This is the USC Listproc archive of AAPORNET messages for this entire month. It is one big message, in chronological order, just the way the USC archive stored it. You can search within this month with your browser's search function (usually Ctrl-F).

Turning this into individual messages that ASU's Listserv software can index and sort means a lot of reformatting. We will do this as time permits.
New messages are of course automatically formatted and indexed correctly, and I have converted November 1994 through January 1995 and June 2002 to the present.

Shap Wolf
Survey Research Laboratory
Arizona State University
shap.wolf@asu.edu
AAPORNET volunteer host

Begin archive:

Archive aapornet, file log9812.
Part 1/1, total size 507914 bytes:

---------------------------- Cut here ------------------------------

---------- Forwarded message ----------
ASC '99

...LEADING SURVEY AND STATISTICAL COMPUTING INTO THE NEW MILLENIUM

Wednesday to Friday, 22nd to 24th September 1999
at The University of Edinburgh in Scotland, UK

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT AND FINAL CALL FOR PAPERS

Building on the success of its 1992 and 1996 international events and to set the scene for the millennium, The Association for Survey Computing is pleased to announce that in 1999 it will be hosting its Third International Conference on Survey and Statistical Computing in Edinburgh.

The Scientific Programme will comprise both invited and contributed papers which will be included in the Proceedings and published prior to the Conference.

The official language of the conference will be English.

The Conference is sponsored by SPSSmr.

INVITED SPEAKERS

Invited speakers will address plenary sessions on the first and last days of the Conference and will include:

*    Mick Couper (University of Michigan)
*    Ian Durrell (SPSSmr)
*    David Hand (Department of Statistics, The Open University)
*    Rory Morgan (Research International Group)
*    Andy Teague (Office for National Statistics)

CONTRIBUTED PAPERS
Contributed papers will be refereed and will address topics covering all aspects of survey and statistical computing, including, but not limited to:

* Case studies
* Computer aided data capture technologies
* Data interchange
* Data management and database design
* Data modelling techniques and data visualisation
* Data quality, editing and imputation
* Dissemination of survey results
* Meta-data and survey documentation
* Networking technology and its impact
* Quantitative and Qualitative data handling
* Sample and field management
* Sample design and weighting
* Secondary data
* Statistical languages
* Surveys and the Internet
* Survey systems

CALL FOR PAPERS

Interested contributors should send a brief abstract (maximum 500 words), including title, relevant keywords and topic headings under which it would best fit, to the following address:

=>  ASC, P.O. BOX 60.
    CHESHAM, BUCKS, HP5 3QH, ENGLAND
    Tel/Fax: +44 (0)1494 793033
    E-mail: asc@essex.ac.uk

Please include your full address with 'phone and fax numbers and, if possible, electronic mail address.

IMPORTANT DATES

14th December 1998           Deadline for receipt of proposals for contribution to parallel streams
30th January 1999            Notification of acceptance sent out
Early March 1999             Deadline for receipt of first drafts of papers for review
Mid April 1999               Referees' comments sent out
Early June 1999                   Deadline for receipt of final
                                         copy of papers for inclusion
                                         in Conference Proceedings

22nd - 24th September 1999        THE ASC CONFERENCE

For complete information, updated as available, please see
                                      http://www.assurcom.demon.co.uk/Events/Sep99/index.htm

or, send an e-mail message to
                                      asc99-info@essex.ac.uk

which will automatically reply.

This message has been sent, on behalf the ASC, by:

Randy Banks (randy@essex.ac.uk)               tel: +44 (0)1206 873067
Chair, Association for Survey Computing       fax: +44 (0)1206 873151
Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)
University of Essex
Colchester, Essex
United Kingdom CO4 3SQ                http://www.assurcom.demon.co.uk

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.
For those of you who are following the debate over the use of statistical sampling in the census the following from today's NY Times may be of interest:

file:///D|/NETSCAPE DOWNLOAD/Download/POLITICS/scotus-census.html

----------CA7D10DA822F2A542163A0A6
Content-Type: text/html; charset=us-ascii; name="scotus-census.html"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Content-Disposition: inline;
filename="scotus-census.html"

<!doctype html public "-//w3c//dtd html 4.0 transitional//en"> <html> <head>
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
<meta name="slug" content="BC-SCOTUS-CENSUS-950&ADD-NYT">
<meta name="date" content="19981130">
<meta name="length" content="1302">
<meta name="byline" content="By LINDA GREENHOUSE">
<meta name="headline" content="Justices Wary of Entering Census Dispute">
<meta name="GENERATOR" content="Mozilla/4.5 [en] (Win95; U) [Netscape]">
<title>Justices Wary of Entering Census Dispute</title>
<NYT_HEADER
version="1.0" type="main"> </head> <body bgcolor="#FFFFFF">

<blockquote>
<blockquote>&nbsp;
<h2>
Justices Wary of Entering Census Dispute</h2>

<p>&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&n
this year over the sampling plan. The House won its case before a special three-judge U.S. District Court here, as did a group of 16 private plaintiffs, organized by a conservative public interest law firm, who brought a similar suit before a three-judge panel in Alexandria, Va. <p>In arguing its appeal from both rulings before the Supreme Court Monday, the administration, represented by Solicitor General Seth Waxman, maintained that neither case should have been allowed to proceed in the lower courts because the plaintiffs lacked the kind of concrete injury necessary to have standing to bring a case in federal court. <p>With the emphasis on jurisdictional issues, very little time was spent during the 90-minute argument on the intricate legal framework on which the sampling plan foundered in the lower courts. Both courts interpreted the opaque provisions of the Census Act to prohibit the use of sampling for the purpose of allocating congressional seats among the 50 states. Both courts then found it unnecessary to address whether the constitutional mandate of an "actual enumeration" rules out statistical sampling. <p>While the courtroom was crowded with members of Congress and with representatives of groups with a stake in this dispute, there was only glancing acknowledgment of just what those stakes might be or of the raw politics at the heart of the matter. Sampling, a form of statistical estimation, is aimed at correcting an anticipated undercount of millions of people that disproportionately misses members of minority groups and poor people living in cities. <p>These areas tend to be Democratic strongholds -- the three worst undercounts in 1990 were in congressional districts in the New York City boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx, according to one study -- and Democrats are confident they will gain in political power if the missing millions are counted. Republicans are determined not to let that happen. <p>An exchange between Justice John Paul Stevens and Maureen Mahoney, representing the House of Representatives, demonstrated the depth of the Republicans' commitment to the traditional headcount. What should a census taker be allowed to do, Stevens asked, when trying to count people in an apartment complex with a large population of illegal aliens? Suppose an apartment appeared occupied, but no one answered the door and the neighbors refused to reveal anything. Would the census taker have any options? <p>"Your honor, they can't guess," Ms. Mahoney replied. <p>So the census taker should put down "zero" even if an apartment was evidently occupied? Stevens asked. <p>"Yes, the lawyer replied, because the Constitution requires an "objective standard," not an estimate. <p>"So an objective standard requires 'zero'?" Stevens persisted, as Justice Stephen Breyer broke in to ask: "Even if the lights go on and off in the evening?" <p>The argument then veered back to whether the House should have been allowed to bring its suit in the first place. The Republican leadership went to court to stop sampling after failing last year to override Clinton's veto of a bill that would have barred "any statistical adjustment" of the population numbers used for apportioning House seats. Waxman said the House should not be permitted to accomplish through litigation what it could not achieve by legislation, a point with which justices across the ideological spectrum appeared inclined to agree. <p>"I don't see a stopping point," Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg told Ms. Mahoney. Ginsburg went on to characterize the House's position as: "Gee, this is really important, and we want you to resolve this, court."
Scalia provided the day's most vivid commentary. "There are 900 ways the House can stymie the president if it has the political will to do it," he said, suggesting as one clearly fanciful option a refusal to appropriate money for the White House staff. "Your honor, this has become an intractable controversy," Ms. Mahoney said. "When you say 'intractable,' you mean the president has won, and the House doesn't have the political will to do anything about it," Scalia replied. "It's a political controversy, and we don't get into that."

Various justices also expressed doubt, although less definitively, about the standing of the private plaintiffs. The 16 individuals, organized by the Southeastern Legal Foundation, of Atlanta, live in various states, including Connecticut, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, that the plaintiffs assert are likely to lose congressional seats under an adjusted census that they would keep under a traditional headcount. The administration's position is that the prediction is premature and too speculative a basis for standing.

The justices indicated discomfort with the lack of agreement on basic facts; since the lower courts decided the two lawsuits on summary judgment, without a trial, the two sides' factual assertions were never tested. The court appeared uncertain on how to proceed. If the justices were to reverse the lower courts by finding that summary judgment was inappropriate, Chief Justice William Rehnquist said, "we'd have no definitive resolution before June," by which time the court's current term is expected to end. In urging the court several months ago to accept these cases on an expedited basis -- a request the court accommodated with unusual speed -- both sides asserted that the dispute needed to be resolved by March in order to keep the census on schedule. In the budget agreement last month, Congress agreed to pay for census preparations only until June 15.

