.45022A-100000@fowler.news.latimes.com>
Does that include women in the mix. If the woman was the tallest in a race, did she win?

Susan Pinkus

On Fri, 6 Nov 1998, Hank Zucker wrote:

> In actuality, the best predictor has always been height.
> At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this country,
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> also.).

> It does. For example, in '92 Clinton was tallest candidate in either party & Bush was tallest Republican. Only one candidate in either party was less than 6'0" (Tsongas - one of the first to drop out).

> And not just Presidential races. In Senate races with two non-incumbent men running, the taller has won the large majority of the time - not always, but far more often than could be attributed to chance.

> This could be an interesting public opinion investigation. Why is the public so prejudiced in favor of tall men?

Hank Zucker
Creative Research Systems
makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good
http://www.surveysystem.com
mailto:surveys@wco.com

In Response to Schulman re: Literary Digest accuracy. It seems to me that the quota control polls that emerged in 1936 also had a pretty good track
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can be sorta right some of the time, according to statistics course I once
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than Newt, ... afterall... I think!
Hal Kassarjian

************


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

>From Susan.Pinkus@latimes.com Fri Nov  6 17:47:35 1998
Received: from mail-lax-2.pilot.net (mail-lax-2.pilot.net [205.139.40.16])
  by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id RAA15726 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:47:34 -0800
(PST)
Received: from mailgw.latimes.com (unknown-c-23-147.latimes.com
[204.48.23.147]
(may be forged))
  by mail-lax-2.pilot.net (Pilot/) with ESMTP id RAA06969;
    Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:47:32 -0800 (PST)
Received: from latimes.com (bierce.latimes.com [192.187.72.9]) by
mailgw.latimes.com (8.9.1/8.8.5) with
SMTP id RAA19363; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:47:33 -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 RAA16584; Fri, 6 Nov 1998 17:47:31 -0800
Received: (from pinkus@localhost) by news.latimes.com (8.6.9/8.6.9) id
Obviously, I didn't mean president, but if a woman ran in a senate, or house race.

On Fri, 6 Nov 1998, Hank Zucker wrote:

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running, the taller has won the large majority of the time - not always, but
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> >This could be an interesting public opinion investigation. Why is the public so prejudiced in favor of tall men?
> >Hank Zucker
> Creative Research Systems
> makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good
> http://www.surveysystem.com
> mailto:surveys@wco.com
> 
> -----Original Message-----
> From: H. H. Kassarjian <hkassarj@ucla.edu>
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Date: Friday, November 06, 1998 10:52 AM
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy

> In Response to Schulman re: Literary Digest accuracy. It seems to me that
> the quota control polls that emerged in 1936 also had a pretty good track
> record until 1948. In actuality, the best predictor has always been
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> taught. And that's the stuff that's fun to compare. And Bill is taller
> than
> Newt, ... afterall... I think!
> Hal Kassarjian

*******

*************************************************************************
*                            *
*                           *
*                           *
*************************************************************************

> From David_Moore@gallup.com Sat Nov 7 09:26:33 1998
Received: from fw (fw.gallup.com [206.158.235.10])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
    id JAA14621 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 09:26:32 -0800
(PST)
From: David_Moore@gallup.com
Received: from exchng1.gallup.com by fw (SMI-8.6/SMI-SVR4)
    id LAA13277; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 11:25:58 -0600
Received: by gallup.com with Internet Mail Service (5.5.2232.9)
    id <W2DJ7LKA>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 11:26:00 -0600
As one whose height does not qualify him to be in the NBA (if in fact the NBA itself were functioning), I should point out that George Romney was taller than Nixon, Dukakis was hardly the tallest Democrat in 1988 when he won the Democratic nomination, that JFK was shorter than LBJ when the former won the nomination in 1960, that Carter was shorter than Ford (1976, in case we forget), that Mondale was shorter than Hart, and that Bill is shorter than George. However, these exceptions do not deny the fundamental truth, depressing as it may be to some of us, that people with longer legs (both men and women) tend to have higher success rates in many professions (where appearance can have an effect) than those with shorter legs. From what I have read, being good looking is even more important than being tall. Strike two!
David Moore

