

LATINO VOTERS & THE POLLS

HOW ACCURATE ARE ELECTION SURVEYS AND EXIT POLLS?

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Polling Latinos 101

- It is well known that the Latino population is growing, and becoming a larger share of the overall U.S. population
- Polling data on Latinos varies widely and wildly
- Conclusion is that many polls make two key mistakes:
 - ▣ Have too few Latinos in their sample – large margin of error
 - ▣ Have the wrong Latinos in their sample – not representative
- In 1970 this might have been no big deal, but Latino population is truly national today

Age Data

1970

Spanish Origin or Descent

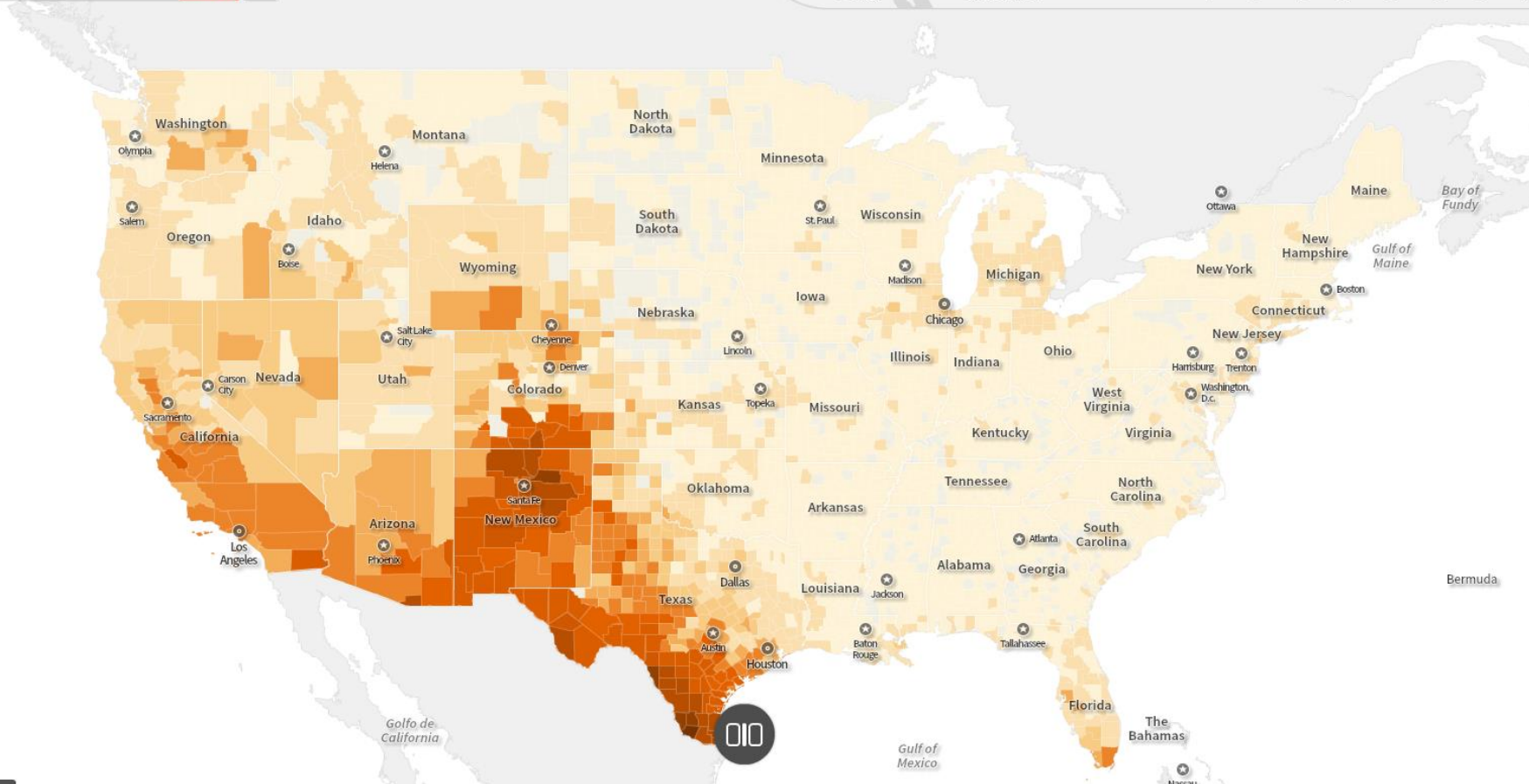
Census 1970