Michael Carvin, representing the private plaintiffs, tried without much success to focus the court's attention on the merits of his case. "The key point is that there will be no 100 percent headcount," he said. "Has there ever been a 100 percent headcount?" Ginsburg asked. "Haven't there always been people missed?"

Unless the Supreme Court issues a definitive constitutional ruling, which does not appear probable, any ruling is likely to leave some important loose ends, of which an appropriations battle is only one. The only question actually before the court is whether sampling can be used for apportionment -- the allocation of congressional delegations among the states, which is the only function the Constitution assigns to the census. But census figures are also used for districting within states, as well as for determining federal aid under a variety of programs. The administration takes the view that a statistical adjustment for those purposes could proceed -- and under one reading of the Census Act would, in fact, be required -- even if the court ruled it out for apportionment purposes.

The cases are Department of Commerce vs. House of Representatives, No. 98-404, and Clinton vs. Glavin, No. 98-564.
Dear AAPOR,

This note is long overdue.

I want to extend my thanks to the many who wrote to congratulate me for receiving the AAPOR Award this year. Your letters were much appreciated; I wish I could reply personally to each one, but it was not possible due to illness. I am very grateful nonetheless.

Apologies for (mis)using the Net.

Je vous aime, l'AAPOR!

Al Gollin
algollin@worldnet.att.net

--------CA7D10DA822F2A542163A0A6--
To give you an idea of what Hill staffers are reading about election polls...

The Wed., Nov. 18th edition of The Hill Rag ran an article by Philippe Shepnick entitled "Pollsters say polls were merely trends." The Rag is a free Capital Hill neighborhood paper distributed in D.C. that covers Hill issues, both local and national, provides a calendar, local Hill gossip, and is widely read by staffers, etc. Interest groups, lobbyists, and others advertise there as a way to target their Congressional audience.

A photo of Sen. Faircloth is featured with the caption "Sen. Lauch Faircloth (R-NC) was given the edge by pollsters, but lost on Election Day." In fact, the article says that he was given a slim 44 to 43 lead, with a 3.5% margin of error. His opponent, John Edwards (D-NC), won 51 to 47.

(Incidentally, many DC locals were THRILLED at Faircloth's loss—he was largely responsible for engineering the takeover of our local self-government by a Control Board and the federalization of our judicial system last July at midnight. He used race baiting in his ads. Local democracy activists held a post election press conference to give him a token bus ticket back to his pig farms that are said to be causing environmental hazards in NC water).

The Rag reports that:

"The surprising results in last week's Senate races had some pollsters questioning their pre-election data and giving credit to the strong get-out-the-vote efforts by Democrats and the unions in the weekend before the Nov. 3 election."

"...some pollsters believe that it is becoming harder to get an accurate =
pulse of the voters because of the refusal rate of callers—the number of people who refuse to take part in the survey—which sometimes reaches 50 percent. The refusal rate on public policy issues hovers around 20 percent.

"The refusal rate is something many people in the research community have been concerned with for a long time," said pollster Brian Vargus, director of the Indiana University Public Opinion Laboratory. "For those of us who do telephone research, we've got to find something that's better."

"Richard Niemi, a political science professor at the University of Rochester, said that, in the last 15 to 20 years, more voters are refusing to participate in telephone polls, but he's not sure how they affect the results. "That could be a factor affecting a poll's accuracy, but we don't really know," he said. "We can't interview those who chose not to participate in polls, so we don't have a good handle on their effect on a race."

Another factor affecting polls is the deluge in media outlets, which allows voters to frequently change their minds, Vargus said. Those two elements diminish the shelf life of a poll. "As Election Day approaches, polls are only as good as the day they were done," he said.

Polls should be viewed as trends, Zogby said. "What polls need to do is provide a reasonable exception for voters," he said. "My balls are made of steel, not crystal. I can't see into the future. None of use can, especially with such voter volatility."

Voters need a better understanding of the numbers behind a poll, Zogby added, and that is the fault of the press. "There needs to be a careful explanation every time a poll number comes out," he said. "God knows there are enough 24-hour news stations, they can give an extra 15 minutes of explanation."

Despite these problems, most good pollsters can do a pretty good job, Niemi said. "In defense of polls, it's amazing how accurate they are, given the problem with the response rate."

Maurice Carroll, director of the Quinnipiac Polling Institute at Quinnipiac College in Connecticut, doesn't think the criticism is warranted if the numbers are right. "A poll has to be judged by its results not by its process. It's the pundits in Washington that are out of touch with voters."

>From murray.edelman@vnsusa.org Tue Dec 1 09:21:20 1998
Received: from libra.vnsusa.com (libra.vnsusa.com [205.183.239.99] (may be forged)) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP id JAA13733 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 1 Dec 1998 09:21:19 -0800
Voter News Service is exploring the possibility of moving from our custom coded exit poll questionnaire input system to a flexible CATI system.

These are the characteristics we are looking for in a CATI system:

1. It must be highly reliable; we have yet to find a way to postpone an election because of operational difficulties.

2. It must support 300 terminals or workstations.

3. We prefer that it run on an HP-UX platform but will consider Windows NT.

4. It needs to be flexible; we will need to insert custom logic.

5. If it uses a relational database, it should be Oracle.

I would appreciate being pointed in some fruitful directions as well as hearing your own thoughts and experiences.

Thank you.

Murray Edelman, Ph.D.
Editorial Director
Voter News Service
Responsibilities
As a Preparation and Processing Manager, you will be responsible for managing the daily activities in coding, editing, key entry, and data processing operations. Additional responsibilities will include hiring, staff training, monitoring task budgets, and monitoring work flow productivity. The position requires a thorough knowledge of data preparation and task processing and a high attention to service excellence both in terms of internal and external clients.

Qualifications
We seek candidates who are highly motivated with outstanding organizational, interpersonal and writing skills. Successful candidates should be able to demonstrate through industry experience the capability of managing a staff of temporary and regular employees, as well as the abilities to self-motivate, appropriately delegate, and effectively communicate. The position requires an Bachelor's degree and 3-5 years of survey research and/or operations experience.

Interested applicants should submit their resume and salary history to one of the following:

E-mail: o._david_jackson@abtassoc.com
Fax: (312) 867-4200

Mail:
Abt Associates Inc.
Human Resources
Abt Associates is committed to fostering a diverse, multicultural work environment.

Company Profile

Abt Associates Inc. has been providing research-based services for business and government since 1965. Our firm is built on the concept that sound information and empirical analysis are the best foundation for decision making in both the public and private sectors. We are a client-focused organization dedicated to providing practical, measurable, high-value solutions to problems brought to us by a wide variety of clients: U.S. government agencies, corporations, foreign governments, and international organizations. Today Abt Associates' practice extends around the world and spans four domains: Social and economic policy research; International economic development; Business research and consulting; and Abt Associates Clinical Trials.

Our full-time, regular staff of over 700 includes nationally and internationally recognized experts known for their grasp of their respective disciplines, innovative research techniques, and insightful, and often ground breaking, analysis and recommendations.

Our professional development opportunities include competitive salaries, outstanding comprehensive benefits, and an Employee Stock Ownership Plan.
Hello George,
I would greatly appreciate any information you receive on this issue. I am working on my dissertation in an area linked to this topic.

Thanks in advance.
Scott

>A colleague has asked me for examples of where opinion polls have been inappropriately used to influence a decision or formulate a policy and consequently the decision or policy dramatically failed.

>Thanks in advance.

>George M.
gimons@xmission.com

--------------------
Scott Goold, Ph.D. (abd)
University of New Mexico
505.293.2504
Web page @ < www.unm.edu/~sgoold >

"I Can't Accept Not Trying"
--------------------
AAPOR's conference operations committee consists of volunteer members who help run parts of the annual conference. The committee is currently seeking volunteers to fill the role of Social Coordinator.

Duties of the Social Coordinator include:

- exploring opportunities for social events at AAPOR conferences (recent events have included evening boat cruises and baseball outings; future activities will depend on opportunities available near conference sites)

- making arrangements for AAPOR members' attendance at these events

- coordinating the "fun run" traditionally held at the conference, as well as the creation of the conference t-shirt.

AAPOR relies heavily on volunteer efforts in running the annual conference, which saves considerable expense to the organization. Volunteers will have the opportunity to make a real contribution to AAPOR, work closely with other members of the committee, and help shape the Social Coordinator role as it continues to develop. It is a great way to get involved, and AAPOR generally pays for the Social Coordinator's hotel room and meals at the conference.

AAPOR members who have general familiarity of AAPOR's conference and membership, and who expect to attend the conference over the next few years, are welcome to submit their names for consideration. In addition to selecting the Social Coordinator, we hope to draw on the list of volunteers to help with other tasks for the 1999 and future conferences.

If you are interested, or have additional questions, please send your name and contact information to Paul Beatty by email (pbeatty@umich.edu) or fax (734-764-8263).