> -----Original Message-----
> From:     Hank Zucker [SMTP:surveys@wco.com]
> Sent:     Friday, November 06, 1998 5:17 PM
> To: aapornet@usc.edu
> Subject:  Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
>
> > In actuality, the best predictor has always been height.
> > At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this
country,
> > the taller candidate has always won (although I have not yet checked the
> > elections in the past 20-25 years, I am confident it would hold up then
> > also.).
> > It does. For example, in '92 Clinton was tallest candidate in either
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> & Bush was tallest Republican. Only one candidate in either party was
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> > than 6'0" (Tsongas - one of the first to drop out).
> > And not just Presidential races. In Senate races with two non-incumbent
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> > running, the taller has won the large majority of the time - not always,
> > but
> > far more often than could be attributed to chance.
> > This could be an interesting public opinion investigation. Why is the
> public so prejudiced in favor of tall men?
If you ask those who help prepare presidential candidates for television debates height has always been a variable associated with "winning" a debate. Here are just two examples.

In 1976, Barry Jagoda, Carter's television advisor, suggested that Ford stand in a depressed area of the stage so that both he and Carter would appear the same height above the podium in head-on face shots on TV. Jagoda's mother called her son and admonished him, "Barry, why do you want to put the President in a hole?" (Kraus, The Great Debates: Carter vs. Ford, 1976)

In 1984, tall man, Vice President Bush, debated short woman, democratic vp candidate, Geraldine Ferraro. Once again, height discussions ensued. After the debate, Bush said, "We tried to kick a little ass last night." (G. Ferraro, Ferraro, My Story)
On Fri, 6 Nov 1998, Hank Zucker wrote:

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Hank Zucker
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mailto:surveys@wco.com

-----Original Message-----
From: H. H. Kassarjian <hkassarj@ucla.edu>
To: aapornet@usc.edu <aapornet@usc.edu>
Date: Friday, November 06, 1998 10:52 AM
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy

In Response to Schulman re: Literary Digest accuracy. It seems to me that the quota control polls that emerged in 1936 also had a pretty good track record until 1948. In actuality, the best predictor has always been height. At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this country, the taller candidate has always won (although I have not yet checked the elections in the past 20-25 years, I am confident it would hold up then also). Schulman's point is well taken! Nevertheless, off-beat methods
can be sorta right some of the time, according to statistics course I once taught. And that's the stuff that's fun to compare. And Bill is taller than Newt, ... afterall... I think!

Hal Kassarjian

************

************

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

From RFunk787@aol.com Sat Nov 7 10:52:52 1998
Received: from imo14.mx.aol.com (imo14.mx.aol.com [198.81.17.4])
          by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
          id KAA29278 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 10:52:51 -0800
(PST)
From: RFunk787@aol.com
Received: from RFunk787@aol.com
          by imo14.mx.aol.com (IMOv16.10) id FTNCa18749
          for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 13:51:56 -0500 (EST)
Message-ID: <daeb3622.364496cc@aol.com>
Date: Sat, 7 Nov 1998 13:51:56 EST
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Mime-Version: 1.0
Subject: Predicting elections
Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7bit
X-Mailer: PCAO 1.6

11/7/98

This discussion of the accuracy of forecasts of recent elections reminds me of an observation Nate Maccoby once made (possibly quoting Sam Stouffer or some such, I don't recall): "The problem with election polling is that you are
using a survey with a good sample to try to predict the outcome of a survey with a bad one."

Perhaps especially apropos to off-year congressional elections? Maybe the pollsters shouldn't be too hard on themselves.