Search or geography



Show data by: County

Visualization type: Shaded Area



Age Data

2014

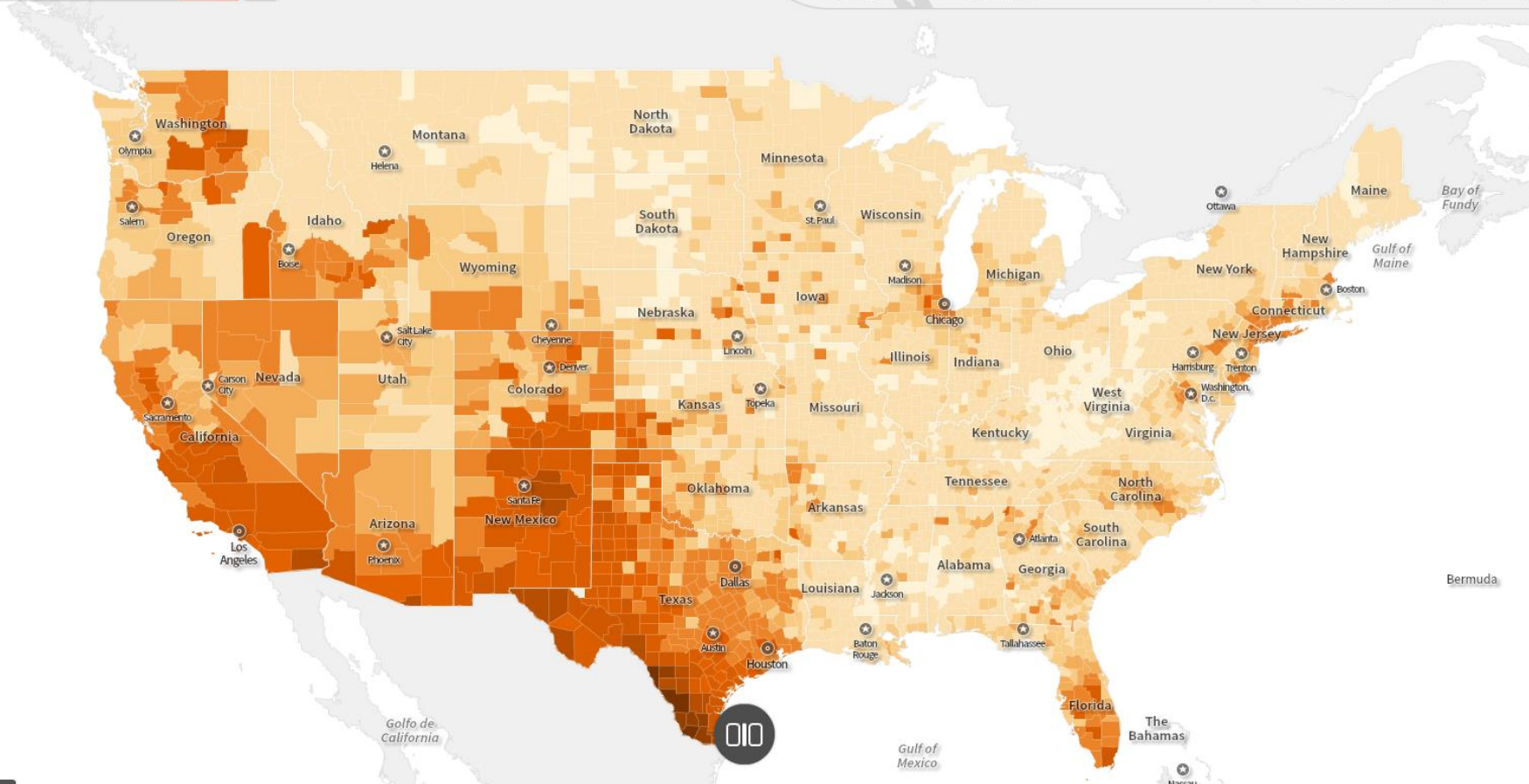
Total Population: Hispanic or Latino
ACS 2014 (5-Year Estimates)

Search or geography



Show data by: County

Visualization type: Shaded Area



PRE-ELECTION SURVEYS



Lessons from 2010

- Nevada
 - ▣ 16 pre-election surveys had Angle +3 on average
 - ▣ Angle lost by -5 when the actual ballots were counted
- Colorado
 - ▣ Same story, polls have Bennet down, yet he won
- Other states that weren't "upsets"
 - ▣ In many states with large Latino populations, polls underestimated the Democratic advantage, as per post-election analysis by Nate Silver at 538