Thanks,

Paul Beatty
AAPOR Conference Operations Committee
Does anyone know a good source to find information on how the public rate various companies and industries (favorability ratings). Specifically, I am looking for ratings of the pharmaceutical industry, the life or health insurance industry and trial lawyers. I seem to remember a discussion or posting on AAPORNET about this recently but can't recall the specifics. Replies should be sent to me directly at jrichter@bsmg.com Thanks.

>From surveys@wco.com Tue Dec 1 15:35:27 1998
Received: from mailhub2.ncal.verio.com (mailhub2.ncal.verio.com [204.247.247.54])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id PAA12213 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 1 Dec 1998 15:35:25 -0800 (PST)
Received: from compaq (cetus168.wco.com [209.21.28.168])
    by mailhub2.ncal.verio.com (8.8.7/8.8.7) with SMTP id PAA06241
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Tue, 1 Dec 1998 15:35:19 -0800 (PST)
Message-ID: <013a01be1d83$2e5fbca0$192cfeea9@compaq>
From: "Hank Zucker" <surveys@wco.com>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Re: Justices Wary of Entering Census Dispute
Date: Tue, 1 Dec 1998 14:42:42 -0800
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.3110.1
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.3110.3

>For those of you who are following the debate over the use of 
>statistical sampling in the census the following from today's NY Times
Say, how about we all refuse to do any polls for any member of Congress who votes against sampling? After all, they don't believe in it anyway <g>.

On a more serious note: Has AAPOR issued any statements in support of sampling in the census? If not, should we?

Hank Zucker
Creative Research Systems
makers of The Survey System: Survey Software that Makes You Look Good
http://www.surveysystem.com mailto:surveys@wco.com

Forgive me for surfacing an issue that was discussed weeks ago. However, I thought some of you might be interested.

Over the last several weeks, I have exchanged several messages and voice mails with Arianna Huffington. My latest letter to her went out on November 19th. The contents of the letter are below. I also sent her a press release I sent out on election night, November 3rd.

The press release makes the point that the Republican campaign managers made the mistake Arianna was advocating. They chose not to believe the polls.
November 19, 1998

Mrs. Arianna Huffington
300 North Carmelina Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90049

Dear Arianna:

I have read some (possibly all?) of your columns on the polls and I agree with almost everything you say. That may surprise you, or not.

The two areas where I (of course!) take exception are:

1. That good polls are remarkably accurate most of the time (even if we don't know how accurate any one poll is). I believe most of the cases where good polls get the winner of an election wrong are not because the poll was inaccurate per se but because of late-swing, differential turnout, etc.

2. I absolutely believe that if you want to know anything about public opinion, you have no choice but to use and read the polls. Absent polls - or even if polls were discredited - leaders, politicians, the media, business and everyone else would be woefully misinformed and make some terrible errors of judgment which can be avoided because of the polls. Before polls existed they did. And politicians who disbelieve the polls often get hurt (e.g. the Republicans this year).

American business would not spend billions of dollars a year on marketing and survey research (and their methods are generally less high quality than the best political polls) if they did not believe they were not getting useful data. They are not that stupid.

With best wishes,

Humphrey Taylor

P.S. I attach my election-night press release which was not unrelated.

**********

FOR RELEASE:
NOVEMBER 3, 1998  11:15 PM

Contact:
Humphrey Taylor, Chairman  (212) 539-9657
David Krane, Executive Vice President  (212) 539-9648
DEMOCRATS BENEFIT FROM BACKLASH AGAINST REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN ADS ON LEWINSKY SCANDAL - AS PREDICTED

Republicans chose to disbelieve the data and ignore good advice.

Until a few weeks ago the Republicans looked set to win big in the mid-term elections. The results so far suggest they have failed to do so. A major reason for the weak Republican showing is that they decided to re-introduce the impeachment issue and the Monica Lewinsky scandal into the closing stages of the campaign.

Recent Harris Polls had issued strong warnings to the Republicans against doing this.

The headline over the Harris Poll released on October 23, read "Modest Backlash Against Republicans' Handling of Impeachment Process Helping to Sustain Democratic Turnout."

On October 28, Humphrey Taylor, Harris Chairman, wrote of "the danger to Republicans of (an) anti-impeachment backlash," and that if the Republicans raised the impeachment issue in the final days of the campaign "they would be likely to inflame potential Democratic turnout." Harris's analysis was based on the fact that a majority of likely voters opposed the impeachment process and wanted to put the issue behind them.

Specifically, the Harris Poll data showed that a 57% to 38% majority of all adults, and a 54% to 42% majority of likely voters, did not believe that the charges against President Clinton - even if all were true - amounted to the kinds of "high crimes and misdemeanors which would justify impeaching him and removing him from office." A 60% to 37% majority of the public, including 43% of likely Republican voters, favored a "severe rebuke" of the president - as suggested by President Ford, so that the President "would remain in office" and the "country can put this scandal behind us." A 55% to 43% majority of the public also believed that "the Republicans in Congress are just out to get the president, whatever it takes, fair or unfair."

In reviewing the results tonight, Humphrey Taylor said, "It is bad manners to say 'I told you so' - but sometimes the urge is irresistible. The Republican decision to spend $10 million on their attack ads at the end of the campaign reminds me of Aesop's fable of the Scorpion And The Frog. The Republicans chose to ignore our advice. But then our advice was free. As independent pollsters, Harris does not do, or accept, work from political candidates or parties in the U.S.A. We haven't done so for thirty-five years. And who takes free advice seriously?"
I second Hank's suggestion. Congress needs to know that the social science research community is not happy about the prospect of being stuck for another 10 years with data that are practically useless for studying certain
populations.

Ed Freeland

--------------16D9B0BAC6271E6507A6CD58
Content-Type: text/x-vcard; charset=us-ascii; name="vcard.vcf"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Content-Description: Card for Freeland, Edward
Content-Disposition: attachment; filename="vcard.vcf"

begin:          vcard
fn:             Edward Freeland
n:              Freeland;Edward
org:            Princeton Survey Research Center
adr;dom:        202 Robertson Hall;;Princeton University;Princeton;NJ;08544-1013;
email;internet: efreelan@princeton.edu
title:          Associate Director
tel;work:       (609) 258-1854
tel;fax:        (609) 258-1985
x-mozilla-cpt:  ;0
x-mozilla-html: FALSE
version:        2.1
end:            vcard

--------------16D9B0BAC6271E6507A6CD58--

>From rshalpern@mindspring.com Wed Dec  2 07:14:13 1998
Received: from camel8.mindspring.com (camel8.mindspring.com [207.69.200.58])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id HAA07924 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 07:14:12 -0800 (PST)
Received: from default (user-37kbutj.dialup.mindspring.com [207.69.251.179])
by camel8.mindspring.com (8.8.5/8.8.5) with SMTP id KAA16877
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 10:14:10 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <3.0.5.32.19981202095338.00827b10@pop.mindspring.com>
X-Sender: rshalpern@pop.mindspring.com
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Pro Version 3.0.5 (32)
Date: Wed, 02 Dec 1998 09:53:38 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: "richard s. halpern" <rshalpern@mindspring.com>
Subject: Re: Justices Wary of Entering Census Dispute
In-Reply-To: <013a01be1d83$2e5fbca0$192cfe9@compaq>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/enriched; charset="us-ascii"

Hans Zuker writes:

>On a more serious note: Has AAPOR issued any statements in support of
Part of me would be very much in favor of taking a strong stand favoring the use of statistical sampling in conducting the next census. However, another part of me is uneasy because of the highly partisan political nature of the debate. The issue of whether or not to use sampling is not exactly black and white and for AAPOR to take a strong stand on such a highly partisan political issue might have undesirable effects on AAPOR’s name and reputation. Having said that, however, I would still be in favor of AAPOR taking a stand, but I felt that the con issue should at least be explored. The fact that the issue is so politically charged should not deter us from standing up for what we believe in and practice.

Dick Halpern

Richard S. Halpern, Ph.D.
Consultant, Strategic Marketing and Opinion Research
3837 Courtyard Drive
Atlanta, GA 30339-4248
rshalpern@mindspring.com
phone/fax 770 434 4121
While I understand the political reasons behind opposition to using sampling in the census, the legal roadblocks have me dumbfounded. As I understand the situation, the constitution does not prohibit sampling, but the Census Act passed by congress (in the 70s?) precludes anything but enumeration as the basis for apportionment. This latter issue apparently forms the basis of the lower court ruling against sampling.

My understanding of the plan proposed by the Census Bureau is that enumeration will still occur. However, sampling will also occur and be used to adjust the enumeration. This is being suggested because past experience and research has clearly demonstrated that enumeration is inaccurate in very predictable ways, i.e., urban populations, particularly non-white urban populations, are significantly undercounted. The object then is to "correct" an enumeration we know to be flawed. Therefore, enumeration is STILL the basis of the census, and for apportionment and anything else census data are used for, it's just that it has been adjusted to make it more accurate.

It is hard for me to believe anything other than that the intention of the founding fathers for the census was to obtain as accurate a picture as possible of the United States. Sampling, when executed correctly, is a mature and scientifically reliable methodology that can yield demonstrably accurate information about a population extrapolated from much smaller portions of that population.

