Polling on Elections, Trust, Media Effects

Sonja Petek
PAPOR Mini Conference
June 2012
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Please contact me with additional questions about this presentation: petek@ppic.org
Outline

AAPOR Conference, Orlando, May 2012

- Election Polling
  - Methods
  - Trends and issues
- Political and Social Issues
  - Political Behavior
  - Polling on Social Issues
- Trust in Institutions
- Media Effects
Election Polling – Methods

- **Identifying Likely Voters in Pre-election Polls: Comparing Methods to Find the Best One**
  David Vannette, Jon Krosnick, Matt DeBell, Catherine Wilson, Stanford University

- **Probabilistic Turnout Report for Upcoming Elections**
  Catherine Wilson, American National Election Studies

- **Reducing Overreporting of Voter Turnout in Seven European Countries – Results from a Survey Experiment**
  Steve Schwarzer, TNS Opinion
  Sylvia Kritzinger, Eva Zeglovits, University of Vienna, Department of Methods in the Social Sciences

- **Breaking Bad? Method & Meaning Of The “Breaking News” Question In Exit Polling**
  Jennifer Agiesta, The Associated Press
  Patrick J. Moynihan, Lillian Nottingham, Harvard University

- **Data Quality from Low Cost Data Collection Methodologies**
  Michael W. Traugott, University of Michigan
Identifying Likely Voters in Pre-election Polls: Comparing Methods to Find the Best One

David Vannette, Jon Krosnick, Matt DeBell, Catherine Wilson, Stanford University

Research questions stated by authors:

- How effective are different “likely voter” methods at identifying actual voters?
- Does using a subgroup of likely voters improve the vote share accuracy?
ANES 2008—face-to-face survey
- Pre-election (mostly September), N=2,322
- Post-election, N=2,102 of same respondents reinterviewed
- Due to September timing, hard to compare with other later pre-election surveys

Identifying voters and predicting vote share
- First, looked at raw ANES data (intention to vote/reported voting)
- Then used likely voters, defined using Gallup method
Identifying Voters

How accurate are respondents in predicting vote share?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnout Accuracy</th>
<th>Raw ANES</th>
<th>Gallup Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly identified voters</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctly identified non-voters</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of respondents correctly classified</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Obama</th>
<th>McCain</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Average Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Election Committee</td>
<td>52.93%</td>
<td>45.65%</td>
<td>1.42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANES Pre-Election</td>
<td>53.97%</td>
<td>42.96%</td>
<td>3.07%</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANES Pre-Election-Std. Gallup</td>
<td>51.22%</td>
<td>45.81%</td>
<td>2.97%</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vannette et al.

- Tested other likely voter models using logistic regressions
  - Modified Gallup (took out insig. variables)
  - Having “voted in a primary”
    - Most Gallup predictors remain significant

- Generated predicted probabilities using full LV regression model
  - Tested two cut points: 64% (official turnout number) and 71% to minimize outcome error
Using .71 cut point

Predicted probabilities

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Average Error</th>
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<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANES Pre-Election - Std. Gallup</td>
<td>51.22%</td>
<td>45.81%</td>
<td>2.97%</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANES Pre-Election - 5pt Gallup</td>
<td>51.45%</td>
<td>45.21%</td>
<td>3.34%</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANES Probability - FEC turnout</td>
<td>50.52%</td>
<td>46.79%</td>
<td>2.69%</td>
<td>1.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANES Error Minimized</td>
<td>51.35%</td>
<td>45.65%</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
<td>1.05%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Identifying Voters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<td>94%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctly identified non-voters</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of respondents correctly classified</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

- **Vote share accuracy**
  - Using likely voter models can improve prediction accuracy
  - Gallup-like models are good but may or may not be the best
  - Assigning predicted probabilities minimizes error
  - ANES vs. Gallup

- **Turnout accuracy**
  - ANES vote intent
  - Gallup method
  - Probabilistic approaches
Election Polling – 2012 Republican Primary

- **The Tea Party and Perot Voters: Kindred Spirits?**
  Larry Hugick, Jessica Starace, Princeton Survey Research Associates International

- **The 2012 Republican Primaries: What the Heck Was That All About?**
  Gary Langer, Damla Ergun, Langer Research Associates
  Patrick J. Moynihan, Institute for Quantitative Social Science-Kennedy School of Government

- **Key Insights on the 2012 Republican Presidential Nomination Contest From Gallup Tracking**
  Jeffrey M. Jones, Gallup, Inc.

