

**PROGRAM  
AND  
ABSTRACTS**

**36th  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR  
PUBLIC OPINION  
RESEARCH**

**THE INN,  
BUCK HILL FALLS,  
PENNSYLVANIA**

**MAY 28 - MAY 31, 1981**



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PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

Editor: Clyde Tucker

SITE SELECTION

James H. Fouss

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

36th Annual Conference  
American Association for Public Opinion Research

The Inn, Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania  
May 28 through May 31, 1981

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THURSDAY, MAY 28

3:00-9:00 Main Lobby	REGISTRATION
2:00-5:30 West Lounge A	MEETING OF OLD AND NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCILS
6:00-8:30 Main Dining Room	DINNER
8:45 Ballroom	FIRST PLENARY SESSION: THE 1980 ELECTION: Why The Polls Differed Chair: Albert H. Cantril, Bureau of Social Science Research Speakers: Richard B. Wirthlin, Decision Making Information Warren J. Mitofsky, CBS News Discussant: Irving Crespi, Irving Crespi and Associates

FRIDAY, MAY 29

7:00-9:45            BREAKFAST  
Main Dining Room

9:15-10:45        PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT THE MILITARY AND DEFENSE  
Library

Chair: Mady Wechsler Segal, University of Maryland and  
Walter Reed Army Institute of Research

"Trends in High School Seniors' Views of the Military"  
Jerald G. Bachman, University of Michigan

"American Attitudes Toward Security Issues After Vietnam  
and Afghanistan"  
Alvin Richman, U.S. Department of State

"West European Security Concerns for the Eighties: Is  
NATO in Trouble?"  
Kenneth P. Adler and Douglas A. Wertman,  
U.S. International Communication Agency

"Perception of National Security in the U.S. and the Federal  
Republic of Germany: Stability and Change in Public Opinion"  
Mathias Schoenborn, Sozialwissenschaftlichen Instituts der  
Bundeswehr (SOWI), F.R.G.

Discussant: Kurt Lang, State University of New York, Stony Brook

9:15-10:45        THE NEW COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES  
East Room

Chair: Joseph T. Klapper, CBS

"Media Marvels of the Eighties"  
Marilyn S. Watts, RCA

"Marshall McLuhan, James Bond, New Woman, and the Information  
Society"  
Harold Mendelsohn, University of Denver

"The Information Society: Social and Public Policy Implications"  
Albert E. Gollin, Newspaper Advertising Bureau

FRIDAY, MAY 29

9:15-10:45  
West Lounge B

QUESTION WORDING AND INTERVIEW EFFECTS

Chair: Alfred E. Goldman, National Analysts

"Context Effects and the Assessment of Attitude Change"

Howard Schuman, University of Michigan  
Stanley Presser, University of North Carolina  
Jacob Ludwig, University of Michigan

"Interviewer Effects in Telephone Surveys"

Clyde Tucker, CBS News

"Measurement of Respondent Burden"

Laure M. Sharp and Joanne Frankel, Bureau of Social  
Science Research

"Question Order and Context Effects in Measuring Political  
Interest"

George F. Bishop, Robert W. Oldendick, Alfred J. Tuchfarber,  
University of Cincinnati

"Why Do They Say That?: Extensions of Experimentation on  
Question Wording"

Susan A. Stephens, Mathematica Policy Research  
Rick Monroe, Indiana University  
Sydney Pierce, Emory University

11:00-12:30  
Library

BLACK AMERICA: PERSPECTIVES ON THE 1980's

Chair: Jean-Marie B. Mayas, Lawrence Johnson & Associates

"Political Status of Black Americans in the 1980's"

James S. Jackson, Phillip J. Bowman,  
Ronald Brown, University of Michigan

"Social Psychological Status of Blacks in the 1980's"

Phillip J. Bowman, Alida D. Quick, Shirley J. Hatchett,  
James S. Jackson, University of Michigan

\*"The Effects of Question Wording on Class Identification and  
Racial Alienation Among Detroit Blacks"

Lawrence D. Bobo, University of Michigan

Discussant: Russell H. Jackson, Mathematica Policy Research

\*Student Paper Award Winner

FRIDAY, MAY 29

11:00-12:30  
East Room

INTERVIEWING BY TELEPHONE

Chair: Howard E. Freeman, U.C.L.A

"A Methodological Study of Telephone and Face to Face Interviewing"

Robert M. Groves, Peter V. Miller, Charles F. Cannell  
University of Michigan

"On the Appropriateness of Interviewing Older Respondents by Telephone"

Richard A. Kulka, Research Triangle Institute  
A. Regula Herzog and Willard L. Rodgers, University of Michigan

"Quality Improvement and Time Savings Attributed to CATI: Reflections on Eleven Years of Experience"

James C. Fink, Chilton Research Services

"The Present Status of Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing"  
J. Merrill Shanks, University of California, Berkeley

Discussant: Seymour Sudman, University of Illinois

11:00-12:30  
West Lounge B

LEADERS, BUREAUCRATS AND MAYBE THE PUBLIC

Chair: R. Richard Ritti, Pennsylvania State University

"Public Hearings and Public Preferences: The Case of the White House Conference on Families"

Michael J. O'Neil, Arizona State University

"A Model of Public Opinion Data Use by Local Governments"  
James Walker and David Karns, Wright State University

"Confidence in Institutional Leadership"

Lee B. Becker, Ohio State University  
Jane D. Brown, University of North Carolina

"Opinion Leaders: Is Anyone Following?"

Joan S. Black, General Electric

12:30-1:45  
Main Dining Room

LUNCH

## FRIDAY, MAY 29

- 2:00-3:30            ROUND TABLE SESSIONS
- Fountain Room        "Children and Television: New Findings"  
                         Robert Krull, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
                         Peter V. Miller, University of Michigan
- Library                "Networking State Polls"  
                         Cliff Zukin, Rutgers University
- East Room            "Diffusion of News of the Reagan Shooting"  
                         John E. Polich, The New York Times
- Seminar Room        "Exit Polls and Psuedo Polls: Public Opinion's Electronic  
                         Future?"  
                         Mark Levy, University of Maryland  
                         Barry Orton, University of Wisconsin Extension
- West Lounge B        "The New Grants (Dis) Economy"  
                         John P. Robinson, University of Maryland
- 3:45-5:15            AGENDA SETTING  
Library
- Chair: Paul B. Sheatsley, National Opinion Research Center
- "Re-examining the Agenda Setting Hypothesis: An Experimental  
Approach"  
Shanto Iyengar and Mark Peters, Yale University
- "The Claims for Agenda Setting: Too Much or Too Little?"  
Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang, State University of  
New York, Stony Brook
- "The Agenda Setting Process and Five Issues: 1948-1976"  
James P. Winter, Syracuse University
- Discussant: Lutz Erbring, National Opinion Research Center