Spotlight on Nevada 2010

- Nevada
 - 16 pre-election surveys had Angle +3 on average
 - These statewide pre-election polls generally had between 50 – 100 Latinos in their sample (MoE 10% – 14%)
 - The Latino vote estimate for Harry Reid was between 55% to 70% in statewide polls in 2010
 - Latino Decisions pre and election eve polls estimate Reid at 90% of the Latino vote
 - corroborated by regression analysis of official precinct level vote choice
 - Had the pre-elections accurately estimated a 90-10 split they would have had Reid leading Angle by 3-5 points

Same problems emerge in 2012

- Late October Monmouth Poll +3.5 Romney
- Latino vote only +6 Obama at 48-42

1. Actual Data as Reported by Monmouth University Poll

	Obama	Romney	Share	O x share	R x share
Whites	38	57	72	27.4	41.0
Latinos	48	42	12	5.8	5.0
Blacks	82	6	11	9.0	0.7
Other	55	35	5	2.8	1.8
			Total:	44.9	48.5

Same problems emerge in 2012

- Substituting the average* of Latino-specific October 2012 pre-election polls of Obama +48

2. Substituting Latino data with 8-poll average of Latinos

	Obama	Romney	Share	O x share	R x share
Whites	38	57	72	27.4	41.0
<i>Latinos</i>	<i>70.3</i>	<i>21.9</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>8.4</i>	<i>2.6</i>
Blacks	82	6	11	9.0	0.7
Other	55	35	5	2.8	1.8
			Total:	47.6	46.1

*Average of Latino Decisions, Pew Hispanic, NBC-Telemundo & Univision polls October 2012 polls

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**Obama
+1.5**

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Polling Latinos 101: Pre-election polls

- Many pre-election surveys make 3 specific mistakes:
 - 1) Sample sizes are way too small
 - 2) Samples not drawn to be representative of all Latinos
 - 3) Limited, or zero interviews in Spanish

Spanish must be available at first-contact!

- Without, Spanish-speakers under-represented;
- Low numbers of Spanish interviews yields a biased sample:
 - ▣ Too assimilated, too native-born, higher income and higher education;
- If the Spanish is under 30% nationally, the firm is very likely using “call-backs” and the sample is biased

Poor sample construction

- Beyond the lack of Spanish interviews, most polls do not attempt to draw a representative or accurate Latino sample
- You must start with a proper Latino sample frame design.
 - Is it representative by age, nativity, education, language, acculturation?
 - When the sample is done, do pollsters check the demographics of their Latino completes and compare them to the Census American Community Survey? NO!
 - If a survey ONLY interviewed recent immigrants we would dismiss it as laughable. At the same time if they interviewed ZERO immigrants, we would dismiss it.
 - The point is, we should be demanding to know the internal demographics and reliability of the Latino sample that pollsters are collecting.

EXIT POLLS



Polling Latinos 101: Exit Polls

- 4 questions to ask of the exit polls
 - 1) Which precincts were selected, and how?
 - 2) What share of Latino interviews are in Spanish?
 - 3) What are the Latino demographics?
 - 4) What percent are election day voters vs. early voters?

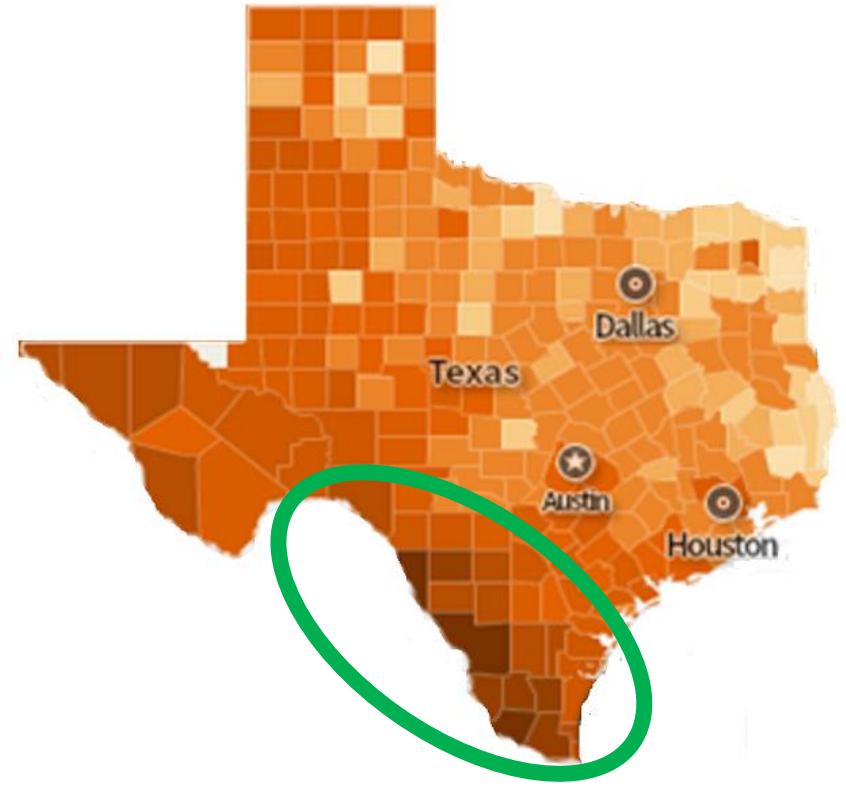
Exit polls systematically misrepresent minority vote