- **Altogether Different: Understanding Dynamics of Primary and General Elections**
  Andrew Smith, University of New Hampshire Survey Center

- **The End of Dempire: An Examination of Party Registration Shifts in Pennsylvania**
  Christopher P. Borick, Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion
The Tea Party and Perot Voters: Kindred Spirits?
Larry Hugick, Jessica Starace
Princeton Survey Research Associates International

- Objective: Compare the similarities and differences between Perot and Tea Party voters to better understand shift in political environment over last 20 years
- Data: Surveys by Times Mirror/Pew Center for the People and the Press, collected by PSRAI
  - 1994 New Political Landscape survey
  - 2011 Political Typology surveys
Hugick and Starace

Key Similarities:

- Demographic profile (greater share male, white, less financial pressure)
- Political alienation, critical of government, anti-immigrant sentiment, negative about regulation

Key Differences:

- Political ID, ideology
- Perot voters more likely to say third party is needed
- Tea Party voters far more unfavorable toward Democratic Party
- Tea Party voters more positive views of corporations
- Social issues: Tea Party more anti-abortion, pro gun
## Where They Differ Most: Party ID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perot Voters</th>
<th>RV Tea Party Supporters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference/Other/DK/Ref</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican/Lean Republican</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat/Lean Democrat</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11</td>
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</table>
Explaining the Differences: Perot Voters’ Populism

Think the Fed Gov’t Helps “Too Much”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perot Voters</th>
<th>RV Tea Party Supporters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wealthy</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Think the Fed Gov’t Helps “Not Enough”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perot Voters</th>
<th>RV Tea Party Supporters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wealthy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Perot Voters in 2012:
#### View of the Tea Party

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Perot Voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haven’t heard of/Refused</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hugick and Starace

Some implications for 2012 election:

– Tea Party didn’t back a third party candidate, but demonstrated clout in primary as Romney ran on conservative views

– Perot voters still a swing bloc

– Both Perot/Tea Party voters less sympathetic to African Americans’ struggles

– Obama’s populist views could appeal to Perot voters
Outline

- Election Polling
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- Political and Social Issues
  - Political Behavior
  - Polling on Social Issues
- Trust in Institutions
- Media Effects
Public Opinion and Political Behavior

- Issue Indifference and Policy Opinion: When Not Caring is Consequential
  Justine G. Ross, University of California, Riverside

- Generations in American Politics
  Jocelyn Kiley, Michael Dimock, Scott Keeter, Pew Research Center

- Gaps in Americans’ Political Interest: Following Politics in Surveys From Gallup, Pew and the ANES
  Joshua Robison, Northwestern University

- POPTOP: How Public Opinion is Related to Public Policy
  Cliff Zukin, Rutgers University

- Who Rallies! The Impact of 9/11 on the Heritability of Political Trust
  Christopher Ojeda, The Pennsylvania State University, 2012 Seymour Sudman Student Paper Competition Winner
Assessing Public Opinion on Social and Political Issues

- **Examining the Growing Support for Same-Sex Marriage in California: What Predictors Have Changed?**
  Sonja Petek, Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California

- **Public Opinion on Gun Control Revisited: Collective Consensus or Unbridgeable Ideological Divide?**
  Bryan C. Parkhurst, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

- **A Multi-Method Approach to Polling Same-Sex Marriage: Experiments in Question Wording, Framing and Implicit Attitudes**
  David P. Redlawsk, Ashley A. Koning, Rutgers University

- **Demographic Determinants of Trends in Public Opinion About Abortion in the United States**
  Jason Kevern, Jeremy Freese, Northwestern University

- **Exploring the Gender Gap in Public Opinion Toward Global Climate Change**
  Marc D. Weiner, Orin T. Puniello, Bloustein Center for Survey Research, Rutgers University
Examining the Growing Support for Same-Sex Marriage in California: What Predictors Have Changed?
Sonja Petek, Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California

- Research question: With recent shift in attitudes, what core predictors have changed since 2008?
- Data: PPIC Statewide Survey data
  - October 2008 and February 2012
  - 2000-2012 for time trends
Do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to be legally married?