Ray Funkhouser

>From beniger@rcf.usc.edu Sat Nov 7 11:09:57 1998
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 LAA01163 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 11:09:56 -0800
(PST)
Received: from localhost (beniger@localhost)
    by almaak.usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
    id LAA12566 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 11:09:56 -0800
(PST)
Date: Sat, 7 Nov 1998 11:09:55 -0800 (PST)
From: James Beniger <beniger@rcf.usc.edu>
To: AAPORNET <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: CUPR post-doc (fwd)
Message-ID: <Pine.GSO.4.02.9811071108190.5920-100000@almaak.usc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

---------- Forwarded message ----------

Date: Fri, 06 Nov 1998 12:25:19 +0000
From: Bob Lake <rlake@rci.rutgers.edu>
Subject: CUPR post-doc

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW IN URBAN POLICY
CENTER FOR URBAN POLICY RESEARCH

The Center for Urban Policy Research (CUPR) at Rutgers University is seeking a Post-Doctoral Fellow for a one-year non-tenure track appointment beginning July 1, 1999. The post-doc will participate in ongoing research at CUPR and pursue independent research. An individual with strong analytical abilities and specialization in community development, urban poverty, and/or environmental policy is strongly preferred. Salary is $40,000 for 12 months plus health benefits. A Ph.D. in urban planning, public policy, geography, economics, sociology or a closely related field must be completed prior to July 1, 1999.

Rutgers is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Applicants should send a letter of interest, a resume, and three letters of recommendation by December 15, 1998 to:
In contrast to Ray’s reference to Nate Maccoby’s observation, I offer a different question: Are the pollsters now hard ENOUGH on themselves? At least to the point of asking some hard questions?

Some observations:

1. Nationally, NOBODY (to judge from media reports) expected a Democratic gain in seats in Congress.

2. In Minnesota, NOBODY expected Jesse Ventura to win.

3. Also, in Minnesota, NOBODY expected Hubert H. "Skip" Humphrey III to finish a poor THIRD—acknowledging that the MINN poll did see some change toward Ventura in the final poll a few days before the election.

4. In response to Arianna Huffington, whatever her motivations, NOBODY has provided any profession-wide data on (a) what current-day refusal rates are; (b) what the consequences of 50+ % refusals might be for representativeness, or (c) the question I don’t think she asked, what the COMPLETION rates are, as a % of eligible numbers that are tried but not reached.
The typical response we have all made in recent years, including your truly, is that the refusing respondents and the unreached but eligible respondents are represented well by those reached. Maybe, but what empirical checks do we have on that assumption?

There may be good answers to these questions, and I hope there are, but we aren't getting them so far on aapornet. We've had a debate on whether a 20% mail-in sample in Ohio is worthy of investigation.

If we're reaching the point where we seriously consider that way of pre-election polling--with all due respect to the Dillman procedure--we need some awfully serious discussion of what is going on with telephone polling.

And in final response to Ray and our mutually-admired teacher, no American election is a "good sample" of the voting age population. If turnout is that tough to predict, it should be acknowledged, up front.

> Perhaps especially apropos to off-year congressional elections? Maybe the pollsters shouldn't be too hard on themselves.
> Ray Funkhouser

---

From oneil@speedchoice.com Sat Nov 7 17:42:04 1998
Received: from mail.phoenix.speedchoice.com ([207.240.197.31])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMT
    id RAA15910 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 17:42:02 -0800
(PST)
Received: from phx35035 (hybrid-217-120.phoenix.speedchoice.com
[207.240.217.120]) by mail.phoenix.speedchoice.com (8.8.8/) with SMTP id SAA08821 for
<aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 18:42:53 -0700 (MST)
Message-ID: <001a01be0ab8$1bb59da0$78d9f0cf@phx35035>
From: "Michael O'Neil" <oneil@speedchoice.com>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
Date: Sat, 7 Nov 1998 18:35:45 -0700
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 4.72.2120.0
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.2120.0

1976 Carter taller than Ford? Oh, Ford must have been pardoned from the
rule.

============================================= 
Michael O'Neil, Ph.D.  
O'Neil Associates, Inc.  
412 East Southern Avenue  
Tempe, Arizona 85282  

602.967.4441 Voice  
602.967.6171 Personal Fax  
602.967.6122 O'Neil Associates Fax  

oneil@speedchoice.com  personal email  
surveys@primenet.com O'Neil Associates email  

