

Design and Analysis of Sample Surveys

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Class 8a: Using surveys to answer questions in political science

- ▶ Suppose you are performing an experiment on question wording. You are doing a survey of people who care for their elderly relatives and would like to know how many hours a week people spend on caregiving. You consider two different ways of asking:
 - ▶ (i) Directly ask how many hours per week
 - ▶ (ii) Ask how many days per week and how many hours per day, then multiply these two numbers
- ▶ You will do a between-subject experiment in a survey of 1000 people to measure the difference in responses between these two ways of asking the question. How large a question-wording effect would you be able to find?

Jitts 2 and 3

- ▶ You conduct an experiment in which some people get a special get-out-the-vote message and others do not. Then you follow up a sample, after the election, to see if they voted. If you follow up 2000 people, how large an effect would you be able to detect?
- ▶ What was the most confusing point in recent classes?

D-7. *8.* For how many years have *YOU* been providing care to this care recipient?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> a. Less than 1 Year | <input type="radio"/> b. 1-2 Years | <input type="radio"/> c. 3-5 Years |
| <input type="radio"/> d. over 5 Years | <input type="radio"/> Refused | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |

D-8. *9.* How often do you provide care to the care recipient?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> a. Every day | <input type="radio"/> b. 4-6 days a week | <input type="radio"/> c. 1-3 days a week |
| <input type="radio"/> d. Less than once a week | <input type="radio"/> Refused | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |

D-9. *10.* If at least once a week, how many *HOURS PER WEEK* do YOU provide care or supervision?

Hours per WEEK if weekly care

D-10. *11.* If less than once a week, how many *HOURS PER MONTH* do YOU provide care or supervision?

Hours per MONTH

D-15. *15.* In general, how satisfied are you with YOUR life?

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Very Dissatisfied | <input type="radio"/> Dissatisfied | <input type="radio"/> Satisfied |
| <input type="radio"/> Very satisfied | <input type="radio"/> Refused | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |

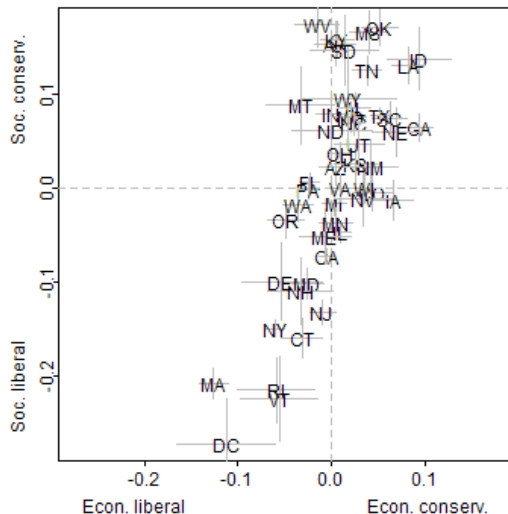
► Now look at some data from an actual survey of caregivers

Some examples from my own research

- ▶ Economic and social ideology by state
- ▶ Social networks
- ▶ Political polarization
- ▶ Why are presidential election campaign polls so variable when votes are so predictable?

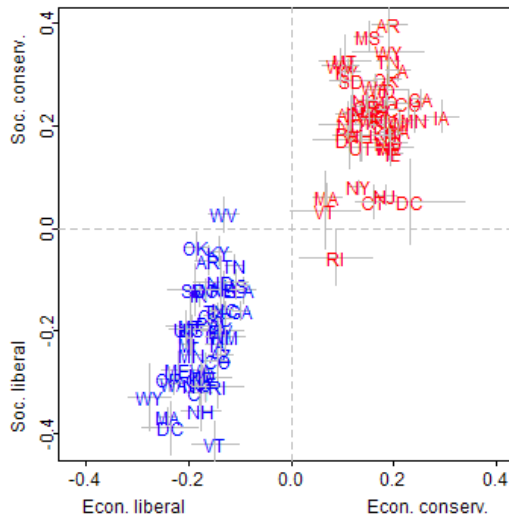
Economic and social ideology by state

Average economic and social ideology scores in each state



Democrats and Republicans separately

Average economic and social ideology scores
among Bush voters (red) and Gore voters (blue) in each state



Annenberg rolling cross-section poll, 2000

- ▶ Economic issues: Are tax rates a problem, favor cutting taxes or strengthening social security, federal gov should reduce the top tax rate, federal gov should adopt flat tax, federal gov should spend more on social security, favor investing social security in stock market, is poverty a problem, federal gov should reduce income differences, federal gov should spend more on aid to mothers with young children, federal gov should expend effort to eliminate many business regulations
- ▶ Social ideology: Federal gov should give school vouchers, federal gov should restrict abortion, federal gov should ban abortion, favor death penalty, favor handgun licenses, federal gov should expend effort to restrict gun purchases, are underpunished criminals a problem, is immigration a problem, favor gays in military, federal gov should expend effort to stop job discrimination against gays, federal gov should expend effort to stop job discrimination against blacks, federal gov should expend effort to stop job discrimination against women, federal gov should allow school prayer

Examples of interest to you

- ▶ Examples of the relevance of survey sampling to political science
- ▶ Work in pairs