Ontario Election: Polling Fails Again!

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Friday, June 13, 2014

http://politicsrespun.org/2014/06/ontario-election-polling-fails-again/

		Ontario Vote Projection Projection du vote en Ontario					Ontario Seat Projection Projection des sièges en Ontario			
	Min.	Low/Bas		High/Haut	Max.	Min.	Low/Bas		High/Haut	Max.
LIBERAL ONTARIO	34.3	35.4	**36.9%**	40.6	47.2	29	42	**49**	55	68
ONTARIO PC	32.2	34.3	**35.8%**	39.0	45.4	25	33	**36**	44	60
ONTARIO NDP	18.4	20.4	**22.2%**	23.8	25.8	9	18	**22**	22	25
green	1.8	2.9	**4.0%**	5.1	6.3	0	0	**0**	0	0
Others / Autres	0.3	0.5	**1.1%**	1.6	2.2	0	0	**0**	0	0

Final projection of June 12, 2014 including polling in the field to June 11, 2014
Projection finale du 12 juin 2014, y compris les sondages effectués jusqu'au 11 juin 2014
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After spectacular failures during the Alberta and BC elections, polling, as an industry struggling for credibility, lost yesterday's election in Ontario along with the neoliberal, anti-social Hudak.

308.com reviewed the polling as of the day before the election. Polls indicated that there would most likely be a Liberal minority government. Those polls missed the extra 10 seats the Liberals earned at the expense of the PC's, and had the PC's 4 points higher than what they really earned.

What's wrong with polling?

1. Random sampling is necessary to make inferences for all of the population. When people block calls, use call display to ignore polling, and self-select for online poll samples, the polling industry has to adjust/calibrate their results "somehow" to try to get an accurate prediction. BC, Alberta and Ontario demonstrate that they can't do that. And people opting out of poll participation skew the results. And the polling industry doesn't even know which demographics of people are opting out. So WE SHOULD NOT PAY ANY ATTENTION TO POLLS ANYMORE! Get it?

2. People lie to pollsters. Those who opt-in to responding to a poll are more likely to have a political agenda. They're also more likely to lie to pollsters, particularly about how strong their intention to vote is. They don't want to look stupid by saying they'd vote in one way, but then admit they aren't likely to bother to vote. And in Ontario's case yesterday, it looked like PC supporters were more likely to express high voter intention, but they couldn't get the vote out.

Polling is lazy.

If people or organizations want to get a sense of how the population is feeling, they can pay some cash, get some polling data, then set policy or do whatever they want with it. But if the polling model is broken, they're going to have to go out, get talking to people on the ground and truly, authentically engage with people.

Shock! Talking to people? It's something political parties have shown real inability to do in any meaningful way. The first one that gets off its ass and starts interacting with actual people, en masse, should see some real electoral gains. No?