-----Original Message-----  
>On Fri, 6 Nov 1998, Hank Zucker wrote:  
> 
>> >In actuality, the best predictor has always been height.  
>> >At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this country,  
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>> 
>> >It does. For example, in '92 Clinton was tallest candidate in either party  
>> & Bush was tallest Republican. Only one candidate in either party was less  
>> than 6'0" (Tsongas - one of the first to drop out).  
>> 
>> >And not just Presidential races. In Senate races with two non-incumbent men  
>> running, the taller has won the large majority of the time - not always, but  
>> far more often than could be attributed to chance.  
>> 
>> >This could be an interesting public opinion investigation. Why is the  
>> public so prejudiced in favor of tall men?  
>> 
>> >Hank Zucker  
>> >Creative Research Systems  
>> >makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good  
>> >http://www.surveysystem.com  
>> >mailto:surveys@wco.com  
>> 
>> 
>> -----Original Message-----  
>> From: H. H. Kassarjian <hkassarj@ucla.edu>  
>> To: aapornet@usc.edu <aapornet@usc.edu>
In Response to Schulman re: Literary Digest accuracy. It seems to me that the quota control polls that emerged in 1936 also had a pretty good track record until 1948. In actuality, the best predictor has always been height. At least in presidential elections, throughout the history of this country, the taller candidate has always won (although I have not yet checked the elections in the past 20-25 years, I am confident it would hold up then also). Schulman's point is well taken! Nevertheless, off-beat methods can be sorta right some of the time, according to statistics course I once taught. And that's the stuff that's fun to compare. And Bill is taller than Newt, ... afterall... I think!

Hal Kassarjian

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

From abider@earthlink.net Sat Nov 7 19:10:26 1998
Received: from hawk.prod.itd.earthlink.net (hawk.prod.itd.earthlink.net [207.217.120.22])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id TAA11306 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 19:10:25 -0800 (PST)
Received: from alvbynos (sdn-ar-002dcwashP283.dialsprint.net [168.191.22.84])
    by hawk.prod.itd.earthlink.net (8.8.7/8.8.5) with SMTP id TAA04996
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sat, 7 Nov 1998 19:10:22 -0800 (PST)
A story in today's (11/7) Washington Post Metro section gives details about the Montgomery Blair 10th graders' prediction that won them the Post's "ninth Crystal Ball competition." Contrary to any implication I may have left here previously, the description in the Post article suggests that their procedures made great sense and doubtless were highly educational as well.

A deservedly serious look at how they analysed the House election poses for me some issues that decision sciences folk have been fussin' over for some time. The first is the finding that for many problems, the record for novices matches or even beats that for experts. (A JAMA paper said that the common bane of sound decision, over-confidence, usually affects experts more often than it does novices.) The field has given a lot of attention to the kinds of complexity and structure of problems on which novices are no worse than experts. Secondly, the students' method apparently was to make judgments by studying every relevant type of information they could get, both national and specific to each district. Their choices of information sources and analyses appear to me to have been judicious. Issues here are when, if ever, to let informed judgment override the result of previously successful formal modelling. Many of the political experts who were in the Post's contest confess (claim?) that's why they went wrong. Another issue the story raises is how to curb the over-confidence that comes from the successful predictions we make of elections that come out the way we like. Pro-Democrat bias may have contributed to the sophomores' success.

Linda DiVall is honest enough to have admitted to the Wash. Post reporter that she didn't go with "her instincts" that told her the Republicans would gain only one seat. "I can't do that, I'm a Republican pollster," she said. It was "instincts," however, not a quant. model's bottom line that she says she censored. With regard to Jim's point about unpublished estimates touted later as being right, it's probably also the case that we don't learn about the fudge on
published fudged predictions that just happen to turn out close to the
mark. If DiVal had won the contest with her entry of +7 for the
Republicans, would she have said, or even believed, that 6 of the
7 seats were fudge?

To pick up a related AAPORNET thread:
The Post story did not tell us whether the Blair HS'ers were right
because they divined what Wednesday morning quarterback's now
are telling us: the Dems did well because more less-likely-to-vote
voters voted than were expected to and fewer more likely ones did.
Consequently, some respondents who cannot vote or are unlikely to vote get included in most election surveys.