## FRIDAY, MAY 29

- 3:45-5:15  
West Lounge B
- SEX, RUM AND POT
- Chair: Roberta S. Cohen, Bell Telephone Laboratories
- "Interviewing Respondents in the Commerical Sex Industry"  
William Kornblum and Terry Williams, The Graduate School  
and University Center, C.U.N.Y.  
Charles Winick, City College, C.U.N.Y.
- "The Birth of Demon Rum"  
Harry Gene Levine, Queens College, C.U.N.Y.
- "Trends in Opinion Regarding Marijuana Policy"  
Eric Josephson, Columbia University
- 3:45-5:15  
East Room
- DIDACTIC SESSION: ARIMA TIME SERIES ANALYSIS AND FORECASTING  
PUBLIC OPINION
- Speakers: Richard Maisel, New York University  
Robin Wunsch, Columbia University
- 5:30-6:30  
Upper Lobby
- RECEPTION FOR NEW ATTENDEES
- 7:00-8:30  
Main Dining Room
- DINNER
- 8:30  
Ballroom
- SECOND PLENARY SESSION: ANALYZING EQUALITY: IS EMPIRICISM  
ENOUGH?
- Chair: Fred H. Goldner, Queens College, C.U.N.Y.
- Speaker: Andrew Hacker, Queens College, C.U.N.Y.
- Discussants: Ira H. Cisin, George Washington University  
Norman M. Bradburn, University of Chicago

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SATURDAY, MAY 30

7:00-9:45  
Main Dining Room

## BREAKFAST

9:15-10:45  
West Lounge B

## CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Chair: Valentine Appel, Simmons Market Research Bureau

"Consumer Behavior in a Time of Uncertainties"  
Donald E. Payne, Oxtoby Smith

"Public Opinion, Consumer Sentiment, and Advertising"  
Franco M. Nicosia, University of California, Berkeley  
Robert Jacobson, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco

"A Landmark Use of Survey Evidence in Litigation"  
Clark Leavitt, Ohio State University

"Public Perceptions of Uses of Mass Communication: An  
Analysis of Source Credibility"  
Franklin R. Carlile and Howard Leonard, Young & Rubicam

9:15-10:45  
East Room

## MASS MEDIA EFFECTS--RECONSIDERED

Chair: Hope Lunin Klapper, New York University

"Toward A Paradigm of Television Effects"  
George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Michael Morgan,  
Nancy Signorielli, University of Pennsylvania

"Public Perceptions and Interpretations of Mass Media  
Disaster Warnings"  
Don D. Smith, University of Iowa

"Who Watches How Much Television (or None at All)?:  
Profiles and Changes since 1975"  
Paul M. Hirsch and Tom Panelas, University of Chicago

11:00-12:30  
West Lounge B

TRENDS IN PUBLIC OPINION: RACE RELATIONS, AUTHORITARIANISM,  
AND FLUORIDATION

Chair: Naomi Rothwell, Bureau of the Census

"Trends in White Racial Attitudes, 1942-1980"  
Charlotte Steeh, Lawrence Bobo, Howard Schuman, University  
of Michigan

"Post World War II Changes in Authoritarianism Among  
Adolescents in West Germany and the United States"  
Gerda Lederer, Scarsdale, New York High School

"Trends in Attitudes Toward Fluoridation"  
P. Jean Frazier, University of Minnesota

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SATURDAY, MAY 3011:00-12:30  
East RoomTAKING THE PULSE OF THE ECONOMY: A FRESH LOOK AT ECONOMIC  
INDICATORS

Chair: Doris A. Graber, University of Illinois

"Indicators of Aggregate Consumer Behavior"  
Richard T. Curtin, University of Michigan"Consumer as Forecaster"  
Fabian Linden, The Conference Board"Consumer Confidence Measurements: Their Predictive Value"  
Burns W. Roper, The Roper Organization11:00-12:30  
Library

UNDERSTANDING RESPONSE RATES

Chair: Irving Roshwalb, Audits &amp; Surveys

"A Comparison of the Randomized Response Approach and Direct  
Question Approach to Asking Sensitive Survey Questions"  
Ralph E. Folsom, Jr. and Michael F. Weeks, Research  
Triangle Institute"Informed Consent Procedures in Telephone Interviews: Effects  
on Response Rate and Item Non-Response"  
Eleanor Singer, Columbia University  
Martin R. Frankel, National Opinion Research Center"Measurement of No Opinion and Nonopinion Responses in  
Sample Surveys"  
Robert Mason and G. David Faulkenberry, Oregon State  
University"Some Unusual Statistical Aspects of the Non-Response Problem"  
Irving Roshwalb, Audits & Surveys12:30-1:45  
Main Dining Room

LUNCH

## SATURDAY, MAY 30

2:00-3:30            ROUND TABLE SESSION

Library            "The Role of the Editorial Page in the Public Opinion Process"  
                    Maxwell McCombs and Elsa Mohn, Syracuse University

West Lounge A      "Computerization and Telephone Interviewing"  
                    Pat Feuhlhart, Bureau of the Census  
                    Lewis Mandel, University of Connecticut  
                    Don Trees, The Rand Corporation

Seminar Room        "Private Polling for Local and Other Elections"  
                    Peter Tuckel, Hunter College  
                    Kurt Schlichting, Fairfield University

Fountain Room      "Organized Religion, Media and the Political Process"  
                    Gillian Lindt, Columbia University

Room 1102          "Studying the Urban Homestead Experience"  
                    Diane Porcari and Peter Eleftherakis, Urban Systems  
                    Research and Engineering

West Lounge B      "Sampling Hard-to-Find Populations"  
                    J. Georg Cerf and Audrey McDonald, Mathematica Policy  
                    Research  
                    Diane Colasanto, University of Wisconsin  
                    Janet D. Griffith, Research Triangle Institute

Room 1106          "On Response Rates vs. Self Selection"  
                    Michael Rappoport, RL Associates

East Room          "Polls and the News Media: The POQ Symposium Revisited"  
                    Albert E. Gollin, Newspaper Advertising Bureau  
                    David Paletz, Duke University

3:45-5:15           AAPOR BUSINESS MEETING  
West Lounge A

5:30-6:30           LOCAL CHAPTER GET TOGETHERS  
East Room

7:00-8:30           PRE-BANQUET DUTCH TREAT COCKTAIL PARTY  
Upper Lobby

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SATURDAY, MAY 308:30  
Main Dining Room

## BANQUET

Presiding: Seymour Sudman  
PresidentRemarks: Helen J. Kaufmann  
Past President

Presentation of AAPOR Student Award

Presentation of AAPOR Award

After Banquet  
Upper Lobby

## PRESIDENT'S DUTCH TREAT PARTY

And After That

GREEN ROUND TABLE: Random Selection without Replacement  
from a Universe of 52 Units

Co-Chairs: Sharp and Sheatsley

SESSION ON HARMONY: Vocal Sampling?