If AAPOR does make public statements, I think it should include the following:

1) Sampling is a reliable and proven methodology;

2) The kind of sampling and data collection being talked about is not the kind used for marketing research or overnight political polling, but a much more thorough process;

3) Sampling is intended as a supplement to traditional enumeration,
Let the politicians make the political decisions. We should stand up for our scientific understanding of the best way to collect the data we need.

Ken Sherrill
Hunter College, CUNY

On Wed, 2 Dec 1998, richard s. halpern wrote:

> Hans Zuker writes:
> 
> >On a more serious note: Has AAPOR issued any statements in support
> >of
> >sampling in the census? If not, should we?
> >Part of me would be very much in favor of taking a strong stand
> favoring the use of statistical sampling in conducting the next census. However, another part of me is uneasy because of the highly partisan political nature of the debate. The issue of whether or not to use sampling is not exactly black and white and for AAPOR to take a strong stand on such a highly partisan political issue might have undesirable effects on AAPOR's name and reputation. Having said that, however, I would still be in favor of AAPOR taking a stand, but I felt that the con issue should at least be explored. The fact that the issue is so politically charged should not deter us from standing up for what we believe in and practice.
>
"Politics" may be a reason for being cautious, and certainly suggests that AAPOR as an organization should not endorse any "partisan" position as such. As an organization, we do have expertise in how sampling might properly be used to improve data quality, and where public debate seems uninformed (in either direction), it might well be appropriate for us to issue a "white paper". But one additional caution might be in order. As survey and statistical professionals we can have a legitimate voice on standards and how our techniques can be employed well. But we are NOT experts on the interpretation of various constitutional and statutory provisions, nor on the advisability of using or not using sampling from the standpoint of PERCEIVED legitimacy of the Census (save insofar as that might come from well conducted surveys of public opinion) and AAPOR should not take any stand on THOSE issues. As individual citizens we quite appropriate have
views, as a "corporate expert witness" we must confine our comments to our area of expertise.

G. Donald Ferree, Jr.  
Institute for Social Inquiry/Roper Center  
University of Connecticut U-164 341 Mansfield Road, Room 421 Storrs CT 06269-1164

>From dhenwood@panix.com Wed Dec 2 09:12:41 1998
Received: from mail2.panix.com (mail2.panix.com [166.84.0.213]) by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP id JAA11145 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 09:12:40 -0800
(PST)
Received: from [166.84.250.86] (dhenwood.dialup.access.net [166.84.250.86]) by mail2.panix.com (8.8.8/8.8.8/PanixM1.3) with ESMTP id MAA07993 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 12:12:37 -0500 (EST)
X-Sender: dhenwood@popserver.panix.com
Message-Id: <l0313030eb28b24bf2dd6@[166.84.250.86]>
In-Reply-To: <3.0.5.32.19981202095338.00827b10@pop.mindspring.com>
References: <013a01be1d83$2e5fbca0$192cfe9@compaq>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Date: Wed, 2 Dec 1998 12:12:46 -0500
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: Doug Henwood <dhenwood@panix.com>
Subject: Re: Justices Wary of Entering Census Dispute

richard s. halpern wrote:

>Part of me would be very much in favor of taking a strong stand
>favoring the use of statistical sampling in conducting the next census. 
>However, another part of me is uneasy because of the highly partisan 
>political nature of the debate.

I think it's hard to argue the fact that the Republicans oppose sampling precisely because they realize it's more accurate, and would boost the count of the wrong kinds of people, for them - poor, dark, urban. The party has a generally hostile attitude towards the social sciences (except neoclassical economics), because social scientists often tell them things they don't want to hear. They've bullied independent agencies like the BLS in unprecedented ways. This is all obnoxious, and independent statisticians and researchers should denounce it whenever they can.

Doug

--

Doug Henwood
In a message dated 12/2/98 12:13:10 PM EST, dhenwood@panix.com writes:

<< Republicans oppose sampling precisely because they realize it's more accurate, and would boost the count of the wrong kinds of people, for them >>

This is a terribly biased statement! It has to do with preventing waste. Why waste money on research when you already know all the answers?

Jim

>From Mark@bisconti.com Wed Dec 2 09:49:02 1998
Received: from medusa.nei.org (medusa.nei.org [208.158.210.1])
  by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
  id JAA26231 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 09:49:01 -0800
(PST)
Received: from jetson.nei.org (unverified [208.158.210.200]) by medusa.nei.org (Integralis SMTPRS 2.0.15) with ESMTP id <B0000341094@medusa.nei.org> for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 02 Dec 1998 12:47:16 -0500
Received: from MARK-BRI by jetson.nei.org with SMTP (Microsoft Exchange Internet Mail Service Version 5.0.1458.49)
  id YC27R993; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 12:50:55 -0500
Received: by mark-bri with Microsoft Mail
  id <01BE1DF1.468E3040@mark-bri>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 12:42:52 -0500
When the federal Constitution was adopted in 1788 (and we in the = District of Columbia lost our right to be represented in the federal = legislature), many people who lived in this country were not considered = "people" by the founding fathers, but were considered property (slaves). = Others were thought to be too emotional/unstable to vote (women). = Others were considered to be separate or outside the federal system = (natives). These people could not vote even if they wanted to.

I don't know much about the history of the census--was everyone counted, = or just those who were considered worthy of the 1 person, 1 vote = concept? If everyone was counted, was the data segmented into "worthy" = versus "not worthy" for reasons of representation/apportionment? How = does it work today for those who are still not represented, like people = of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico?

The issue of sampling in the Census has been kicking around for two or = three years but is now getting a lot more attention in the media.

The history of this issue can be traced back to the 1990 Census. After = the results were released Cong. Sawyer, who chaired the census subcommittee= , and Cong. Rodgers, who then was the ranking member and is now the chair = of the appropriations subcommittee which census falls under, made =
statements that indicated support for new and better ways to conduct the census. The National Research Council (the principal operating agency of the National Academy of Sciences) came out with a report in November 1994, which suggested the use of sampling.

By this time the GOP now controlled the House. A consultant suggested something to the effect that as many as 25 House seats could be effected if sampling were used. This was interpreted as "the GOP would loose 25 seats" if sampling were used.

About two years ago, a consortium of organizations coordinated by TerriAnn Lowenthal <terriann2k@aol.com> a former staff member for the Sawyer subcommittee, keeping organizations up to date on the issues related to sampling and Census 2000.

At the moment, the alternative to the sampling methodology is a reworking of the methodology that was used in 1990. In truth, this methodology was first used in 1970 and then reworked around the edges in 1980 and 1990. I was recently at a conference where Tom Hofeller, the staff director for the census subcommittee, said that sampling was not going to happen. I asked what methodology he proposed instead. He said it was not his place, but the Presidents to propose something that the Republicans would accept. I suggested that the President had his proposal on the table and it was not the Republican's turn to come up with something that would produce a more accurate census that 1990.

What people overlook is there is no relationship between being counted in the census and voting. The relationship is not with who votes, but the block counts that are available to the people who draw the district lines. It might be wiser, and a little more devious, if the GOP let sampling go through and put all of their effort into capturing as many state legislatures as possible.

Three other tidbits:

Realizing that census results also impact on funds that are sent to the states, Republicans are supporting a two-number census - -- one for apportionment (unadjusted) and one for the distribution of funds (adjusted).

A good comprehensive history of the census can be found in a book by Prof. Margo Anderson: "The American Census: A Social History."

In 1990, when there was an effort to adjust the results of the census, Newt Gingrich wrote a letter supporting adjustment since Georgia would have gotten one more seat.

Steve Dienstfrey
Mark Richards asks how "enumeration" took place in 1790. I have read that in some areas of the country the census-taker pinned an enumeration form (read "sign-up sheet) on a tree, and you signed up. If you didn't sign up, you weren't counted. If you were a woman, you knew better than to sign. If you owned slaves, I guess you indicated the number, or 1/5 the number. And if you couldn't write your name...?

Whatever the faults of this method, it beat the rough guess method, which was at that time the only alternative. Sampling was not a developed science, and anyway, where would you have gotten an accurate list to sample from? Let alone a telephone to do RDD from?

I agree with those who say we as an organization should issue a statement about sampling. It may be that it will be _another_ statement about sampling, but it can't be done too often. We should definitely _combat_ the suggestion that sampling is less accurate than omitting people. I would prefer omitting Lance Pollard's implication that sampling as used in market research is of less good quality than the sampling plan that the Census Bureau has: it depends on which market research, doesn't it? It would be all right to encourage review of the Census Bureau's sampling plan by statistical consultants, though.

Everything else that Lance says is quite to the point. And we should be sure to state our dismay at the fact that a respected statistical procedure has become entangled in political controversy, where it does not belong. I was not aware that there is legislation expressly forbidding sampling anywhere. Again, the intent would have to be to _increase_ accuracy for us to find it acceptable. I hope we all agree on that, too.
AAPORibus Unum,

On the next census and sampling: One thing which we might all do to help would be to call or write the science editor or reporter on our local newspaper and suggest the timeliness of a piece on sampling as an applied science. I suggest this because I think we suffer, more than anything else, from sheer and utter ignorance of what sampling is, why it works, and why it has value. If the general public, even the educated public, even the supposedly educated political and media elite, could gain even a rudimentary sense of systematic and statistical sampling as a part of logic, inference and---might we hope---epistemology, all of our lives could only be better, or at least easier. Response rates might even rise! And on what else but sampling's essential intellectual core, after all, could all of us in AAPOR ever really agree?

