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Opinion Polls Skewed To Marginalize Ron Paul

Reader says choosing Texas Congressman led to bizarre questions about sexual positions and cooking rice, even admitted practices of pollsters artificially deflate Paul's real support

Paul Joseph Watson
Prison Planet
Monday, November 12, 2007

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Presidential candidate Ron Paul has broke fundraising records, consistently trounces the opposition in phone-in and Internet polls and the Texas Congressman always performs well at straw polls, yet is the reason for his meager support in national opinion polls partly due to a deliberate effort to skew the results?

A reader tells us that he recently signed up with Zogby to take part in a national opinion poll about the 2008 presidential election.

Upon confirming Ron Paul as his pick, the poll branched out into a myriad of bizarre and intrusive questions that would put most off completing the process, thereby making the poll null and void, and unfairly deflating national support numbers for the Congressman.

(Article continues below)

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"The first part of the poll was about which candidate one prefers, with candidates from both parties being available as choices. Great! However, after I finished answering positively for Ron Paul, the poll got very interesting," he writes.

"As anyone who is familiar with how polls work is aware, polls are branching in their structure. Answers you give to one section of the poll will determine what questions you will receive in the next section of the poll."

The reader then relates his confusion about the fact that the poll threw up 20 questions about cooking rice before another extensive set of questions regarding personal sexual behavior.

"This went on for a number of pages and was rather intrusive," he writes. "It dealt with sexual positions, sexual fantasies, sexual preferences and similar intimate subjects. Of course neither rice cooking or sexual behavior have very much to do with presidential elections or politics in general. Or at least it shouldn't!"

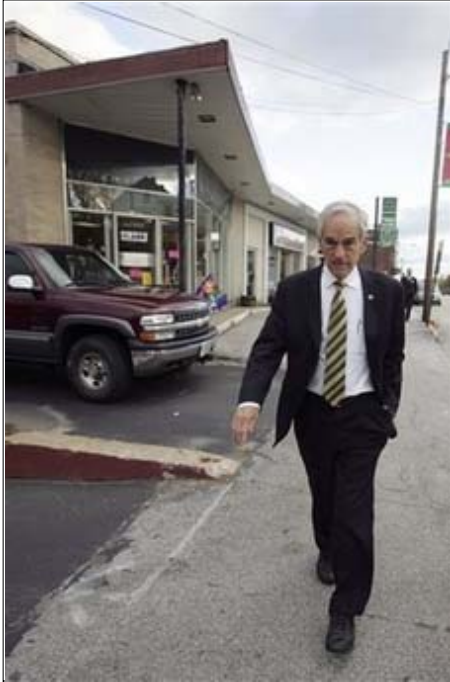
"I think that most people who answered Ron Paul as their preference in the first section of the poll probably would have bailed out in the following branching sections of the poll regarding rice cooking and sex, simply because of the questions that were being asked. This means that their preference for Ron Paul would have been voided since they never finished the poll, and so their preference would not be recorded as a result," he concludes.

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Could this really be part of a ploy to marginalize Ron Paul voters and trim his national poll numbers to make his support appear minimal?

We've seen from the after-debate poll results and recent record breaking fundraising success that Ron Paul's support is far from imaginary, as is acknowledged by bookmakers the world over who are consistently slashing his odds.

It's a tantalizing question, but what is already admitted practice on behalf of the polling agencies goes a long way to explain the Congressman's comparatively low national opinion numbers.



As Lasse Pitkaniemi writes in his excellent article, *Ron Paul and Opinion Polling*, there are a number of ways in which Ron Paul's national support is being subdued by apparently "scientific" national opinion polls.

Pitkaniemi reminds us that opinion polls are conducted using telephone landlines, a medium being increasingly abandoned by Ron Paul's core support - young people and technophiles. This is a basic sampling error because people who use landlines are less likely to use the Internet and thus are less likely to have heard of Ron Paul.

Questions tailored to exclude irregular voters and young people, which are a staple of opinion polls, will also artificially dwindle Paul's apparent support. Pitkaniemi also highlights the unfair application of vote multipliers in downgrading Ron Paul's support level.

"In order to reduce the inaccuracy between two polls conducted by the same pollster, vote multipliers are added, which can be based on earlier polls, prior elections, "scientific" analyzes or just simply guesses. Here is how they work. Let's say that a vote multiplier for Rudy Giuliani is 1.2, for John McCain 1.5 and for Ron Paul -3.0. If the pure poll gives Giuliani 25%, McCain 10% and Ron Paul 10% of the vote, the opinion polls are counted to show 30% for Giuliani, 15% for McCain and only 3% for Ron Paul. The chances are that opinion polls for Ron Paul have negative multipliers, since no-one conducting the polls believes that he can win," he writes.

Pitkaniemi concludes by reminding us that national opinion polls merely reflect name recognition, and since a majority of Americans have problems naming the Vice-President, it's unsurprising that they haven't heard of Ron Paul. The majority of these people are unlikely to have an interest in politics and will not even be voting in Republican primaries.

"For example Carter was only polling 1% in 1975 and he won the presidency. Back in 1991 Clinton's support was at 2% and he became the president. Joe Lieberman was leading the Democratic presidential nomination in 2003, yet he failed to win a single primary," writes Pitkaniemi, adding that Ron Paul's revolutionary use of the Internet as a campaign tool mirrors historical successes where elections have been won on the back of ingenuity and seizing a new medium of communication.

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