Co-Chairs: Maisel and Riess

(SUNDAY PROGRAM, NEXT PAGE)

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SUNDAY, MAY 31

7:00-9:45  
Main Dining Room

BREAKFAST

9:15-10:45  
East Room

FOUNDATIONS OF OUR CRAFT: WHAT IS A QUESTION, WHAT IS AN ANSWER?

Chair: Elizabeth Martin, National Academy of Sciences

"Questions, Answers and Social Reality"  
Kurt W. Back, Duke University

"Basic Principles"  
Eric Marder, Eric Marder Associates

"Survey Research Meets Cognitive Psychology: Dalliance or Alliance?"  
Albert D. Biderman, Bureau of Social Science Research

11:00-12:30  
East Room

THE MEANING OF THE 1980 ELECTION

Chair: Burns W. Roper, The Roper Organization

Panel Discussants: Everett Ladd, University of Connecticut  
Adam Clymer, The New York Times  
V. Lance Tarrance, Jr., V. Lance Tarrance  
and Associates

12:30  
Main Dining Room

LUNCH

## TRENDS IN HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' VIEWS OF THE MILITARY

Jerald G. Bachman  
University of Michigan

This paper reports military related plans and attitudes of high school seniors, using questionnaire data from large (N = 15,000 to 18,000) nationally representative surveys of the classes of 1976 through 1980. Seniors' views about the military as an institution have been mostly favorable during the past five years, with only a small minority indicating that military influence and spending are too high. However, very few seniors view military service as an acceptable or desirable work setting, and the proportion who do has been shrinking since 1976. There has also been some decline in perceptions that military service provides good opportunities for personal fulfillment or educational advancement, whereas perceptions of discrimination against women in the military have risen sharply. Since these views are correlated with enlistment intentions, it is not surprising to find that the proportions of seniors expecting military careers, or any military service, has declined since 1976.

AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD SECURITY ISSUES  
AFTER VIETNAM AND AFGHANISTAN

Alvin Richman  
U.S. Department of State

This paper discusses the resurgence during the past decade of the public's concern with national security issues. Two broad types of concepts are examined, using nationwide survey data: 1) The public's perceptions of the United States' security environment, including its perceptions of Soviet foreign policy objectives and military power relative to the U.S., and 2) the public's preferences about how the U.S. should deal with the security situation it faces, including how much military power the U.S. should build and how it should exercise that power in different regions under various circumstances.

Trends for most of these indicators are presented, going back to the early post-World War II years in some cases. Some of the relationships between the public's perceptions and its preferences on security issues are also discussed, using various Gallup, Harris, and Roper surveys conducted between 1974 and 1980.

WEST EUROPEAN SECURITY CONCERNS FOR THE  
EIGHTIES: IS NATO IN TROUBLE?

Kenneth P. Adler and Douglas A. Wertman  
U.S. International Communication Agency

Using data from USIA/USICA, European Community and other surveys, this paper analyzes West European publics' perceptions of threats to national security and their opinions on appropriate responses. It also examines generational, political, and big country/small country differences in these attitudes. While fear of war, which increased sharply after Afghanistan, may since have diminished, there is continuing concern over Soviet actions and intentions. In addition, more and more West Europeans see the USSR as militarily stronger than the U.S. Many West Europeans still consider NATO essential, but some want NATO modified to give Europeans a greater say. At the same time, there is only limited backing for increased defense spending or, in those countries where deployment is planned, for installing long-range theater nuclear weapons.

In most West European countries, these opinions on security issues are widely shared, with few generational differences. Leftists, naturally, are less supportive of NATO than members of rightist parties. They are also more likely to be among the growing minority of West Europeans who favor accommodation to the USSR or neutrality over a Western military alliance.

PERCEPTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES  
AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY - STABILITY  
AND CHANGE IN PUBLIC OPINION

Mathias Schoenborn  
Sozialwissenschaftlichen Instituts der Bundeswehr (SOWI), F.R.G.

The paper mainly is based on a report of a research team of the German Armed Forces Institute for Social Research, consisting of H.-U. Khor, G. Rader, M. Schonborn, G. Wachtler, and R. Zoll.

The paper will present three different aspects of the perception of national security:

1. On the basis of three public opinion polls carried out in the Federal Republic of Germany between the end of 1977 and Spring 1980 the shift of public opinion will be shown concerning aspects of national security and views held on the Federal Armed Forces.
2. In part two the paper compares the results of two public opinion polls on the perception of national security carried out in Autumn 1979 both in the United States and the Federal Republic.

3. The third part concentrates on stability and change of individual opinion on aspects of national security in times of important international events: During a period when the hostages were taken in Teheran, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan and NATO decided upon the possible future deployment of new Euro-strategic weapons. In order to obtain data on stability and change of individual opinion, a panel (October/November 79 - February/March 1980) was organized in the Federal Republic.

MARSHALL McLUHAN, JAMES BOND, NEW WOMAN, AND THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Harold Mendelsohn  
University of Denver

The possible functional consequences of the new communication technologies are examined to provide a basis for forecasting both the impact of those technologies on American tastes and values and the resulting impact on future media usage. By way of example, data are presented to indicate that not only have the earlier voiced dismal forecasts of the death of taste failed to materialize, but rather the tastes of the population have apparently improved. As tastes become more up-scale, and as the new technologies provide appropriately specialized fare, segmentalization of audiences will be hastened and intensified. More generally, changing social styles and institutions will stimulate increasing demand for all sorts of information and entertainment, and the new media technologies will succeed in addressing these demands to the degree that they can become functionally appropriate.

THE INFORMATION SOCIETY: SOCIAL AND  
PUBLIC POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Albert E. Gollin  
Newspaper Advertising Bureau

Communications technologies have increasingly been seen as engines of social change, ushering in a new era of information abundance and transforming social and political processes. These images of the future have been caught up in the concept of the "information society," given currency by Daniel Bell, Alvin Toffler and others. But social structures (institutions and processes) are not supinely affected by new communications potentialities; they also selectively absorb, deflect or reject the thrust of new technologies. Several factors likely to affect the reception of new telecommunications gadgetry are identified, and their implications for social conflict and change are assessed.

## CONTEXT EFFECTS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF ATTITUDE CHANGE

Howard Schuman and Jacob Ludwig  
University of Michigan

Stanley Presser  
University of North Carolina

Results from two experiments in Survey Research Center national telephone surveys demonstrate the problem of context effects in studying social change. In the first experiment, involving an NORC General Social Survey item about abortion, the findings underscore the conventional wisdom that context must be kept constant in comparing results from different surveys. The second experiment, however, which replicates one carried out by Hyman and Sheatsley in 1948, shows that holding context constant does not necessarily solve the context problem.

