

# A Brief History of Political Public Opinion and the SSBR Lab

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# My Background in Surveys

- Louis Harris Political Data Center at UNC Chapel Hill
- Graduate courses – f2f doorstep survey on Budget Preferences
- Learning on the fly—early USCA Research Methods classes—exercises to real surveys
- Genesis of the SSBR Lab in the early 1980s
- Types of surveys performed (no perfect type): telephone, mail, on-line, focus groups, panel study
- Entities performed for: not political candidates, *The Aiken Standard*, SRS, USCA, Camp Gravitt, Chamber of Commerce, local hospital, realtors, the LSCOG, SC Workforce Development, SC DHEC
- Dissemination: Press releases, newspaper, tv, speeches, web

# “The Survey”

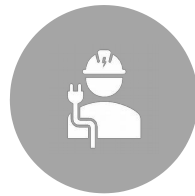
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# Consumer's Guide to Surveys



Who done it?



When done?



How many and how chosen?



Question wording?



Methodology reported?



# Problem Areas



## Show and Tell

[SSBR Lab Website](#): for studies, press releases, and more

[Surveys](#): Questionnaires with frequency and % distributions on all questions and listing of most topics covered in each

# SSBRL “House Effects:” Sample Selection and Interviewing Techniques for Telephone Surveys

- RDD (random digit dialing) used initially – very inefficient
- Use white pages--pages chosen systematically (sample size / # of pages = # chosen on each page), then systematic to get the numbers on each page, e.g. if total is four, then tenth residential number from top and bottom of each of the two columns
- To include unlisted numbers use “Plus 1” method of number selection ,e.g. if number chosen is 649-5541, then dial 649-5542; if refusal, add 1 more)
- “Most recent birthday” method of selecting respondent
- Response rate: USCA caller id/anonymity/plea for pity/info on how used
- Easy to more invasive question order to get respondent to “buy in”
- “Graceful out path” to minimize non-opinions

# SSBRL “House Effects”: Sample Selection and Interviewing Techniques for Exit Polls

- Combine Quota sampling, cluster sampling, and systematic sampling
- Quota sampling wrt: precincts in major county areas, # of interviews in each precinct proportional to relative size of precinct, and gender
- Cluster sampling wrt: just 10 locations/precincts, chosen to match previous election outcomes, two time clusters (early morning and noon)
- Systematic sampling to select respondents based on time used for each clipboard, then next available respondent of correct gender
- Response rate: USCA ID/plea for pity/positive approach/assurances
- Easy to more invasive question order to get respondent to buy in
- Demonstration of how we approached respondents



# Results in terms of representative samples in Exit Polls with samples in 600-700 range (SE:+/- 4%)

Year	cand	Act%	Sur%	Cand	Act%	Sur%	Cand	Act%	Sur%
1992	Clinton	32	32	Bush	55	52	Perot	13	15
1994	Theodor	36	36	Beasley	63	63			
1996	Clinton	33	34	Dole	62	62	Perot	5	3
1998	Hodges	39	41	Beasley	59	57			
2000	Gore	32	34	Bush	65	64			
2002	Hodges	35	37	Sanford	65	63			
2004	Kerry	33	36	Bush	62	66			
2006	Moore	<b>46</b>	<b>53</b>	Sanford	<b>54</b>	<b>46</b>			
2008	Obama	<b>37</b>	<b>45</b>	McCain	<b>61</b>	<b>52</b>			
2010	Sheheen	40	37	Haley	<b>55</b>	<b>62</b>			
2012	Obama	36	37	Romney	63	60			
2014	Sheheen	31	31	Haley	66	67			