

Bradley effect



Bradley Effect The Bradley effect, also known as the Wilder effect, is a theory that refers to a tendency among white voters to either say they are undecided about whom to vote, or to say that they will vote for a non-white candidate, but then vote for the white candidate during the elections. " The Bradley effect is named after former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, an African-American who ran for California governor in 1982. Exit polls showed Bradley leading by a wide margin, and the Democrat thought it would be an early election night. But Bradley and the polls were wrong. He lost to Republican George Deukmejian." (CNN) Some researchers believe that the Bradley effect is just an attempt to come up with an excuse for the inaccurate results of flawed opinion polling practices (Keeler, Scott and Nilanthi Samaranayake 2007). There have been several explanations given as the cause of these polling errors, but it is generally believed that some voters, due to societal pressure, are not very forthcoming in their answers during the pre-election polls. It is believed that some white voters are concerned about being labeled as racially prejudiced, and so do not fully declare their support for white candidates in the polls before the actual elections. " A recent study found that the possibility of the Bradley effect, while the last finding suggested the possibility of a " reverse" Bradley effect in which black voters might have been reluctant to declare to pollsters their support for Obama or are under polled." (North Carolina Statewide Survey Research Report 2008) President Barack Obama did not really suffer this phenomenon in the presidential elections because although this issue is something to be concerned about, it clearly is not as serious an issue as it was in the 1980s. It is notable that both racial attitudes and polling techniques have undergone a lot of change since the Bradley effect was first

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noticed. References CNN (Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com/2008-10-13/politics/obama.bradley.effect_1_bradley-effect-bradley-campaign-exit-polls?_s=PM:POLITICS) North Carolina Statewide Survey Research Report (2008). Tel Opinion Research, LLC. Keeler, Scott and Nilanthi Samaranayake. (2007) Can You Trust What Polls Say about Obama's Electoral Prospects?, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press