## INTERVIEWER EFFECTS IN TELEPHONE SURVEYS

Clyde Tucker  
CBS News

Interviewers effects can ultimately be traced to specific interviewer behaviors, but, in advance of that, exploratory studies are necessary for directing this inquiry. Previous studies have examined interviewer effects in both personal interview surveys and telephone surveys. There are two general conclusions to be drawn from these studies: (1) interviewer effects differ from item to item, and (2) a number of methodological difficulties surround the estimation of interviewer effects.

This study examines interviewer effects in eleven CBS News/New York Times national polls from 1980. Not only are the interviewer effects for different items considered, but also the effects for the same items over several polls. Additionally, the methodological problems arising in this type of analysis are discussed. Specifically, the questions of randomization and unequal variances are dealt with. Some possible solutions to these problems are offered.

## MEASUREMENT OF RESPONDENT BURDEN

Laure M. Sharp and Joanne Frankel  
Bureau of Social Science Research

A two-phase experimental study based on 700 interviews was conducted in the suburbs of Philadelphia in 1980 at two points in time to assess empirically self-perceived respondent burden. Three variables were manipulated: interview length, level of effort, and repeat administration. Respondent burden was assessed indirectly by examining item non-response rates and other behavioral indicators and directly through a self-administered reaction form completed at the conclusion of each interview. Disclosure of interview length did not affect refusal rates. Interview length was associated with higher perception of burden primarily as measured by willingness to be reinterviewed. Belief in the efficacy of surveys and in personal benefits resulting from survey participation emerged as strong attitudinal correlates of self-perceived burden.

QUESTION ORDER AND CONTEXT EFFECTS AND  
MEASURING POLITICAL INTEREST

George F. Bishop, Robert W. Oldendick, Alfred J. Tuchfarber  
University of Cincinnati

Data from two split-ballot experiments suggest that changes in question order and context may be responsible for an apparently precipitous decline of interest in politics at the time of the CPS 1978 American National Election Study. The results also support the general hypothesis that respondents answer survey questions in terms of the "information" that is most relevant and available to them in memory. This response style appears, moreover, to be most pronounced among those who are least informed about public affairs, though the conditions under which such an interaction occurs are rather complex. The paper concludes with a discussion of an alternative interpretation of the findings--Converse's concept of "constraint"--and the broad implications of an information-processing approach to public opinion research.

WHY DO THEY SAY THAT?:  
EXTENSIONS OF EXPERIMENTATION ON QUESTION WORDING

Susan A. Stephens	Rick Monroe	Sydney Pierce
Mathematica Policy Research	Indiana University	Emory University

Numerous studies have been conducted over the years which attempt to examine the effects of question wording variations on survey results. The research presented in this paper is concerned with two types of question wording effects: (1) the effects of varying the direction (positive/negative) and the strength of the verb in a statement to which respondents are to agree or disagree, and (2) the effects of varying response choices from full sentences to single words. Both are based on earlier work, but this paper expands previous question wording experiments by developing additional versions of the survey questions. The data were collected as part of a 1980 personal interview survey of 715 center township residents of Indianapolis, Indiana. A multi-stage analysis strategy is designed to compare these results with those obtained earlier and to extend our understanding of specific attributes of alternative question forms which affect survey responses. Multivariate techniques are also used to determine subgroups of respondents differentially influenced by variations in question wording.

## POLITICAL STATUS OF BLACK AMERICANS IN THE 1980's

James S. Jackson, Phillip J. Bowman, Ronald Brown  
University of Michigan

An often overlooked trend over the last several decades has been the growing political involvement and sophistication of the black population. From sit-in demonstrations, local and national freedom marches, efforts to register and encourage blacks to cast the ballot, to the increasing numbers of local, regional and national elected officials, there has been a consistent trend toward greater political and electoral participation. Paralleling the movement toward greater political activism, however, has come increased cynicism concerning the responsiveness of the two major political parties. We have had few social science research efforts directed to an in-depth analysis of the correlates of these political activities. What do these trends indicate about the current stage of black political consciousness? Should blacks form their own national political party? What should the black role be in relationship to the existing political structures? Are coalitions possible with other relatively disenfranchised groups? Preliminary data from a national probability sample of black American adults will be used in addressing these issues and projecting likely directions for black political behavior in the current decade.

## SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL STATUS OF BLACKS IN THE 1980's

Phillip J. Bowman, Alida D. Quick, Shirley J. Hatchett,  
James S. Jackson  
University of Michigan

Anecdotal information and restricted empirical studies have consistently pointed to the poor social and psychological status of black Americans relative to that of whites. Whether portrayed as a function of their inherent deficits or as a function of very real and ever present environmental stressors, blacks have been characterized as having serious and significant social-adjustment problems, often resulting in mental health related disabilities. Consistently overlooked in the questionable, and possibly biased, interpretations of available data on the status of black Americans are the factors that have been important in the survival of the group over the last 300 years in this ever changing society. In the National Survey of Black Americans we have examined the current status and social functioning of the black population. Among the numerous areas surveyed, we examined mental health status and help seeking, perceptions of discrimination, functioning of the family and para-kin networks and social identity development. Our major and over-riding concern has been on the investigation of those factors present in blacks as a group that are important for adequate social and psychological functioning. Thus, we have investigated the role of family, friends, the church and more generally the role of informal and formal social support systems in buffering the deleterious effects of a negative environment. These factors, based upon the available evidence, will

become even more crucial to the survival of the black population in a decade which already evidences a strong and significant move to a more individualistic, market orientation. Preliminary data from a national probability sample of black American adults will be used in projecting likely directions for the black population in the current decade.

THE EFFECTS OF QUESTION WORDING ON CLASS  
IDENTIFICATION AND RACIAL ALIENATION  
AMONG DETROIT BLACKS

Lawrence D. Bobo  
University of Michigan

This paper addresses the distinction between class identification and class consciousness, the discrepancy between objective and subjective class statuses among Blacks, and the relationship between class identification and alienation. The data are taken from the 1976 Detroit Area Study which oversampled Blacks (N=400), conducted a split ballot question wording experiment involving two versions of the class identification item, and replicated the question from a previously used racial alienation index. The findings are that the two class identification items do not produce widely discrepant marginals, but do bear different relationships to several objective characteristics (income, education, occupation), and to the alienation index. In addition, lower class identifiers on one of the items had the highest alienation scores. It is concluded that class identification is a cognitive task calling for self-description, not a proxy for class consciousness. Further, a sense of racial alienation plays into class identification, thus partially explaining why Blacks show greater discrepancy between objective and subjective class positions.

