

Those partisan non-partisan groups

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Just because they say they're non-partisan doesn't mean that they're non-partisan.

Friday night, I got a phone call from "Victor" at "Washington Counts" who came right out and asked me whom I was going to vote for.

I asked him to repeat the name of the organization he represents, and he said, "Washington Counts, a non-partisan organization, working in cooperation with Emily's List."

I couldn't find any information about "Washington Counts", but I did find [Emily's List](#), which is a blatantly partisan group. Their own [About Page](#) say that they are "dedicated to... electing pro-choice Democratic women".

I pointed out to "Victor" that Emily's List is a partisan group. He ignored me and repeated his question, asking me whom I was going to vote for.

I told him that I was unlikely to be inclined to assist an organization that start out by lying to me.

And then I heard a click and a recorded voice saying, "This survey was sponsored by Emily's List. On the web at www.emilyslist.org."

Let's see what happened here. Somebody claimed to be from "Washington Counts", but in fact they were from "Emily's List". [Corrected identification 9:38am.] That person claimed to be representing a non-partisan group, but in fact the group is highly partisan.

I guess if you're going to lie, you may as well go all-out.

Of course, this could have been a double-fake-out. Perhaps it was really a pro-life Republican group **pretending** to be a pro-choice Democratic group?

These sorts of double-fake-outs are not unheard of. In California, anybody who pays the requisite fee can get a statement printed in the voter's guide. It has been known to occur that somebody who holds one position on an issue submits **an incoherent or absurd statement in support of the opposition position**, thereby making the opposition look

stupid. During the 1996 U.S. presidential election primary season, Candidate X sponsored a telephone survey asking voters “If Candidate Y took <controversial position>, would your opinion of Candidate Y go up, down, or stay the same?” The intent here was to start the rumor that Candidate Y was actually considering taking said controversial position (which would have undermined Candidate Y’s traditional support).

You can never tell where the dirty tricks are coming from in politics.

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