Measurement may be less biased in this mail survey than the telephone polls because a reasonably close facsimile of the ballot is sent to respondents. Instead of asking questions in a hypothetical manner like, "If the election were held today would you vote for..." the sampled person is presented with the exact ballot wording and visual layout, e.g. "For Governor. J Jones, Democrat; T Smith, Republican; etc." This format strikes me as desirable because that's exactly what one will see on the actual ballot. Also, the mail questionnaire is visual as is the election ballot. This may be especially advantageous when trying to predict outcomes for initiatives, and lower level statewide races (e.g. auditor, treasurer) where people may not have clear cut preferences. To the extent people are influenced by order, and exactly wording, we don't have to worry about getting equivalency in the wording of questions for an aural format.

Sampling error. The Columbus Dispatch has typically obtained a completed sampled size that is larger than most of the comparison telephone polls with which it was compared (at least prior to this year=96I've not yet seen any of the results from the current election other than Jon Krosnick's summary). All other things equal a larger completed sample should provide more precise estimates. =20

This leaves nonresponse error to consider. The issue here is whether respondents hold different preferences than the nonrespondents who vote. Nonresponse error is not the same as response rate. Apparently, the respondents don't hold different preferences, and the important question is why? It seems like those who choose to send back ballots are much more likely than those who do not send them back to be actual voters, and that should not be surprising. =20

A mail election survey of registered voters is also a little unusual (compared to other surveys of defined populations) because if one obtains a very high response rate, say 75%, a large number of those respondents will be from people who do not vote! This would be true since voting rates are usually much lower than that (I think I heard 39% nationally, in this year's election=96I don't know what the Ohio rate was). What one is interested in is to get response from people who will actually vote and not all registered voters or members of the general public who for whatever reasons say they are registered and likely to vote. =20

In sum, my point in the paper was that on 3 of the 4 major sources of survey error there are reasons to expect the mail survey to produce better results than the telephone. And, on the fourth there are some unusual conditions that make a low response rate from ALL registered voters not necessarily detrimental.

A side comment on the context for these comments. The paper Phil refers to is "Mail and Other Self-Administered Surveys in the 21st Century: The
Beginning of new Era," and my comments on the Columbus Dispatch Survey were fairly brief (six paragraphs). I wrote the paper in order to think through a much broader set of issues about the future use of self-administered surveys. The comments about the Columbus Dispatch survey were based in part on the Visser et al. article, but also on lengthy discussions with a reporter from the Columbus Dispatch who sat in on the self-administered survey course I have occasionally taught in the University of Michigan Summer Institute. He showed me all of the mailings and other procedural details used by the Dispatch. 

Finally, I am not at all arguing that mail should replace telephone for most election surveys. For many reasons I don't think that is likely to happen in the near future, especially for national surveys. However, discussing those results provided another useful reminder (if one is needed) that all surveys need to be evaluated on the basis of the four sources of error, and not just response rates.

Don Dillman

> At 04:31 PM 11/6/98 -0500, you wrote:
> I, too, was skeptical about the Dispatch poll. In fact, in 1982, if memory serves, I advised them to drop it. But there are some theoretical justifications that we may have overlooked. Don Dillman reminded me of them when I interviewed him for a USA Today op-ed piece (Nov. 2). The self-administered format means that:
> 1. You can ask a truly unbiased question by presenting a sample ballot.
> 2. The bias that comes from the social interaction with the interviewer (leading to non-attitudes passed off as genuine attitudes) is absent. 
> 3. The respondent has time to think about his/her answer.
> 4. Identifying registered voters is no problem because that is the source of the sample.
> It's true that the response rate is poor, but at least it can be calculated. With RDD, you have to guess whether the phones that never answer had eligible respondents behind them or not.
> Don will have a piece on this in the forthcoming Gallup Research Journal. Don, if you are guarding this channel, would you like to enlighten us?
Don A. Dillman
705 S.W. Mies St.
Pullman, Washington 99163
509-334-1141 or 509-335-1511

