

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

The 1993 annual conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) was held May 20–23 at the Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, IL. Official registration was 498, making this the largest conference that AAPOR has ever held on its own.

The conference program consisted of two didactic sessions, two plenary sessions, and 45 panels. A total of 185 papers were delivered at the formal panels, and every session had a chair and/or discussant. A total of 346 individuals were listed in the program index. For the first time, the conference hosted a poster session at which presentations about new findings and technological advances, as well as small replications, were presented.

On a related note, the Survey Methods Section of the American Statistical Association (ASA) invited AAPOR to collaborate on various projects, and the council agreed to explore this. As the first effort in this regard, methodological papers presented at the annual conference were eligible to be published in the ASA Survey Methods Section's *Annual Proceedings*. Authors submitted proposals for 72 papers they wanted considered for such publication, and they are being reviewed by ASA for suitability of content for publication in their annual volume.

The conference began with two didactic sessions on Thursday afternoon, each of which was attended by approximately 30 participants. Klaus Kirppendorf of the University of Pennsylvania conducted a session on content analysis and Steven Blixt and Charles Cannell of the University of Michigan conducted a session on behavior coding methods.

The formal program began with a plenary session on Thursday evening entitled "Alternative Models for Estimating Presidential Vote." Chaired by Clyde Tucker of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it consisted of presentations by three researchers who used quite varied techniques for estimating the outcome of the 1992 presidential election. James Campbell, a political scientist on leave at the National Science Foundation, described forecasting models that employ aggregate measures of

public opinion and economic conditions. Robert Forsythe, an economist from the University of Iowa, described the operation of the Iowa Political Stock Market, through which "shares" were traded in a mechanism that became equivalent to estimating the outcome. And Michael Kagay, director of surveys at the *New York Times*, discussed preelection polls and the role of current measures of public opinion in the efforts of the other two speakers.

On Friday evening, the second plenary session was entitled "Public Opinion in the Campaign and in the White House." The speakers were Fred Steeper of Market Strategies, a pollster in the Bush campaign and White House, and Stanley Greenberg of Greenberg Research, Inc., a pollster in the Clinton campaign and White House. Kathy Frankovic, AAPOR president, moderated an interesting presentation and lively discussion of how public opinion has been employed by recent successful presidential candidates.

At Saturday night's awards banquet, Jack Elinson, professor emeritus at Columbia University, was honored with the AAPOR Award for exceptionally distinguished achievement. Dick Warnecke of Illinois enlisted 26 colleagues to help in the selection of the AAPOR Student Paper Awards, and the AAPOR Student Paper Award went to Michaela Wanke of the University of Mannheim for her work entitled "Question Wording in Comparative Judgments: Understanding and Manipulating the Dynamics of Direct Comparison." The second-place paper was authored by E. Clement Brooks of the University of California, Berkeley, and was entitled "Re-evaluating Converse's Non-attitudes Thesis: Stability and Measurement of 1950's Public Opinion." There were also two third-place awards: E. Marla Felcher of Northwestern University was honored for her paper entitled "Increasing the Accuracy of Respondents' Estimates of the Frequency of Everyday Behaviors in Survey Research: Memory Cues vs. Increased Retrieval Time," as was J. Frederick-Collins of the University of North Carolina for her paper entitled "A Spiral of Bias? Database Marketing and Public Opinion Formation."

Arranging for the conference requires a great deal of work on the part of many people. I was ably assisted by the associate conference chair, Diane Colasanto of Princeton Survey Research Associates. The program took form after two meetings of individuals in Ann Arbor and Princeton to screen the initial paper proposals. Members of these committees included, in Ann Arbor, James Dearing of Michigan State, Steven Heeringa and Vincent Price of Michigan, and Sherry Marcy of DataStat, Inc., and, in Princeton, Jack Ludwig of the Gallup Organization, George Carcagno of Mathematica Policy Research, Mark Schulman of Schulman, Ronca, and Bucuvalas, and Cliff Zukin of Rutgers.

The success of the conference itself depends upon a close working

relationship with the hotel, and this was again ably managed by Karen Liss Goldenberg of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Dawn Von Thurn of the Bureau of the Census handled all of the requests for audiovisual requirements, and Nancy Mathiowetz organized the Fun Run and the T-shirt contest and sales. Phyllis Endreny, research consultant, organized the book exhibit, where there was representation from 38 publishers. Bob Lee of Pace University organized the technology exhibits, and there were five exhibitors.

As a service to members, we also experimented with a form of a "job fair" that attempted to match prospective employers with AAPOR members who might be looking for work. This activity was organized by Jo Holz of NBC, modeled after a similar effort of the ASA. A total of 19 positions were listed, and 21 conference attendees indicated an interest in seeking employment.

In the end, the conference would not have taken place without the able assistance of Cathy Ostrowski, the AAPOR administrator. Joyce Meyer assisted in the preparation of the printed program material.

For a nominal charge, copies of the conference program can be obtained from the AAPOR secretariat at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

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Conference Chair