- Education level among minority voters in 2010 exit polls

<u>State</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>Exit Poll</u>	<u>Diff</u>
Arizona	24.5	45.0	+20.5
Colorado	28.3	57.9	+29.6
Florida	27.4	40.0	+12.6
Texas	28.7	40.9	+12.2
National	28.9	41.0	+12.1

Exit polls are not representative of Latino vote

- Exit poll sample design is not intended to get a statewide representative sample of subgroups of voters
- In 2014 the Edison exit polls selected ZERO precincts in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas
- Exit polls said 44% of Latinos voted for Abbott

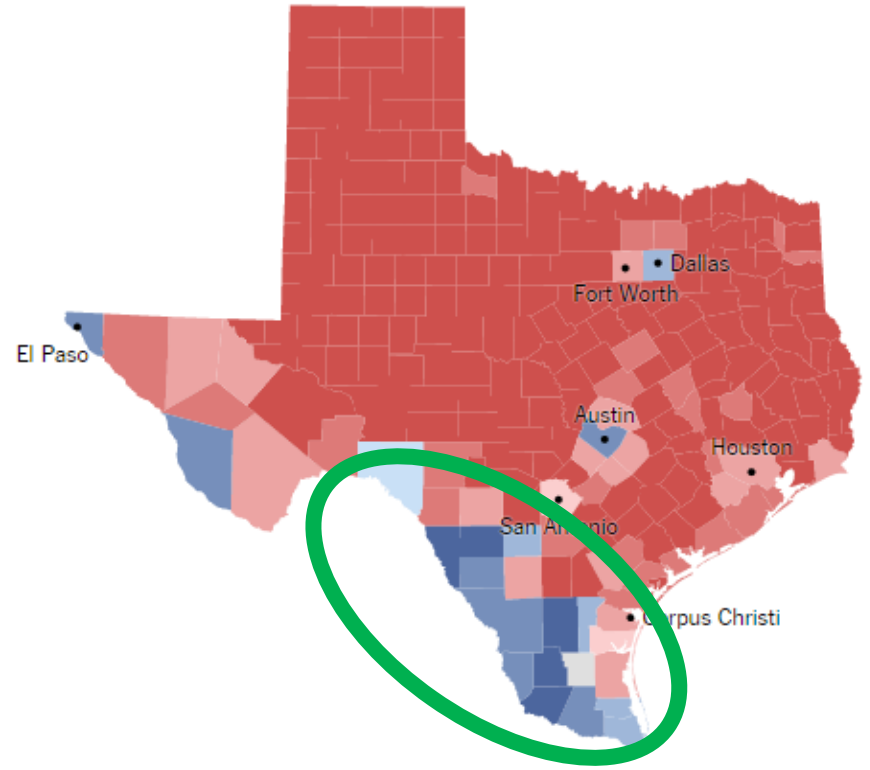


Important Texas Polling Issues

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□ Exits: 44% for Abbott

<u>County</u>	<u>Latino</u>	<u>Abbott</u>
Starr	96%	21%
Maverick	95%	26%
Zavala	93%	23%
Jim Hogg	92%	26%
Duval	89%	24%



Bad samples = Wrong data

- Statistical analysis by David Damore earlier this year shows clear evidence that Latino respondents who appear in so-called “mainstream” polls are statistically more likely to be Republicans
 - **The Correlates of Latino Political Behavior, 06/20/2016**
 - <http://www.latinodecisions.com/blog/2016/06/20/the-correlates-of-latino-political-behavior/>
- Put another way, those missing in these polls are the most likely to be Democrats: immigrants, Spanish-dominant, lower socioeconomic status, and younger Latinos

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