A METHODOLOGICAL STUDY OF TELEPHONE AND FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWING

Robert M. Groves, Peter V. Miller, Charles F. Cannell  
University of Michigan

This paper describes some findings from a study which compared telephone with face-to-face interviews using the Health Interview Survey questionnaire. The Health Interview Survey is an ongoing National Survey sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics. In the final quarter of 1979, a national sample of respondents (N=8210) was interviewed by telephone by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, and face-to-face interviews were taken with a separate national sample of respondents (N=19800) by the Bureau of the Census. The research was designed to test the possibility of using telephone interviews for the health surveys. The study design included an examination of telephone respondent rules, interviewing techniques, and computer-assisted interviewing. This paper discusses overall telephone--personal interview differences and similarity, and takes a closer look at telephone interviewing technique effects on reporting of health information.

ON THE APPROPRIATENESS OF INTERVIEWING OLDER  
RESPONDENTS BY TELEPHONE

Richard A. Kulka  
Research Triangle Institute

A. Regula Herzog and Willard L. Rodgers  
University of Michigan

Addressing the possibility that personal and telephone interviews may systematically be more or less appropriate for surveying different subgroups of the population, this paper examines some current research findings relevant to the suitability of telephone interviewing with older people, while also presenting some new evidence from a recent secondary analysis of data from a national telephone-personal interview study (Groves & Kahn, 1979) and some other large national surveys. The extent to which differences between the two modes vary by age is examined with regard to: (a) the characteristics of respondents that are reached; (b) aspects of the interview process; and (c) the quality of responses obtained. In general, while significant differences in survey participation by the elderly in telephone and personal interviews are noted, along with some differences suggesting that older respondents interviewed by telephone are more sensitive than younger people to the length or pace of interview, few consistent differences in the quality of responses obtained from older people interviewed by the two survey modes were observed. Overall, evidence available to date generally supports the viability of conducting telephone interviews with the elderly as a reasonable substitute for face-to-face interviews.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PUBLIC PREFERENCES: THE CASE OF  
THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON FAMILIES

Michael J. O'Neil  
Arizona State University

This paper summarizes the results of a random statewide survey of the Arizona population conducted for the Arizona delegation to the White House Conference on Families. It also reports on a survey of participants at each of six regional public hearings held throughout Arizona for the White House Conference on Families. The data presented are important indicators of the priority of selected family-related concerns and institutional preferences of a "mass" and an "elite" sample. A comparison between the two surveys casts considerable doubt on the proposition that public hearings are an effective means of gauging public sentiment.

A MODEL OF PUBLIC OPINION DATA USE  
BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

James Walker and David Karns  
Wright State University

This paper explores the use of public opinion data by local public officials. It poses a model based on the perspective of the public official toward popular participation in decision-making and on the actual function the data serve in the decision process.

The model is derived from three case studies in an urban Ohio county and from interviews in other jurisdictions.

Two basic polar positions are hypothesized. The first, called the bureaucratic perspective tends to be shared by those who would minimize direct popular participation in governmental decision-making. The other, called the democratic perspective, indicates a willingness to initiate citizen participation through surveys.

The paper also examines a variety of ethical, legal, and constitutional issues. It reaches the conclusion that the use of such data can be helpful in a time of diminishing public resources and expectations.

CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Lee B. Becker  
Ohio State University

Jane D. Brown  
University of North Carolina  
Chapel Hill

Crucial gaps exist in what is known about public evaluations of leaders of U.S. institutions. The purpose of this paper is to fill one of those gaps by examining relationships among the evaluations of leaders of various institutions through secondary analysis of national surveys conducted by NORC and Harris. The data show that, at certain points in time, there are similarities in the ways differing institutions are evaluated. It also is true, however, that the public can and sometimes does distinguish among the institutions in society. For example, the electorate seems to recognize the distinctiveness of the press and the executive branch of government. While evaluation of these two institutions vary inversely over time, this negative covariation seems not to be functional.

## OPINION LEADERS: IS ANYONE FOLLOWING?

Joan S. Black  
General Electric

The General Electric Company has been conducting interviews with national samples of adults by telephone every quarter since 1964. In addition to questions on corporate image, the studies are used to provide data which may be used to alert the company to changes in public opinion, operating as an early warning device to detect new influences that may affect the company.

Beginning in 1972, in response to management requests to find ways to detect new issues earlier, questions were included to identify respondents whose opinions might be expected to change earlier than the sample as a whole. The Katz/Lazarsfeld questions reported in Personal Influence (1955) were adapted to this purpose.

This paper will report findings for six changes in public attitudes toward government activities which were detected between 1975 and 1978. "Recent advisors" (opinion leaders) changed earlier than potential advisors who, in turn, changed earlier than non-advisors. Recent advisors changed from 3-14 quarters earlier than non-advisors.

Further, "Recent advisors" within each of several demographic groups changed earlier than others in their group. In at least one case, "Recent advisors" among those with a high school education or less changed earlier than college educated respondents.

RE-EXAMINING THE AGENDA SETTING HYPOTHESIS:  
AN EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

Shanto Iyengar and Mark Peters  
Yale University

This paper tests the agenda-setting hypothesis with an experimental design. Over the course of a week, residents of the New Haven area viewed four thirty minute newscasts. Using stories from past newscasts (obtained from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive), subjects in the treatment condition were exposed to extensive coverage of U.S. military preparedness. Newscasts viewed by subjects in the control condition contained no information concerning military preparedness. Analysis of pretest to posttest changes in perceptions of issue salience strongly corroborates the agenda-setting hypothesis: on an index of defense salience, experimental subjects registered significantly larger increases than control subjects. The analysis also considers the role of recall as mediator of the agenda-setting effect and assesses the consequences of agenda-setting for evaluations of the incumbent president. Raising the salience of U.S. military preparedness is found to significantly strengthen the relationship between perceptions of the president's performance in the realm of military affairs and overall evaluations of presidential job performance.

THE CLAIMS FOR AGENDA SETTING:  
TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE?

Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang  
State University of New York, Stony Brook

The postulate of this paper is that agendas are "built," not set, and that issues are collectively rather than individually defined. This means, first, that the process is a continuous one and, second, that the specific part played by the media in this process differs according to whether an issue (or problem) directly relates to a personal concern that intrudes into people's lives or whether it results from a political controversy on which people take sides after certain symbolic meanings have been elaborated and made relevant to them. The process, so conceived, also involves several feedback loops. Among these are the images through which political figures see themselves and their own activities mirrored in the media, the pooling of information into a common definition of the situation within the press corps, and the various indicators of the public response. This approach is developed with reference to material from Watergate.

THE AGENDA-SETTING PROCESS AND FIVE ISSUES, 1948-1976

James P. Winter  
Syracuse University

Although there has been a profusion of agenda-setting research in recent years, little attention has been given to several areas, including: individual versus aggregate issue analysis, and the role of issue obtrusiveness; contingent conditions for the agenda-setting process; and the question of the appropriate "time frame" for analysis: how much media content do we measure, and what is the period of peak association between media emphasis and public salience for issues?