-- Jim

******

>From s.kraus@mail.asic.csuohio.edu Wed Dec  2 11:30:22 1998
Received: from mail.asic.csuohio.edu (bones.asic.csuohio.edu [137.148.208.27])
  by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
  id LAA04898 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 11:30:20 -0800
(PST)
Received: from myhost.csuohio.edu (137.148.18.30) by mail.asic.csuohio.edu
  with SMTP (MailShare 1.0fc6); Wed, 2 Dec 1998 14:30:37 -0500
X-Sender: s.kraus@bones.asic.csuohio.edu
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Light Version 1.5.2
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
To: aapornet@usc.edu
From: "Dr. Sidney Kraus" <s.kraus@mail.asic.csuohio.edu>
Subject: Re: Sampling: What We Might Do
Date: Wed, 2 Dec 1998 14:30:37 -0500
Message-ID: <1299513459-308627@mail.asic.csuohio.edu>
Although I understand the political views associated with the current discussions about sampling, AAPOR's credibility depends, in part, on its ability to defend the scientific method. I vote for a direct approach to Congress: the essence of assessing public opinion and representing the population in counts and other aggregate considerations is best served (most accurately) with scientific methods of sampling populations. Our discussions should not be based on political affiliation or ideology, but on science.

Sid Kraus

At 10:56 AM 12/2/98 -0800, you wrote:
>
> AAPORibus Unum,
> > On the next census and sampling: One thing which we might all do to help would be to call or write the science editor or reporter on our local newspaper and suggest the timeliness of a piece on sampling as an applied science. I suggest this because I think we suffer, more than anything else, from sheer and utter ignorance of what sampling is, why it works, and why it has value. If the general public, even the educated public, even the supposedly educated political and media elite, could gain even a rudimentary sense of systematic and statistical sampling as a part of logic, inference and--might we hope--epistemology, all of our lives could only be better, or at least easier. Response rates might even rise! And on what else but sampling's essential intellectual core, after all, could all of us in AAPOR ever really agree?
> >
> > *******
> >
> >
>
> From abcgss1@nittany.uchicago.edu Wed Dec  2 14:12:54 1998
Received: from cicero.src.uchicago.edu (root@cicero.src.uchicago.edu [128.135.232.3])
 by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
 id OAA12820 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 14:12:53 -0800
 (PST)
Received: from nittany.uchicago.edu (nittany.uchicago.edu [128.135.45.8])
 by cicero.src.uchicago.edu (8.8.5/8.8.5) with ESMTP id QAA01211
 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 16:12:51 -0600 (CST)
Received: (from abcgss1=localhost)
 by nittany.uchicago.edu (8.8.5/8.8.5) id QAA24906
 for aapornet@usc.edu; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 16:12:51 -0600 (CST)
Date: Wed, 2 Dec 1998 16:12:51 -0600 (CST)
From: "Tom W. Smith" <abcgss1@nittany.uchicago.edu>
Message-Id: <199812022212.QAA24906@nittany.uchicago.edu>
To: aapornet@usc.edu

General Social Survey Student Paper Competition

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago announces the fifth annual General Social Survey (GSS) Student Paper Competition. To be eligible papers must: 1) be based on data from the 1972-1998 GSSs or from the GSS's cross-national component, the International Social Survey Program (any year or combination of years may be used), 2) represent original and unpublished work, and 3) be written by a student or students at an accredited college or university. Both undergraduates and graduate students may enter and college graduates are eligible for one year after receiving their degree.

The papers will be judged on the basis of their: a) contribution to expanding understanding of contemporary American society, b) development and testing of social science models and theories, c) statistical and methodological sophistication, and d) clarity of writing and organization. Papers should be less than 40 pages in length (including tables, references, appendices, etc.) and should be double spaced.

Paper will be judged by the principal investigators of the GSS (James A. Davis and Tom W. Smith) with assistance from a group of leading scholars. Separate prizes will be awarded to the best undergraduate and best graduate-level entries. Entrants should indicate in which group they are competing. Winners will receive a cash prize of $250, a commemorative plaque, and the MicroCase Analysis System, including data from the 1972-1998 GSSs (a $1,395 value). The MicroCase software is donated by the MicroCase Corporation of Bellevue, Washington. Honorable mentions may also be awarded by the judges.

Two copies of each paper must be received by February 15, 1999. The winner will be announced in late April, 1999. Send entries to:

Tom W. Smith
General Social Survey
National Opinion Research Center
1155 East 60th St.
Chicago, IL 60637

For further information:

Phone: 773-256-6288
Fax: 773-753-7886
Email: smitht@norcmail.uchicago.edu
I shared some of the APPORNET discussion on the above with Professor Margo Anderson, an avid historian on the Census. She provides some useful and interesting references for consideration.

Please feel free to respond directly to her.

Thanks,

Carolee Bush
In response to the recent emails on historical questions on the Census and sampling, AAPOR members should be made aware that historians have examined the history of censustaking and demographic analysis at the time of the first census. See for example,

James Cassedy, Demography in Early America (Harvard University Press, 1969)

Feel free to contact me directly with questions,

Margo Anderson
Fellow, 1998-99, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (202 691 4069)
& Professor, History Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
margo@uwm.edu

Dear All:

There are procedural histories for most Censuses. There is a census
publication of all schedules through to 1980.

A very good cite to look at is the Steve Ruggles Historical site at http://www.ipums.umn.edu. There you can also get Census data from 1850 through 1990 in a common format.

Ruggles is editing the enumerator instructions for 1850 through 1990, I think

Andy Beveridge.

Jeanne Anderson wrote:

> Mark Richards asks how "enumeration" took place in 1790. I have read
> that in some areas of the country the census-taker pinned an
> enumeration form (read "sign-up sheet) on a tree, and you signed up.
> If you didn’t sign up, you weren't counted. If you were a woman, you
>

From surveys@wco.com Wed Dec 2 17:33:07 1998
Received: from mailhub2.ncal.verio.com (mailhub2.ncal.verio.com
[204.247.247.54])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id RAA00241 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 17:33:04 -0800
    (PST)
Received: from compaq (sextans128.wco.com [209.21.28.128])
    by mailhub2.ncal.verio.com (8.8.7/8.8.7) with SMTP id RAA15459
    for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 17:33:02 -0800 (PST)
Message-ID: <01cb01be1e5c$c7470f20$192cfe9a@compaq>
From: "Hank Zucker" <surveys@wco.com>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: Re: Sampling: What We Might Do
Date: Wed, 2 Dec 1998 17:30:44 -0800
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.3110.1
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.3110.3

I agree with Sid that we should take a direct approach in support of sampling as the best available way to improve the accuracy of the next census, and I agree with Jim that education should be part of what we do. A combination of a press release and a letter to Congress, both backed up with a white paper, might work.

In general, I think that AAPOR should stay away from taking political positions, but I think we should not shy away from taking a scientific position just because that scientific position has political implications.

Hank Zucker
Although I understand the political views associated with the current discussions about sampling, AAPOR's credibility depends, in part, on its ability to defend the scientific method. I vote for a direct approach to Congress: the essence of assessing public opinion and representing the population in counts and other aggregate considerations is best served (most accurately) with scientific methods of sampling populations. Our discussions should not be based on political affiliation or ideology, but on science.

Sid Kraus

At 10:56 AM 12/2/98 -0800, you wrote:

On the next census and sampling: One thing which we might all do to help would be to call or write the science editor or reporter on our local newspaper and suggest the timeliness of a piece on sampling as an applied science. I suggest this because I think we suffer, more than anything else, from sheer and utter ignorance of what sampling is, why it works, and why it has value. If the general public, even the educated public, even the supposedly educated political and media elite, could gain even a rudimentary sense of systematic and statistical sampling as a part of logic, inference and--might we hope--epistemology, all of our lives could only be better, or at least easier. Response rates might even rise! And on what else but sampling's essential intellectual core, after all, could all of us in AAPOR ever really agree?

-- Jim

From arobbin@mailer.fsu.edu Wed Dec 2 17:36:08 1998
Received: from mailer.fsu.edu (mailer.fsu.edu [128.186.6.122])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id RAA01815 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 17:36:06 -0800 (PST)

Alice Robbin

P.S. Also to own and read (and read again) are the books that Margo Anderson cited, among them HERS.

On Wed, 2 Dec 1998, Andrew Beveridge wrote:

> Dear All:
> 
> There are procedural histories for most Censuses. There is a census publication of all schedules through to 1980.
> 
> A very good cite to look at is the Steve Ruggles Historical site at http://www.ipums.umn.edu. There you can also get Census data from 1850 through 1990 in a common format.
> 
> Ruggles is editing the enumerator instructions for 1850 through 1990, I think
> 
> Andy Beveridge.
> 
> Jeanne Anderson wrote:
> 
> Mark Richards asks how "enumeration" took place in 1790. I have read that in some areas of the country the census-taker pinned an enumeration form (read "sign-up sheet) on a tree, and you signed up. If you didn't sign up, you weren't counted. If you were a woman, you
>From abider@earthlink.net Wed Dec 2 18:23:39 1998
Received: from avocet.prod.itd.earthlink.net (avocet.prod.itd.earthlink.net [207.217.120.50])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id SAA15173 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 18:23:28 -0800
(PST)
Received: from alvbynsy (sdn-ar-001dcwashP247.dialsprint.net [168.191.22.9])
by avocet.prod.itd.earthlink.net (8.8.7/8.8.5) with SMTP id SAA12003
for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Wed, 2 Dec 1998 18:23:23 -0800 (PST)
Message-ID: <000f01be1e64$54ec7ca0$0916bfa8@alvbynsy>
Reply-To: "Albert Biderman" <abider@earthlink.net>
From: "Albert Biderman" <abider@earthlink.net>
To: <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: re: Census and Sampling
Date: Wed, 2 Dec 1998 21:26:22 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
boundary="----=_NextPart_000_000C_01BE1E3A.68E18860"
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.2106.4
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.2106.4

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

------=_NextPart_000_000C_01BE1E3A.68E18860
Content-Type: text/plain;
  charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: base64

QXMgb3RoZXJxIGhhdmUgc3VnZ2VzdGVkIGhlcmUsICBwb2xpdGljYWwgYW9tYmVjY29tcG9uZToZcyB0byB0
aGUgYXJnZwIiWiIGV2ZW4gX2Fycm93b28gY2F0ZWdvcnkgSGVsbG93cyB0aGUgY292ZXIgY29tZSB0aGUg
Y2Vzc2VzIHNlbnRlZCBvdWx0IGFubm90IHRvIHJ1biB0aGUgT29mc3NldCByZWZ0IGJlZCBhbmQgZ2VuZGlu
Z3MgY2F0ZWdvcnkgY2F0ZSB0aGUgY29tZSB0aGUgY29tZSB0aGUgY29tZSB0aGUgY29tZSB0aGUgY29tZSB0a

---=_NextPart_000_000C_01BE1E3A.68E18860--
I agree with the member who suggests that we talk directly with Congressmen. Especially Congressional committees. Especially those concerned with
appropotionment, distribution of money, etc.

Trying to communicate our position to legislators via the press adds too many possibilities of distortions, misunderstandings, inaccuracies, etc. Even if Congressmen read newspapers. We are better off writing directly to committee chairs, who will certainly pass on our communications to staff, and perhaps to other committee members.

This is not lobbying: we are not paying anyone to represent our point of view. We are simply over-volunterring our own AAPOR leaders!

>From ande271@ibm.net Thu Dec 3 04:51:44 1998
Received: from out4.ibm.net (out4.ibm.net [165.87.194.239])
    by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
    id EAA29079 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 3 Dec 1998 04:51:43 -0800
(PST)
Received: from default (slip-32-100-252-175.ny.us.ibm.net [32.100.252.175])
    by out4.ibm.net (8.8.5/8.6.9) with SMTP id MAA49816 for <aapornet@usc.edu>;
    Thu, 3 Dec 1998 12:51:39 GMT
Message-ID: <3666B422.1996@ibm.net>
Date: Thu, 03 Dec 1998 07:54:10 -0800
From: Jeanne Anderson <ande271@ibm.net>
Reply-To: ande271@ibm.net
X-Mailer: Mozilla 3.0 (Win95; U)
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: aapornet@usc.edu
Subject: [Fwd: [Fwd: Census and Sampling]]
Content-Type: message/rfc822
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Content-Disposition: inline

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

--------------58FB28A74AC0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

I am re-sending this, because it has been quoted twice in truncated form. Some of the points made in the remainder would, I believe, be
non-controversial.

The part about the tree-pinning is not just apocryphal. Census-takers may not have been careless: we had itinerant hunters, trappers, merchants, preachers, new settlers and assorted other people whose permanent residences, if they existed, would have to be tracked down only at great expense. Enumeration represented the most systematic way of determining the population and apportionment for many of the decennial Censuses. That sampling was not mentioned in the Constitution does not decrease our (AAPOR's) respect for those who labored to establish sound methods in the decades before our technology made it possible for us to gather data about the U.S. population more efficiently. Tree-pinning or other "sign-ups" probably identified individuals and households in some areas that would otherwise not have been known to census-takers or even local big-wigs.

--------58FB28A74AC0
Content-Type: message/rfc822
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Content-Disposition: inline

Message-ID: <3665B28D.6437@ibm.net>
Date: Wed, 02 Dec 1998 13:35:09 -0800
From: Jeanne Anderson <ande271@ibm.net>
Reply-To: ande271@ibm.net
Organization: Jeanne Anderson Research
X-Mailer: Mozilla 3.0 (Win95; U)
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: AAPORNET@USC.EDU
Subject: Census and Sampling
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Mark Richards asks how "enumeration" took place in 1790. I have read that in some areas of the country the census-taker pinned an enumeration form (read "sign-up sheet) on a tree, and you signed up.
If you didn't sign up, you weren't counted. If you were a woman, you knew better than to sign. If you owned slaves, I guess you indicated the number, or 1/5 the number. And if you couldn't write your name...?
Whatever the faults of this method, it beat the rough guess method, which was at that time the only alternative. Sampling was not a developed science, and anyway, where would you have gotten an accurate list to sample from? Let alone a telephone to do RDD from?

I agree with those who say we as an organization should issue a statement about sampling. It may be that it will be _another_ statement about sampling, but it can't be done too often. We should definitely _combat_ the suggestion that sampling is less accurate than omitting people. I would prefer omitting Lance Pollard's implication that sampling as used in marketing research is of less good quality than the sampling plan that the Census Bureau has: it depends on which market research, doesn't it? It
would be all right to encourage review of the Census Bureau's sampling plan by statistical consultants, though.

Everything else that Lance says is quite to the point. And we should be sure to state our dismay at the fact that a respected statistical procedure has become entangled in political controversy, where it does not belong. I was not aware that there is legislation expressly forbidding sampling anywhere. Again, the intent would have to be to _increase_ accuracy for us to find it acceptable. I hope we all agree on that, too.

--------------58FB28A74AC0--

>From JHH@MPRNJ.COM Thu Dec  3 05:36:15 1998
Received: from mpr5.MATHINC (MPR5.mathinc.com [38.233.146.17])
   by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with SMTP
   id FAA06183 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Thu, 3 Dec 1998 05:36:14 -0800 (PST)
Received: by mpr5.MATHINC with SMTP (Microsoft Exchange Server Internet Mail Connector Version 4.0.994.63)
   id <01BE1E97.AAA86450@mpr5.MATHINC>; Thu, 3 Dec 1998 08:33:56 -0500
Message-ID: <c=US%a=_%p=MATHINC%l=MPR5-981203133027Z-156477@mpr5.MATHINC>
From: John Hall <JHH@MPRNJ.COM>
To: "'AAPORNET'" <aapornet@usc.edu>
Subject: RE: Sampling: What We Might Do
Date: Thu, 3 Dec 1998 08:30:27 -0500
X-Mailer: Microsoft Exchange Server Internet Mail Connector Version 4.0.994.63

>I am not sure that all of us in AAPOR agree about "sampling's essential intellectual core." I recall giving a presentation at a local chapter as part of a panel discussion on within household respondent selection. One member of long standing wondered why I was worried whether a particular respondent selection method was a probability sampling method, and compared my arguments to arguing about angels dancing on the head of a pin.

John
John Hall
Senior Sampling Statistician
Mathematica Policy Research
P.O. Box 2393
Princeton, NJ 08543
phone (609) 275-2357
fax (609) 799-0005
email jhall@mathematica-mpr.com

>--------
>From: James Beniger[SMTP:beniger@rcf.usc.edu]
>Sent: Wednesday, December 02, 1998 1:56 PM
AAPORibus Unum,

On the next census and sampling: One thing which we might all do to help would be to call or write the science editor or reporter on our local newspaper and suggest the timeliness of a piece on sampling as an applied science. I suggest this because I think we suffer, more than anything else, from sheer and utter ignorance of what sampling is, why it works, and why it has value. If the general public, even the educated public, even the supposedly educated political and media elite, could gain even a rudimentary sense of systematic and statistical sampling as a part of logic, inference and—might we hope—epistemology, all of our lives could only be better, or at least easier. Response rates might even rise! And on what else but sampling’s essential intellectual core, after all, could all of us in AAPOR ever really agree?

-- Jim

I just re-read my posting from yesterday and found a typo that is fairly significant.

In my discussion with Tom Hoffeler when he said the president should come up with a plan that the Republicans will accept. I said the president has a plan on the table and it is NOW (rather than not) the responsibility of =
the Republicans to put something forward that will improve the accuracy of the next census.

An interesting book that I forgot to mention is by Barbara Everitt Bryant (the Director of the Bureau of the Census during the 1990 Census) and William Dunn "Moving Power and money: The Politics of Census Taking" published by New Strategists Publications, Inc., Ithaca. It is a light read but none the less insightful.

Steve Dienstfrey

Hi,
I don't have an example of where polls may have been used inappropriately, but there's an excellent book by Richard Sobel that's a case study on ignoring polls: Public opinion in U.S. foreign policy : the controversy over Contra aid Published: Lanham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield, c1993

I'd be very interested to hear what other references you might have,

Monica Wolford
Program on International Policy Attitudes
Univ. of Maryland
Scott Goold wrote:
>
> Hello George,
> I would greatly appreciate any information you recieve on this issue.
> I am working on my dissertation in an area linked to this topic.
> >
> Thanks in advance.
Some quick observations re sampling:

1. As Steve Dienstfrey noted, sampling might well result in gains in some apportionment gains in states controlled by Republicans. As a result, it is unwise to assume that sampling will benefit Democrats solely, or even on balance.

2. We should also stop repeating the false assertion/implication that the Census was ever a simple "head count." Even in the manuscript era, the head of household acted as a proxy for other family members. Thus, the Census has always attempted to cover the POPULATION OF HOUSEHOLDS, but has also always used a CONVENIENCE SAMPLE within households. In many cases, neighbors have been employed as proxies as well (creating the possibility for people to be counted twice if they have a second home).

-- Eric Plutzer

Eric Plutzer (exp12@psu.edu)
Department of Political Science
The Pennsylvania State University
107 Burrowes Building, University Park, PA 16802

Phone: (814) 863-8978    Fax: (814) 863-8979
Personal homepage:  http://www.la.psu.edu/~eplutzer/
Graduate programs:  http://www.la.psu.edu/polisci/grad/
SYMPOSIUM ON
MODEL SELECTION, EMPIRICAL BAYES AND RELATED TOPICS
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

March 24-26, 1999

The United States Postal Service, The Gallup Organization, Inc., the National Center for Health Statistics, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and the Gallup Research Center of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will sponsor a symposium on Model Selection, Empirical Bayes and Related Topics on March 24-26, 1999, in Lincoln, Nebraska. The symposium will start in the afternoon of March 24, 1999 (Wednesday) and end around noon on March 26, 1999 (Friday).

The following researchers have agreed to present papers in the invited sessions:

Susie Bayarri (Universitat de Valencia, Spain)
James Berger (Duke Univ.)
Ferry Butar Butar (Sam Houston Univ.)
Gauri Datta (Univ. of Georgia)
Bradley Efron (Stanford Univ.)
John Eltinge (Texas A & M Univ.)
Edward George (Univ. of Texas at Austin)
Malay Ghosh (Univ. of Florida)
Elizabeth Halloran (Emory Univ.)
Jiming Jiang (Case Western Univ.)
Michael Larsen (Harvard Univ.)
Carl Morris (Harvard Univ.)
Donna Pauler (Harvard Univ.)
On March 25, 1999 (Thursday) Professor Bradley Efron will deliver the departmental annual Rawlee lecture for a general audience.

We plan to have a poster session of selected papers. If you wish to present a paper (on any topic of interest), please send the title and an abstract (less than 200 words) to P.Lahiri at the following address by January 31, 1999.

If you are interested in attending the symposium or presenting a paper in the poster session, please send the following completed form and the required registration fee by January 31, 1999 to P.Lahiri, Dept. of Math./Stat., 922 Oldfather Hall, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0323, USA (email: plahiri@math.unl.edu; FAX: 402 472-8466). The registration fee is $100 ($30 for students). Please make your check payable to the UNL Dept. of Math./Stat. We regret that we cannot accept payments by any other methods.

Limited space is available so we may not be able to accept your registration even if you send your completed registration by January 31, 1999. In that case your check will be returned.

Latest information about the symposium will be available from the following web page:

http://www.math.unl.edu/Stat

If you have any question about the symposium, please contact Ms. Joyce Zach, Symposium Coordinator, at (402) 472-3731 (email: jzach@math.unl.edu).

Thank you for your attention.

Partha Lahiri
Organizer

REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name:

Last:____________________________

First:___________________________

M.I.:__________________________

2. Affiliation:________________________________________________________
3. Position: _________________________________

4. Mailing Address: ______________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________

5. Phone Number: _______________________________

6. Email Address: ______________________________

7. FAX Number: _______________________________

8. Please check one of the following:
   
   (a) Will attend but will not present a paper in the poster session: _______
   
   (b) Will present a paper in the poster session: _______
       (please send the title and the abstract of your presentation by
        January 31, 1999)

9. Registration Fee: $100 (Students: $30)
   Please make your check payable to the UNL Dept. of Math./Stat.
   We regret that we cannot accept payments by any other methods.
   Please send the registration fee by January 31, 1999 to

   P. Lahiri
   922 Oldfather Hall
   Department of Math./Stat.
   University of Nebraska-Lincoln
   Lincoln, NE 68588-0323
   U.S.A.

*****
The other day I saw that Tom Guterbock suggested a panel for the AAPOR conference on Citizen Satisfaction Surveys (a great idea!).

Which has given me the push to ask if anyone else might be interested in joining a panel on Latino voting issues (and other social indicators among Latinos).

If you have interest / data, please contact me (soon!) and perhaps we can organize an interesting discussion!

Thanks,

Ana Maria Arumi
Public Policy Institute of California
500 Washington, Suite 800
San Francisco CA 94111
415 291-4438 Direct
415 291-4401 Fax
the U.S.Census. It appears to promote the use of sampling more as a means to address the escalating costs and difficulties in conducting the Census than as a means to solve the undercount question explicitly.

Nonetheless, the undercount question is the one that dominates, because of the perceived political implications.

A good source of information on the undercount problem and the political fracas surrounding it in the 1990 Census is "Looking for the Last Percent" by Harvey M. Choldin (1994, Rutgers U. Press), currently available in paperback.

Harvey Choldin, Stephen Fienberg and NY Time correspondent Stephen Holmes appeared on the NPR program "Talk of the Nation" on August 18, 1998 to discuss the sampling issue in the 2000 Census. The program may be heard via Real Audio at:

_________________________

Stephen Dienstfrey wrote:
> The issue of sampling in the Census has been kicking around for two or three years but is now getting a lot more attention in the media.
> The history of this issue can be traced back to the 1990 Census. After the results were released Cong. Sawyer, who chaired the census subcommittee, and Cong. Rodgers, who then was the ranking member and is now the chair of the appropriations subcommittee which census falls under, made statements that indicated support for new and better ways to conduct the census. The National Research Council (the principal operating agency of the National Academy of Sciences) came out with a report in November 1994, which suggested the use of sampling.
> By this time the GOP now controlled the House. A consultant suggested something to the effect that as many as 25 House seats could be effected if sampling were used. This was interpreted as "the GOP would loose 25 seats" if sampling were used.
> About two years ago, a consortium of organizations coordinated by TerriAnn Lowenthal <terriann2k@aol.com> a former staff member for the Sawyer subcommittee, keeping organizations up to date on the issues related to sampling and Census 2000.
> At the moment, the alternative to the sampling methodology is a reworking of the methodology that was used in 1990. In truth, this methodology was first used in 1970 and then reworked around the edges in 1980 and 1990. I was recently at a conference where Tom Hofeller, the staff director for the census subcommittee, said that sampling was not going to happen. I asked what methodology he proposed instead.
He said it was not his place, but the Presidents to propose something that the Republicans would accept. I suggested that the President had his proposal on the table and it was not the Republican's turn to come up with something that would produce a more accurate census that 1990.

What people overlook is there is no relationship between being counted in the census and voting. The relationship is not with who votes, but the block counts that are available to the people who draw the district lines. It might be wiser, and a little more devious, if the GOP let sampling go through and put all of their effort into capturing as many state legislatures as possible.

Three other tidbits:

Realizing that census results also impact on funds that are sent to the states, Republicans are supporting a two-number census - - one for apportionment (unadjusted) and one for the distribution of funds (adjusted).

A good comprehensive history of the census can be found in a book by Prof. Margo Anderson: "The American Census: A Social History."

In 1990, when there was an effort to adjust the results of the census, Newt Gingrich wrote a letter supporting adjustment since Georgia would have gotten one more seat.

Steve Dienstfrey
From acep@sprintmail.com Thu Dec 3 18:55:41 1998
When the federal Constitution was adopted in 1788 (and we in the District of Columbia lost our right to be represented in the federal legislature), many people who lived in this country were not considered "people" by the founding fathers, but were considered property (slaves). Others were thought to be too emotional/unstable to vote (women). Others were considered to be separate or outside the federal system (natives). These people could not vote even if they wanted to.

I don't know much about the history of the census--was everyone counted, or just those who were considered worthy of the 1 person, 1 vote concept? If everyone was counted, was the data segmented into "worthy" versus "not worthy" for reasons of representation/apportionment? How does it work today for those who are still not represented, like people of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico?

As an historian, I am not sure whether to smile or despair at the presentism of this communication. The franchise and the population basis for representation were separate issues. The Constitution provided, and still provides, that members of the House of Representatives "shall be apportioned among the several States . . . according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons." Most of the people mentioned as the basis for apportionment were not qualified to vote, most notably women and children, and including free Negroes in most but not quite all states. Note that indentured servants ("bound to Service for a Term of Years"), who could not vote, were explicitly fully included in the basis of the apportionment, and that tax-paying Indians were included by implication. My studies of the history of the franchise were too long ago for me to remember, if I ever saw the issue addressed, whether tax-paying Indians were admitted to the franchise in any state. All that were left for "all other persons" were slaves, who counted as three-fifths for purposes of apportionment of the House of Representatives until the Census of 1870; published ante bellum tabulations list a "Federal population" for the states, which included the 60% adjustment for slaves. Note that free Negroes in the slaves states would be counted at 100%. Supposing that South Carolina in 1790 included a negligible number of free Negroes, we can calculate its "Federal population" as follows (date in thousands from Historical Statistics of the United States):

White: 140 x 100% = 140
Negro (Slave): 109 x 60% = 65
Federal Population: 205
Total Population: 249

The franchise was a separate matter entirely. Voting for public officials was considered to be a responsible act, and the franchise was deliberately limited to those thought to be able to resist bribery or intimidation. The focus of the franchise was on the representation of households, not persons. Therefore, it was limited to persons who owned property or paid enough rent to indicate substantial economic independence. Most heads of household were able to vote because the property requirements were low enough that anyone who owned a farm or business that would support a family, or rented a house that would accommodate a family, qualified. Not qualified were those without economic independence: hired laborers, indentured servants, adult sons of the household who had not yet set up their own farms or businesses, and, in most cases, women. In at least one state in the early national period, New Jersey, women who owned sufficient property on their own account were allowed to vote, but they had to be mostly widows who had not remarried: the property of married women reverted to their husbands, and women who had never married would not usually have property of their own. In some areas, such as Virginia in the colonial era at least, a person could vote once each in as many counties as he owned property, and a vigorous and wealthy landowner such as the young George Washington could spend election day dashing across country from one county seat to another to cast his multiple votes. A minimum age of 21 was, as far as I know, universal.

The franchise in the colonial and early national periods was definitely not limited to immigrants. Although official immigration statistics do not begin until 1820 and the Census did not collect information on country of birth until 1850, it is generally accepted that the immigration rate of the Revolutionary and early national period was lower than it had been before the imperial crisis and than it became after the European economic and political dislocations of the 1840s, so most voters would in fact have been native-born. Although the Federalist Congress attempted to restrict naturalizations in the late 1790's, whether resident aliens were allowed to vote was a state matter, as were all franchise qualifications until the ratification of the 15th Amendment in 1870. (The Constitution specified that for the House of Representatives, "the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature," whatever they might be. Some states had a more restrictive franchise for the state senate, usually in the form of a higher property qualification.)

Although the Constitution, when ratified in 1789, authorized the Congress to create a Federal district, it took time to agree on a site and pass the required legislation. The population of the area was quite small-around 8,000 when the Federal government was transferred in 1800. Except during the few years between ratification and creation of the district, residents
of the District never had any right to be represented in Congress to lose, since the bicameral Congress with a popularly-elected lower house did not exist before 1789.

Feminist paranoia and political correctness were still a half dozen or so generations to come.

I can't expect anyone else on AAPORNet to have any sympathy for the Republican fears about the use of sampling in the Census, but I can explain them. There is apparently an assumption among AAPOR members that the alternative to an "actual enumeration" is a nonpartisan, scientific estimation process that will provide the most "objective" numbers possible for apportionment of the House of Representatives among the states and of Congressional and other electoral districts within the states. This is not the alternative that a Republican who is aware of the history of Congressional districting in the United States would see.

The Republican Party has been on the losing end of too many clever Democratic gerrymanders (the infamous Burton laws in California being only the most celebrated), including those imposed by "nonpartisan" panels of judges, not to have suspicions about an "estimation" process that is going to be controlled by a perjurer whose congenital unwillingness to use the English language in an honest manner is approaching legendary proportions. If the man can't give a straight answer to a question about whether he thinks he is the country's "chief law enforcement officer," he certainly can not be trusted with arcane statistical procedures that the attorneys in the
After reading Albert Parker's recent note trying to explain the Republican...
concerns about the use of sampling in the census, I feel compelled to come to the defense of our colleagues who work at the Census Bureau.

During my career I have both worked for the Bureau and used them as a contractor when I was employed by another federal agency. I have also dealt with them at professional associations.

They are scrupulous to a fault. They follow both the spirit and the letter of the law. I was once in a knock down, drag out fight to save the data from about 200 respondents to a survey they conducted for my agency because they felt these individuals could be identified if someone had access to seven files held by my agency and two by another.

I find it hard to believe that they would succumb to any political pressure to falsify results no more than we would cook the numbers in one of our reports to make our clients happy. In addition to this, there is what might be called the "bureaucratic reality ethic" of doing what is right regardless of who is in charge. Bureaucrats know that in a few years there will be political appointees from the other party running the show, and the only way they (the career civil servants) have any credibility is to play it straight.

Lastly, there is the fact that there are very few secrets in Washington. If someone wanted to cook the results I am convinced it would hit the papers. There are people of every political persuasion working at Census.

Parker’s point about the Republicans being out done in the line drawing wars in the various states is not a function of sampling. And while this may have happened in the days of Phil Burton, Phil is dead and there are a host of firms on both sides which specialize in drawing district lines.

I apologize if I gave the impression that I am arguing with Parker. Rather I am arguing with the Republican position that he is putting forward.

Steve Dienstfrey
Schulman, Ronca, & Bucuvalas, Inc.
Stephen Dienstfrey wrote:

>After reading Albert Parker's recent note trying to explain the Republican concerns about the use of sampling in the census, I feel compelled to come to the defense of our colleagues who work at the Census Bureau.

Me too. As a journalist, I talk frequently with Census people, and I've always been very impressed by their seriousness, fairness, openness, and dedication. Truly admirable civil servants - and I'd say the same for statisticians in other government agencies that I also talk with, like the BEA and BLS. And from what I know of other national statistical agencies, this is one area where the U.S. government really shines.

Doug

--

Doug Henwood
Left Business Observer
250 W 85 St
New York NY 10024-3217 USA
+1-212-874-4020 voice +1-212-874-3137 fax
e-mail: <mailto:dhenwood@panix.com>
web: <http://www.panix.com/~dhenwood/LBO_home.html>

Alice R. Robbin wrote:

Ditto. As someone who teaches about the federal statistical system, including in comparative perspective, we have much to be proud of. Alice
On Fri, 4 Dec 1998, Doug Henwood wrote:

> Stephen Dienstfrey wrote:
> 
> >After reading Albert Parker's recent note trying to explain the
> >Republican concerns about the use of sampling in the census, I feel
> >compelled to come to the defense of our colleagues who work at the
> >Census Bureau.
> >
> Me too. As a journalist, I talk frequently with Census people, and
> I've always been very impressed by their seriousness, fairness,
> openness, and dedication. Truly admirable civil servants - and I'd say
> the same for statisticians in other government agencies that I also
> talk with, like the BEA and BLS. And from what I know of other
> national statistical agencies, this is one area where the U.S.
> government really shines.
> >
> Doug
> >
> --

Robbin FSU

>From JOHNNY@CATI.UMD.EDU Fri Dec  4 09:55:45 1998
Received: from umailsrv1.umd.edu (umailsrv1.umd.edu [128.8.10.53])
by usc.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8/usc) with ESMTP
id JAA17811 for <aapornet@usc.edu>; Fri, 4 Dec 1998 09:55:42 -0800
(PST)
From: JOHNNY@CATI.UMD.EDU
National Omnibus Survey

January 1999

The University of Maryland Survey Research Center will be conducting its next national CATI omnibus survey in January.

The objective is to provide a vehicle for researchers interested in collecting data on a small number of variables or who want to experimentally compare alternative versions of questions on a large sample.

Survey Design: 1,000 interviews [48 states], using a dual frame (list-assisted/Mitofsky-Waksberg) sample, with random selection of one adult respondent within each sample household. Up to 20 callbacks; refusal conversion; assistance with questionnaire design and two pretests.

Deliverables: Ascii data set and SPSS Windows systems file with researcher's items and standard SRC demographics (sex, age, race, income, education, marital status, household size), sample household and poststratification weights, and a brief methods report, including sampling errors (computed using jackknife procedures).

Schedule:

Questions due: January 11
Pretesting: mid-January
Data collection: February-March
Data delivered: April 12

Cost: $850 per single response item. More complex questions, split ballot experiments, rotated items or response categories will be budgeted on an individual basis.

Space is limited and cannot be reserved without contract completion.

We have been able to do this survey annually and hope to increase it to
twice a year.

Respond to: src@cati.umd.edu
    phone 301 314 7831
    fax 301 314 9070

General Information about SRC: http://www.bsos.umd.edu/src

Assistant Director