dillman@turbonet.com or dillman@wsu.edu
fax 509-335-0116

>From Mdecisions@aol.com Sun Nov 8 11:51:48 1998
Received: from imo11.mx.aol.com (imo11.mx.aol.com [198.81.17.1])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id LAA07016 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sun, 8 Nov 1998 11:51:47 -0800
(PST)
From: Mdecisions@aol.com
Received: from Mdecisions@aol.com
    by imo11.mx.aol.com (IMOv16.10) id FXAQA10440
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sun, 8 Nov 1998 14:45:06 -0500 (EST)
Message-ID: <28409eb0.3645f4c2@aol.com>
Date: Sun, 8 Nov 1998 14:45:06 EST
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Mime-Version: 1.0
Subject: Re: Comparisons of Poll Accuracy
Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7bit
X-Mailer: AOL 3.0 16-bit for Windows sub 86

Please send me a copy of your chapter -- sounds very interesting.

    Don Singh-Cundy
    Huxley College
    Western Washington Univ.
    Bellingham, WA
    Scundy1@mail.cc.wwu.edu

>From beniger@rcf.usc.edu Sun Nov 8 13:34:00 1998
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 NAA10840 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sun, 8 Nov 1998 13:33:59 -0800
(PST)
Received: from localhost (beniger@localhost)
    by almaak.usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id NAA02447 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Sun, 8 Nov 1998 13:33:59 -0800
(PST)
Date: Sun, 8 Nov 1998 13:33:59 -0800
From: James Beniger <beniger@rcf.usc.edu>
To: AAPORNET <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Montgomery County Blair High School Student Poll
Message-ID: <Pine.GSO.4.02.9811081333100.1103-100000@almaak.usc.edu>
Here's yesterday's Washington Post story on the Montgomery County Blair High School students' midterm election poll...


A Coup With the Crystal Ball
Students Out-Predict Pundits on Election Results

By Ellen Nakashima
Washington Post Staff Writer
Saturday, November 7, 1998; Page B01

It was the pros vs. the amateurs. A cadre of high-paid political experts vs. a bunch of 10th-graders at a Montgomery County high school.

And the kids waxed the entire crew.

A class of Montgomery Blair High students bested 13 pollsters, prognosticators and pundits in predicting the outcome of Tuesday's midterm elections.

In The Washington Post's ninth Crystal Ball competition, the Blair sophomores were the only ones to predict no House gain for the GOP. They forecast that the Republicans would hold 228 congressional seats and the Democrats 206, a status quo pick that put them closest to the result that shocked the pros: The Democrats actually picked up five seats.

"I'm mortified," said Emory University political scientist Merle Black, who predicted a Republican pickup of nine seats. "We'll all have to go hang our heads in shame."

Mused GOP pollster Linda DiVall: "I think my problem was I was too loyal to my party instead of relying on my instincts."

Her instincts told her the GOP would gain one House seat. "Then I said, 'I can't do that -- I'm a Republican pollster.' So I did House plus seven," she said.

Winners of the contest run by the Sunday Outlook section receive a
crystal ball, a plaque and bragging rights.

Free Congress Foundation President Paul Weyrich, a conservative commentator, laughed when he heard that "a bunch of high school students" had won.

"If I'm gonna be embarrassed and insulted, I would much rather have it be by them than by [CNBC high-volume talk show host] Chris Matthews or someone," he said, chuckling. "That says everything you need to say about this election: that high school kids have a better handle on this than those of us who have been involved in the political process for 40 years!"

Weyrich, who won the contest two years ago, said that next time he will do what he did in 1996: "Go with what I think, and never mind what anyone else thinks."

This time, he said sheepishly, "I talked to a lot of people -- pollsters and consultants, and obviously, I was not getting accurate information."

The 71 students, members of a communication arts program at the school just outside the Capital Beltway in Silver Spring, had no magic formula for picking winners. They did their homework.

After teacher Stacy Dimmick identified the 71 most competitive House, Senate and gubernatorial contests, each student selected one race to research and predict.

They dug up demographic data on each district, including age, gender, religion, educational level and income. They studied campaign ads. They scoured the Web sites of the Census Bureau, Congressional Quarterly and Project Vote