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Trump victory raises questions

By Michele Levine, Gary Morgan and Julian McCrann, Roy Morgan Research

As the world watched Donald Trump voted in as the next President of the United States of America, two questions emerge:

Why did Donald Trump win?

Why did the Public Opinion Polls get it so wrong?

1) Why did Donald Trump win?

The 'rustled on' Republicans voted for Donald Trump – or NOT Hillary Clinton. The real question is how did Donald Trump attract such a large vote among those who would traditionally vote Democrat or not vote at all?

“Real unemployment number is 20%” said Donald Trump

It seems that everywhere in the world politicians and Governments are seeking to minimise or hide the ugly truth about massive unemployment (and under-employment). For those who are unemployed, whose family members are unemployed or whose children may never get a job, the 'great unemployment lie' as Jim Clifton of the Gallup Organisation called it, is just that – a lie. It creates distrust, and at least 20% of people feel disenfranchised. Donald Trump calling *real unemployment* at 20% was a voice that recognised these disenfranchised electors.

The language of 'winning again'

Donald Trump's carefully crafted language offered those who felt like losers or that they were losing out the hope of 'winning again' and being 'winners'. In the Western World at least, the idea of 'a win' or 'luck' is one of the few ways to motivate the disengaged, depressed and downtrodden.

Donald Trump defied Political Correctness.

Donald Trump gave voice to the deepest fears and anger of the disenfranchised against 'other'-people of other or different race, colour, gender, religion, political persuasion and opinion. And he did so in language that defied 'political correctness' – that many feel render them inarticulate or unable to speak honestly.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2) Why did the Public Opinion Polls get it so wrong?

There was no dearth of public opinion polls in the lead up to yesterday's US Election. Most, simply reflected the prevailing view – that Hillary Clinton would win – a view held by 90% of people in the US.

Bias towards the Party people 'think will win'

The phenomenon of bias towards the party or candidate people think will win is probably the most common bias in political polling. Given 90% thought Hillary Clinton would win, the theory is people who supported Donald Trump would be less likely to agree to be interviewed, and less likely to say how they would vote. We see the same phenomenon in Australia with Pauline Hanson. The most recent example of this phenomenon was Brexit.

A Poll is only as good as its Sample

The aim is to poll a representative sample of the population of interest – whether it be the US or relevant States.

The US population is extraordinarily diverse and much more heterogeneous than Australia. To adequately represent the population requires serious attention to the task and in particular must include polling people may not be easily reached by traditional polling such as landline telephones or increasingly commercial Internet panels. The best practice for sampling and surveying is a multi-mode polling methodology that begins with an address-based probability sample and includes face-to-face, telephone and mobile and may incorporate online surveying depending on the respondent's preferred method of giving their views. This is expensive and although used regularly by Roy Morgan in Australia is rarely, if ever, used in the US.

Voter Turnout – the 'wild card' in this US election.

In Australia voting is compulsory and so the vast majority of electors vote. However in the US voting is not compulsory – so voter turnout can be a critical determinant of the outcome of an election. Early indications are that voter turnout in yesterday's election was up around 5% to a record, or near record levels, in many States. The additional turnout no doubt from 'hard to get', 'disenfranchised' voters favoured Donald Trump.

Independence and Provenance matters!

In the US as well as Australia there are many polls reported that are of dubious veracity – leaked private party polling is often selectively reported to 'send a message' or 'create a perception'. It is important when reading polls to review carefully – where they were conducted, who was interviewed, when the poll was taken, exactly what questions were asked and critically who funded the poll.

For further information:

Contact	Office	Mobile
Gary Morgan:	+61 3 9224 5213	+61 411 129 094
Michele Levine:	+61 3 9224 5215	+61 411 129 093

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. The following table gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. The figures are approximate and for general guidance only, and assume a simple random sample. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
500	±4.5	±3.9	±2.7	±1.9
1,000	±3.2	±2.7	±1.9	±1.4
1,500	±2.6	±2.2	±1.5	±1.1
2,000	±2.2	±1.9	±1.3	±1.0

Morgan Poll Accuracy — Recent Elections State & Federal (2006 – 2015)

The Morgan Poll has proven to be consistently the most accurate regular poll in recent Australian Elections — including the 2013 Federal Election, 2010 Federal Election, 2007 Federal Election, 2010 Victorian State Election & 2012 Queensland State Election.

The **Morgan Poll** was the most accurate of all polling companies at [the 2013 Federal Election](#) for the two-party preferred vote (L-NP: 53.5% cf. ALP 46.5%) (sample 4,937 electors).

The **Morgan Poll** was the most accurate of all polling companies at [the 2007 Federal Election](#) for both primary vote and two-party preferred predictions (sample 2,115 electors).

The **Morgan Poll** accurately predicted [that the ALP would win the 2006 Queensland Election with a reduced majority](#) (sample 604 electors).

The **Morgan Poll** accurately predicted [that the ALP would win the 2006 Victorian Election with a reduced majority](#) (sample 956 electors). The **Morgan Poll** was also the most accurate on the primary vote of the major parties for the Victorian election.

Note: The [discussion on Possum Pollytics](#) regarding Morgan and Newspoll is well worth reading.

The following included comment says it all: “I find it interesting that for the only poll in the last five years for which there is any ‘real’ figure with which to compare, i.e. the polls immediately before the 2004 election, Morgan (45.5%) was closer to the actual Coalition Primary (46.7%) than Newspoll (45%) or Nielsen (49%), and Morgan (38.5%) was also closer to the ALP actual primary (37.6%) than Newspoll (39%), and only marginally further away than Nielsen (37%). Since we have no idea of how far away the ongoing polls are from ‘reality’ (whatever that means), surely we should just go with what we know, that in the most recent testable case, Morgan was better at forecasting the actual primary vote than Newspoll. On what possible basis should we decide that the Newspoll or Nielsen primary vote estimate is ‘better’ than Morgan’s.”

[View Federal Voting Intention Trend](#)