The current study presents theoretical and methodological arguments for individual-issue analysis, and elaborates the concept of time frame and its component variables. A longitudinal analysis of several issues was conducted, comparing the number of front page articles in The New York Times as the national media agenda, and public opinion on those issues in 23 Gallup surveys between 1948 and 1976, on the most important problem facing the country.

The findings indicated greater agenda-setting effects for unobtrusive issues, as hypothesized. The peak association between media and public salience ranged from one to three months, indicating no need for content analyzing the media any further back in time, and suggesting a relatively short term media effect rather than cumulative, or long term effects.

Finally, contingent conditions such as socio-demographic status did affect the agenda-setting process, dependent on the individual issue. For the relatively unobtrusive foreign affairs issue, high newspaper use groups such as those with higher education demonstrated greater agenda-setting effects.

## THE BIRTH OF DEMON RUM

Harry Gene Levine  
Queens College, City University of New York

At the end of the 18th century and the early decades of the 19th century, Americans transformed their fundamental ideas about the nature and effects of alcoholic beverages, and its place in everyday life. In the 17th and 18th century alcohol was regarded as a health-giving and joy-producing substance: it was drunk at all hours of the day and night, by men and women of all classes. In colonial America, alcohol was commonly referred to as "the good creature of God."

By the 1830's, a revolution in public opinion had occurred. A broad cross section of the middle class had come to believe that alcohol was a dangerous and powerful substance, capable of ruining an individual, a family, and even the whole nation. A mass movement, the temperance movement, was organized to convince people to give up alcohol, and by the mid-1830's over a million and a half people had taken the pledge not to drink. Throughout the 19th century, alcohol was often referred to as a "demon."

This paper is concerned with the transformation of public opinion about alcohol in the early 19th century: how alcohol moved from one status to another; how this change of consciousness was effected. It examines the motivations, interests, and backgrounds of the leaders of the campaign against alcohol, as well as the reasons why masses of people came to accept the new view of alcohol as a dangerous commodity. The paper suggests that the new ideas about liquor must be understood in terms of broad social, economic, cultural and political changes associated with the rise of market capitalism.

## TRENDS IN OPINION REGARDING MARIJUANA POLICY

Eric Josephson  
Columbia University

Although 11 states have passed laws decriminalizing possession of marijuana, the movement to liberalize policy regarding the drug now appears to be stalled. This is due to the softness of public support for such reform and a recent backlash against it. To be sure, trend data from national surveys conducted during the 1970's show that by the end of the decade nearly half of those polled backed decriminalization and the proportion supporting the more radical policy of "legalizing" the drug had increased from 13% in 1969 to nearly one-third by 1978. However, even among young adults who have used marijuana there has been no increase in the proportions favoring either its decriminalization or legalization; by the end of the decade fewer than half of them supported the latter policy. Perhaps most significant, hard-liners feel much more strongly about the options they prefer than do liberals about the policies they favor. Hence while the public has become more supportive of marijuana policy reform, this shift has not been great enough and such views are not strongly enough held to help achieve much more reform than has already taken place. The ambiguous situation of marijuana--widely used but still prohibited, decriminalized in some states and not in others--seems likely to continue.

DIDACTIC SESSION: ARIMA TIME SERIES ANALYSIS AND  
FORECASTING PUBLIC OPINION

Richard Maisel  
New York University

Robin Wunsch  
Columbia University

Auto Regressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA) modeling (sometimes called the Box Jenkins Method) is one of the newest and most powerful ways of analyzing a time series. This session will cover the basic ideas behind this type of analysis including how it can be used to:

- a. Show the process by means of which public opinion changes through time.
- b. To test theories about opinion formation.
- c. To generate short range forecasts.
- d. Show the relationship between attitude and behavior.

Illustrative examples will cover congressional voting and the relationship between measures of consumer confidence and the economy.

No advanced mathematical knowledge is required though it would be helpful to know the meaning of a correlation coefficient.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTIES

Donald E. Payne  
Oxtoby-Smith

A variety of uncertainties, largely economic, have affected consumer expectations, consumer views of products, and consumer buying strategies in the automobile market. Research during the past decade, and especially during the past five years, reveals several different emerging patterns of coping, whose implications apply not only to automotive marketing, but to other "considered" purchases as well.

PUBLIC OPINION, CONSUMER SENTIMENT, AND ADVERTISING

Franco M. Nicosia  
University of California, Berkeley

Robert Jacobson  
Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco

Throughout the many areas of public opinion research, it is difficult to find an index so consistently used for several decades as the consumer sentiment index (SRC, University of Michigan). It has been assumed that this index tap changes in society-wide orientations and that these changes are causally related with changes in consumption expenditures, rates of inflation, and so on.

The possible causal relationships of this index with advertising at the macro society-wide level have not been studied. In addition, the macro roles of advertising in society have been studied only occasionally and the findings have been inconclusive.

This paper examines two questions. First, do changes in advertising cause changes in consumers' sentiment and are there feedbacks? There is a variety of empirically unsubstantiated and contradictory opinions about this question. Second, are there statistical inference procedures that can give empirical evidence of causality, and does this evidence satisfy intuitive notions of causality?

Studies of the macro, society-wide roles of advertising--using new developments in multivariate time series analysis--have recently produced findings concerning these two questions.

#### A LANDMARK USE OF SURVEY EVIDENCE IN LITIGATION

Clark Leavitt  
Ohio State University

In 1976, the Federal Trade Commission initiated legal action against several analgesic advertisers. The case is unusual for its use of behavioral research as evidence in several ways, the most important being that the Commission funded a large scale, carefully designed study using probability sampling and carefully controlled statistical design and analysis. To the author's knowledge this was the first use of a study of this type in government litigation. A second noteworthy feature was the limited objective of this technically ambitious study. It had but one primary purpose: to determine the perception of several brands of analgesics. And it did so by the use of rating scales based on a priori analysis of the dimensions stressed by advertising. The study itself is relatively straightforward and simple from the point of view of a social psychologist but it represented a pioneer effort in the use of social science research in the courtroom, especially when considered in the light of the legal framework in which it was used. In its simplest form the argument was that the existence of a perceptual profile that corresponded to previous advertising emphasis on such dimensions as speed or gentleness was evidence that the advertising had induced these perceptions.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF USES OF MASS COMMUNICATION:  
AN ANALYSIS OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY

Franklin R. Carlile and Howard Leonard  
Young & Rubicam

The paper reports the findings of a study of consumer attitudes towards and ways of using messages produced by mass communication sources. The focus of discussion is on culturally based views of three types of mass communicators: 1) news media--network television and local newspapers, 2) public information sources--labor union leaders and government leaders, and 3) commercial communication sources--business leaders and advertising. It is hypothesized that audience members attribute characteristic motivations for deception attempts to each type of communicator. Armed with the culturally provided resources of an information-consumption oriented society, individuals critically evaluate information by source type and use it with what they consider to be appropriate degrees and modes of caution. It is concluded that application of "uses and gratifications" perspectives to the study of commercial communication will enable scholars in this field to contribute to the mainstream of mass communication study.

TOWARD A PARADIGM OF TELEVISION EFFECTS

George Gerbner, Larry Gross, Michael Morgan,  
Nancy Signorielli  
University of Pennsylvania

A decade of research on the relationships between television's dramatic content and viewers' conceptions of social reality has led to the development of a paradigm of television effects which will be reported in this paper. A great variety of findings had been reported as largely supporting and partially modifying but also occasionally contradicting the original hypothesis that television's cultivation of conceptions and behaviors is content-specific across a wide spectrum of programs and viewing groups.

The emerging paradigm is based on the conception of television as a stable (and generally stabilizing) factor differentially integrated into different styles of life. Although television's contribution to conceptions and behaviors is relatively independent, it is not isolated; it varies across demographic subgroups in systematic and comprehensible ways. The paper will discuss the development of this paradigm for specifying directions of cultivation, and will illustrate it by summaries from our research.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF  
MASS MEDIA DISASTER WARNINGS

Don D. Smith  
University of Iowa

There is a clear need for a better understanding of the factors involved in obtaining effective public response to disaster warnings. Time after time, faced with warning of impending disaster, many Americans have not responded as directed, often imperiling their lives. This study examines the mass media messages, the public's exposure to the messages, and the behavioral responses of the public to these media messages when Hurricane Eloise hit Panama City, Florida, on September 23, 1975. There was considerable incongruity between the advisory content of the messages and the actual responses of the public. The public's perceptions and interpretations of the message contents are examined and the results suggest a clear need for considering alternative forms of content and presentation in disaster warning messages.

WHO WATCHES HOW MUCH TELEVISION (OR NONE AT ALL)?:  
PROFILES AND CHANGES SINCE 1975

Paul M. Hirsch and Tom Panelas  
University of Chicago

The number of respondents in the NORC General Social Survey who report that they do not watch any television on the average day has doubled from 4% of the sample in 1975 to 8% in 1980. This paper assesses the significance of this trend and investigates its causes. In addition, earlier generalizations about television nonviewers based on smaller numbers of respondents from the NORC survey are reassessed on the basis of the current cumulative survey, which brings the total number of nonviewers to 320. Other aspects of viewing trends, and profiles of respondents in different viewing categories are reviewed, and the implications of both for explanatory models of media and television are discussed.

TRENDS IN WHITE RACIAL ATTITUDES, 1942-1980

Charlotte Steeh, Lawrence Bobo, Howard Schuman  
University of Michigan

Drawing on data collected by NORC, Gallup, the Survey Research Center and the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan, we examine shifts in white attitudes toward interracial contact, school and residential integration, fair employment, support for anti-black organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, and support for government intervention to promote racial equality. Our focus is on long-term trends by region.

POST WORLD WAR II CHANGES IN AUTHORITARIANISM AMONG  
ADOLESCENTS IN WEST GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES

Gerda Lederer  
Scaresdale High School

This study examines the changes in the attitudes of authoritarianism and dogmatism among adolescents in West Germany and in the United States over time. Surveys conducted in the United States in 1978 and in West Germany in 1979 are compared with surveys carried out in these countries in 1945 and in 1962 and 1966.

The survey instrument was a questionnaire composed of nine subscales, including items from the California F-Scale of Adorno et al. and from the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. It focused on authoritarianism in relation to the state, the family, the school, and society in general.

A significant decrease in authoritarianism over time was noted in each country. The changes were greater in West Germany than in the United States: whereas German adolescents were far more authoritarian than their American counterparts in 1945, American adolescents are significantly more authoritarian than those in West Germany today.

These findings also held when the analyses were repeated separately by socioeconomic level.

TRENDS IN ATTITUDES TOWARD FLUORIDATION

P. Jean Frazier  
University of Minnesota

The public health technique of adjusting fluoride levels in communal water supplies to prevent tooth decay is entering its fifth decade of use in the United States. However, fluoridation as a political issue is very much alive in many parts of the country. Proposals to initiate, maintain, or rescind fluoridation continue to generate controversy despite repeated and consistent assurances of safety from the scientific community. Unlike other public health measures, fluoridation has long been a socio-political issue closely tied to sub-issues such as safety, individual rights, home rule for communities, the question of who shall decide, and the right of people to make such decisions through public vote. This paper presents a critical overview of public opinion and social research on fluoridation. Specifically, it 1) reviews existing national data generated between 1952 and 1977 on public knowledge and opinions, with emphasis on change and continuity, 2) describes previous social research including studies from other countries, and 3) raises research questions based on recent social action and controversy.

## INDICATORS OF AGGREGATE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Richard T. Curtin  
University of Michigan

The Survey Research Center, at the University of Michigan, began a series of periodic consumer surveys more than 30 years ago, under the direction of George Katona. The Surveys of Consumers were developed and based on a theoretical view designated as behavioral or psychological economics. The underlying theory focuses on the human factor in economic affairs. Changes in consumer expenditures for new housing and vehicles during the past several decades have played a major role in determining whether the economy slipped into recession or moved toward recovery and growth. The consumer, rather than business or the government, has become the dominant factor shaping the course of the aggregate economy.

This paper will focus on the performance of consumer attitudes and expectations data in forecasting aggregate changes in sales of vehicles and houses. In addition, internationally comparative data are available for 11 countries, in addition to the United States. A comparison of the predictive ability of consumer sentiment data across these several countries will be discussed.

## CONSUMER AS FORECASTER

Fabian Linden  
The Conference Board

The "expectations" component of the Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index has an impressive record of foretelling economic trends. The survey which probes 5,000 different households each month asks respondents to indicate, among other things, the likely trend of business and job opportunities in the coming six months. They are also asked how they expect their personal fortunes to fare.

The statistical series which is based on these three questions has demonstrated, in the twelve year history of the program, a capacity to forecast even moderate and short term changes in the real GNP growth rate, with a lead time of roughly three to five months. In almost no instance did this measure send false signals.

However this series has some major limitations. It only suggests an approximation of the magnitude of change in economic activity, and it also fails to provide with precision the time frame of such change.

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE MEASUREMENTS:  
THEIR PREDICTIVE VALUE

Burns W. Roper  
The Roper Organization

Mr. Roper will review a dozen different economic confidence/buying intentions measurements his organization has experimented with over the last 7½ years in an attempt to find measures that would predict either sales of specific products and services or general economic activity. He will show how each of these measures correlates or fails to correlate with subsequent economic activity and will point out which ones give solid evidence of being predictive and which ones either show no sensitivity to future economic conditions or else give misleading readings. He will focus on one measurement that has consistently led the Commerce Department's index of leading indicators.

A COMPARISON OF THE RANDOMIZED RESPONSE APPROACH AND  
DIRECT QUESTION APPROACH TO ASKING SENSITIVE  
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Ralph E. Folsom, Jr. and Michael F. Weeks  
Research Triangle Institute

This paper reports on two studies conducted by the Research Triangle Institute that compared a randomized response technique and a direct question method with regard to asking a sensitive question of survey respondents. In one study a sample of persons who had recently been arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol was selected from police records. A self-administered direct question approach and a randomized response method were used on separate subsamples to ask respondents if they had been arrested for this offense. In the other study a sample of never-married females aged 15-19 was asked if they had ever had sexual intercourse. The question was asked directly by the interviewer early in the interview and was repeated at the end of the interview using a randomized response technique. The paper describes the design of the experiments, the statistical analyses performed, and the results of the comparisons.

INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES IN TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS:  
EFFECTS ON RESPONSE RATE AND ITEM NONRESPONSE

Eleanor Singer  
Columbia University

Martin R. Frankel  
National Opinion Research Center

This study experiments with different ways of informing respondents about a survey in order to see how such differences affect the quality of the data collected and the meaning of the experience for them. Extending earlier work on informed consent in personal interviews, it replicates essential features of the earlier study in telephone interviews with an RDD sample.

Two factors were varied in the present study: information about the content of the interview, and information about its purpose. Neither of these significantly affected either the response rate to the survey as a whole or item nonresponse. The response rate was highest among those respondents given the most information about the survey's content and purpose, but again not significantly so.

Although the response rate to the telephone survey was considerably below that obtained earlier with personal interviews, the quality of response to sensitive items was somewhat better on the phone than in person.

#### MEASUREMENT OF NO OPINION AND NONOPINION RESPONSES IN SAMPLE SURVEYS

Robert Mason and G. David Faulkenberry  
Oregon State University

An experiment in alternative wording of opinion questions compared the measurement of opinion states. Attention focused on distinguishing theoretically and empirically between "no opinion" or ambivalent opinion states and "don't know" or nonopinions. Three versions, each tapping the same opinion state, were administered randomly and independently to a total sample of 801 Oregon adults in face-to-face interviews. Each varied in opportunity for these response states to be selected. The results showed that no opinions ranged from near zero to 12% and "don't know's" from 6% to 38%, as one allowed these responses to surface in the question. Opinion group differences were related significantly to one's level of knowledge, level of interpersonal discussion and level of education. Results support the contention that no opinions and nonopinions can and should be distinguished from one another and allowed to play their respective roles in social science models.

#### SOME UNUSUAL STATISTICAL ASPECTS OF THE NON-RESPONSE PROBLEM

Irving Roshwalb  
Audits & Surveys

The investigation of the problem of non-response has generally involved two issues--how to define response (and non-response) rates and how to increase the response rate. This paper discusses three interesting statistical problems that bear on both of these issues. The first deals with the relationship between the design of the study and the method used to calculate its response rate. In many applications, the standard methods of calculating the response rate tend to produce underestimates of that value. The second, treating response itself as a random variable, leads to a model which involves an explicit statement of the correlation between response and the variable under study. The third, tracing the consequences of non-response when it leads to the effective truncation of the frequency distribution under study, develops some insights into the relationship between total mean-square-error and the response rate of a survey.

## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND SOCIAL REALITY

Kurt W. Back  
Duke University

Interviewing gains information of two different kinds: one takes the answers obtained in the interview as aims in themselves, the other tries to construct a larger structure out of the questions used as indicators. The former serves as a predictor of events analogous to the questions, the principal models being buying and voting behavior, and this is the main original model of public opinion interviews. The latter is used frequently to obtain physical facts such as reconstruction of landscapes and buildings from travellers' descriptions, or in other informant interviews, that is to construct physical reality. Public opinion interviews are, however, frequently measures of a social reality as well; the questions are not taken at face value but as parts of scales and indices which measure invisible, but real variables. In a wide way, interviews can be seen as indicators of a larger social reality, which represents the social environment as shown in conversations, in stimuli provided by the mass media, as anchor points of opinions, by selective attention. This social reality forms a background which individual questions probe. If questions are aims in themselves, progress in methods can be made by improving the particular questions and their administration in detail. If we look at questions as a basis for studying social reality, different techniques are needed; for instance, informants are not equal, but some may be better equipped to give insight into the social reality; in the same way, other factors of design and interviews and analyses are affected.

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

Eric Marder  
Eric Marder Associates

In addition to the traditional view of survey research, there is a different way of looking at the process of asking questions and collecting answers, which, for want of a better term, may be called "The Behavioral View." In this view, all considerations of "truth" and "falsehood" are set aside. There is no such thing as a biased question. There is no such thing as an untruthful answer. We are no longer concerned with what the respondent said, but with the fact that he said it.

From this perspective, a question is essentially a message addressed to the respondent, to which the respondent is obliged, by the rules of the game, to respond by making a choice of some kind (open-endedly, or from a set of options provided). And bias is no longer a bad thing but the very thing we are trying to measure.

The questioning process becomes a device for the systematic orderly measurement of the biasing power of different messages. The answering process becomes the systematic making of choices among options under conditions of controlled information. The "content" of the discipline becomes that lawfulness that is inherent in the process, that is that aspect of human nature that is uniquely revealed when people are asked to make choices in response to stimulation by messages.

SURVEY RESEARCH MEETS COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY:  
DALLIANCE OR ALLIANCE?

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Although survey research has had long-standing involvement with social psychology, it has had few contacts with theory or research in cognitive psychology. I report here the results of a workshop held in 1980 in which survey specialists asked a few cognitive psychologists how knowledge and theory about cognitive structure and process might contribute to improvements in survey methods. The workshop focused on the problems the National Crime Survey confronts in eliciting retrospective reports of victimizing events. The psychologists did offer useful ways for survey methodologists to formulate survey recall problems, some chastening experimental results, but only a few specific prescriptive suggestions. Many of the recall problems in surveys could not be matched against any of the experimental work in psychology. Survey research will profit substantially from cognitive psychology as experimentalists come to have greater involvement with such problems. The outlook is promising in that cognitive science may have as much to gain from the alliance as does survey research.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF COMPUTER-ASSISTED TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING

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Academic, governmental, and profit-making survey research organizations are now making at least provisional plans for the development and/or adoption of systems for computer-assisted telephone interviewing (or CATI). Many of the same organizations are also adapting CATI and/or commercial data entry systems to handle the editing, coding, and routine creation of machine readable records based on interview protocols for non-telephone studies. This paper presents a summary of the kind of CATI (or CATI-related) systems which have been adopted by survey organizations in the United States, and suggests both the opportunities and the obstacles associated with rapid growth in their dissemination and utilization. Special emphasis is placed on the early experience of several survey units with inter-institutional cooperation in CATI development and dissemination.

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