- Voters pass Prop. 22
- Supreme Court ruling; marriages begin
- SF issues marriage licenses
- Voters pass Prop. 8
- 9th Circuit ruling
- Favor: 55, 50, 48, 48, 49, 50, 49, 50, 53, 52
- Oppose: 39, 44, 44, 44, 45, 44, 44, 45, 42, 41
Petek and Baldassare

Age

Race/Ethnicity

18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-65
65+

White
Other

Oct 08
Feb 12
Oct 08
Feb 12
Petek and Baldassare

Marital Status

- Never married
- Divorced/separated
- Married/widowed

Religion

- No religion
- Mainline Protestant
- Catholic
- Evangelical Protestant

Oct 08 | Feb 12
---|---
Oct 08 | Feb 12
Petek and Baldassare

Party

- Strong Dem
- Weak Dem
- Leaning Dem
- Ind
- Weak Rep
- Leaning Rep
- Strong Rep

Ideology

- Somewhat liberal
- Very liberal
- Middle-of-the-road
- Somewhat conservative
- Very conservative
**Petek and Baldassare**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>October 2008</th>
<th>February 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Protestants</td>
<td>Strongest –</td>
<td><strong>Weaker</strong> (still strongest – )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>–</td>
<td><strong>Weaker</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>–</td>
<td><strong>Weaker</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberalism</td>
<td>Strongest +</td>
<td><strong>Weaker</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.-born</td>
<td>+</td>
<td><strong>Not significant</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>+</td>
<td><strong>Not significant</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td><strong>Strongest +</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced/separated</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td><strong>Strongest +</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Bay Area</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outline

- Election Polling
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- Trust in Institutions
- Media Effects
Confidence and Trust in Institutions

- Trust at the Federal, State and Local Levels: An Examination of the Similarities and Differences
  Dean E. Bonner, Mark Baldassare, PPIC

  Dmitriy Poznyak, George F. Bishop, University of Cincinnati, Bart Meuleman, University of Leuven

- Is Confidence Really Declining? The Canadian Case
  Isabelle Valois, Claire Durand, Université de Montréal, Département de Sociologie, John Goyder, University of Waterloo, Department of Sociology

- Public Confidence in Social Institutions and Media Coverage: A Case of Belarus
  Dzmitry Yuran, University of Tennessee

- Georgia on Their Minds: The Impact of War and Financial Crisis on Georgian Confidence in Social and Governmental Institutions
  Andrea Lynn Phillips, Davit Tsabutashvili, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Survey Research and Methodology Program, Allan L. McCutcheon, University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Bonner and Baldassare

Determinants of Trust at the Federal, State, and Local Levels: An Examination of the Similarities and Differences
Dean Bonner, Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California

- Research question: Are the determinants of trust the same across different levels of government?
- Data: PPIC Statewide Survey data
  - May 2011 and December 2011
Bonner and Baldassare

Trust in government questions

– Next, how much of the time do you think you can trust the (“your” for local) government in ______ to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

– Would you say the _____ government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all of the people?

– Do you think the people in _____ government waste a lot?
Bonner and Baldassare

Trust in government across the three levels

Local

State

Federal
## Determinants of Trust Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Local Trust</th>
<th>State Trust</th>
<th>Federal Trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of State</td>
<td><strong>Strongest +</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strongest +</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strongest +</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Perceptions</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Politics</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Voting</td>
<td><strong>Strongest -</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strongest -</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Voter</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>Strongest -</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Bonner and Baldassare
Determinants of Trust Regression Results with Performance Variables

<table>
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<th>Federal Trust</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of State</td>
<td>Strongest +</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in Politics</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Voting</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Voter</td>
<td>Strongest -</td>
<td>Strongest -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Approval</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Approval</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Strongest +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

- Political and contextual optimism variables are significant at each level of government with the perception that things are going in the right direction and frequency of voting providing the most leverage.

- We also found that when performance related variables are added to our base models of trust at the state and federal level that they are not only significant, but they also increase the explained variance.
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Media Effects on Political Views and Behaviors

- Media Partisanship Scores: Developing a Holistic Measure for the Effects of Politically Relevant Media
  Devra C. Moehler, Elizabeth Roodhouse, Douglas Allen, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania

- The Effects of Media Localism on Political and Social Trust
  Michael Barthel, University of Washington, Department of Communication

- Effects of Televised Campaign Advertising: Considering the Accuracy of Retrospective Survey Self-Reports of Media Consumption
  Sarah Niebler, Carly Urban, University of Wisconsin-Madison
  Ken Goldstein, Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG)