ISR and AAPOR: A Challenging Path to Harmony

Our country has just experienced a most unusual presidential election year, and public opinion polls have played a large role in the drama. What better time to take a look at a piece of the history of polling as it is reflected in the complex relationship between the Institute for Social Research and the American Association for Public Opinion Research?

In the early 1990s, AAPOR moved its administrative secretariat from an accounting firm in Princeton, New Jersey to ISR’s Thompson Street Building. ISR’s Mike Traugott was the 1999-2000 President of AAPOR, ISR Founder Charlie Cannell won the 1999 AAPOR Award for outstanding contributions to public opinion research, and ISR’s Bob Groves won a 2000 Innovator’s Award for the development of survey methodology as an academic field. In the past fifteen years, six ISR associates have been presidents of AAPOR, and five have won the AAPOR award (see highlighted boxes on p. 12). Many on the ISR faculty are members of AAPOR, and many AAPOR members outside ISR have benefited from ISR’s training programs. However, the relationship between the two organizations has not always been so harmonious.

Founded in 1947, AAPOR’s stated purpose was to organize an annual conference where survey researchers from the commercial, government and academic sectors could all come together to share experiences and insights. In addition to providing a venue for the cross-fertilization of ideas from diverse sectors of a complex enterprise, AAPOR became a leader in setting professional standards and disclosure requirements in the field of public opinion research and the sponsor of a prestigious journal, the Public Opinion Quarterly.

THE EARLY DISAGREEMENT

AAPOR’s post-war dream of providing a home for the wide variety of professional interests involved in public opinion research almost died on the vine. During World War II, the government and the military had relied heavily on public opinion research to take the attitudinal pulses of armed services personnel overseas and of civilians who remained stateside. The skills and talents of both commercial pollsters and academic survey researchers were tapped. However, during those years, a rift began to develop between these two groups, a rift caused by—continued on page 10
With the death of Leslie Kish in November, the social sciences lost one of the most remarkable social statisticians of the 20th century. Leslie’s unrivaled reputation as a teacher of leading sampling statisticians worldwide, as an unfailing proponent of probability sampling for over a half century, and as advocate of rolling samples as alternatives to future decennial censuses are just some of the reasons why his impact has been so vital and lasting. Leslie also forged one of the many, and perhaps the strongest, links between ISR and opinion research as both an academic field and as a commercial profession. This issue of the ISR Sampler, in its focus on these many linkages, is dedicated to Leslie’s heritage.

One of the hallmarks of that heritage I call, “honest numbers for democracy.” Those who know Leslie’s early adult life recall that he fought in Spain against Franco’s totalitarian regime. Leslie was deeply committed—in brave action as well as in written words—to freedom under democratic rule. And I, for one, view his life-long devotion to training statisticians, to creating national statistical systems, and to improving censuses around the globe, as an extension of that commitment. Leslie seems to have believed that numeracy, and not just literacy, must be a pillar of democracy and of democratic society. He might have said that the ability of a people to measure the accomplishments of their elected governments, to know transparently the direction of sociopolitical and economic change, and to calculate for themselves the state of affairs about important community and national issues, lies at the core of numeracy and of democracy. I suspect Leslie must have believed deeply in the capacity of statistics in the hands of many people, to trump the force of totalitarianism.

This heritage of honest numbers for democracy motivates much of the Institute’s research. It is manifest in the National Study of Family Growth, a new project collaboration between the Survey Research Center, the Population Studies Center, and the ICPSR. It lies at the core of the Consumer Surveys Program and the four decades of the National Election Study, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, and the National Survey of Black Americans. It is pervasive in all of ISR’s centers.

Perhaps the hallmark of this heritage, however, will be the proposed Graduate Degree Program in Survey Methodology. Currently before the Executive Committee of the Horace Rackham Graduate School, the proposed program would elevate ISR’s role in graduate education on the University of Michigan campus. An interdepartmental degree program, under auspices of the Graduate School as the degree-granting unit, the program would combine expertise in sampling statistics, statistical modeling, and cognitive social psychology (as relevant to the interrogation of opinions, belief, values, attitudes, decision-making, judgments, and memory). Students in this proposed program would be drawn from abroad as well as nationally, for one purpose of this program is to strengthen professional capacities of national statistical systems as well as to deepen the talent pool of academic survey methodologists and researchers. ISR’s many research projects would provide important training opportunities for these students, whether they seek academic posts or ultimately pursue practitioners’ careers in market research, opinion polling, or political forecasting, like the ISR alumni highlighted in this issue.

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ISR Trains Leaders in Commercial Polling

ISR is now playing a leadership role in AAPOR, and at the same time, many AAPOR members from the commercial and government sectors have benefited directly from involvement in ISR’s training programs. The following individuals are some examples:

DIANE COLASANTO

Diane Colasanto, who with her husband, Andrew Cohut, co-owns Princeton Survey Research Associates, claims that “what I do right now comes directly out of what I learned at ISR.” As a graduate student in political science at the University of Michigan in the mid 1970s, Colasanto did a practicum through ISR with the Detroit Area Study. She was a teaching assistant for Howard Schuman, who was also co-chair of her dissertation committee, and she used data from the Detroit Area Study for her dissertation project. She remembers Schuman as “a very inspiring teacher, especially when it came to designing and asking questions, a skill which has proved so useful for my whole career.” Schuman was also instrumental in convincing Colasanto to join AAPOR. He was, she says, “single-handedly responsible for a lot of the AAPOR membership in those days.”

Colasanto completed her doctorate in 1977 and taught survey research as an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She went on to become chief methodologist for the Gallup Poll, where she stayed until 1989, when she and Cohut formed Princeton Survey Research, a company that supplies survey data to media, foundations and corporations, and has offices in Princeton, NJ and Washington, DC. Colasanto is also co-owner of a subsidiary telephone survey company, Princeton Data Source of Fredericksburg, VA, and she is an active member of AAPOR, serving on its Public Opinion Quarterly Advisory Committee.

EUGENE ERICKSEN

As a consultant to the National Economic Research Association, Inc. (NERA), Eugene Ericksen is “very grateful to ISR for encouraging me to think in an interdisciplinary way.” Ericksen first worked at ISR in the 1960s, when he was a doctoral candidate in sociology. He was a research assistant to Leslie Kish and Irene Hess on a project that evaluated the life situations of African-Americans in Detroit after the riots. He has particularly fond memories of what he calls “The Leslie Kish Consulting Hour” when students and faculty from many parts of the university came together to brainstorm solutions to research problems. Students’ vague, unfocused ideas would be clarified, and they “wouldn’t leave until they had a research plan.”

Ericksen received his Ph.D. in 1971, with a concentration in demography. He worked as a sampling statistician at the Institute for Social Research at Temple University for ten years, as well as serving on the mathematics faculty at Princeton. As a consultant to NERA, he has been hired by a Presidential Monitoring Board to evaluate the Year 2000 Census, and he says that the survey methods he learned while working on his dissertation under Leslie Kish will be directly applicable to this project. He’s also teaching a course in sampling at Temple: “Basically,” Ericksen says, “I’m using what Leslie taught me and diffusing the knowledge I learned at ISR.”

BRUCE HOYNOSKI

A senior vice president for research at Nielson Media Research Midwest Headquarters in Schaumburg, Illinois, Bruce Hoynoski attended ISR’s eight week Summer Sampling Program for Statisticians in 1981 and studied under Leslie Kish. The summer program proved invaluable for Hoynoski, who had earned his MA in applied statistics from Stanford, but needed more background in survey research and sampling methods. He finds that the education he received at ISR in designing and selecting samples “fits perfectly” with the work he’s doing at Nielson Media, where he leads a team that designs panel studies and telephone surveys for clients in the media industry, including advertisers, commercial
networks, and cable networks, such as CNN. The clients use the data collected in the Nielsen surveys for understanding and predicting audience trends. Hoynoski claims that the survey methods he learned at ISR “play a direct role in how we pick these samples. We use Leslie Kish’s survey sampling textbook as our Bible.”

RICHARD KULKA

A vice president for research at Research Triangle Institute (RTI) in North Carolina, Richard Kulka calls his organization “a little ISR.” Kulka coordinates a large team of statisticians, social scientists, and other professionals dealing with issues of health and health care policy. Like ISR, RTI is a not-for-profit, university affiliated organization, with ties to Duke University, University of North Carolina, and North Carolina State, but unlike ISR, where all projects are grant funded, RTI is a “contract organization,” whose main client is the federal government.

Kulka studied social psychology at Michigan in the late 1960s under Ted Newcomb and Dan Katz, and he “quickly got interested in survey research.” His education was interrupted by a stint in the Army: he served in Vietnam and at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he initiated one of the early surveys of post-traumatic stress in Vietnam veterans. Kulka came back to Michigan and worked on various projects at ISR in the mid 70s and 80s. He did his dissertation work with Libby Douvan, who asked him to manage a project in Detroit on students’ adaptive behaviors in school environments. This experience proved invaluable not only from a research standpoint, but because, says Kulka, “Libby gave me a chance to do the day-to-day management of the project.” This combination of research sophistication and managerial skill proved invaluable to Kulka when he moved on to positions at the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago and, most recently, at RTI.

ELIZABETH MARTIN

As a senior researcher for survey methodology at the US Census Bureau, Betsy Martin has been involved in evaluating the new census question which allows respondents to identify with more than one race. This question, says Martin, represents “a huge change, with implications for how data is used,” and one of her jobs is to develop useful methods for classifying multi-racial respondents. Martin has been examining issues of race ever since the early 1970s, when she was a graduate student in sociology at Michigan and a teaching fellow at the Detroit Area Study. She worked with Professors Otis Dudley Duncan and Howard Schuman on a replication of the Study of Social Change. The study monitored changes in attitudes toward politics, gender, and family roles, and was also involved in re-examining racial attitudes shortly after the Detroit riots. Martin’s experience with the DAS during those turbulent years was exciting and even a little scary, but, she says, “it was terrific hands-on training, and really exceptional, really unique. I didn’t realize it at the time, but there was nothing else like it in the country.”

As a student and teaching fellow, she “really got hooked on surveys,” and this deep interest led directly to her career at the Census Bureau, where for the last two years she has been working on the 2000 Census as a senior technologist. Prior to 1998, she was the director of survey methods research, where she worked with psychologists, anthropologists, and survey methodologists in a usability testing lab which sought to understand the causes of question errors, and to design and test potential improvements.

ANDREW MORRISON

In 1990, after working for Market Opinion Research for more than ten years, Andrew Morrison became founder and CEO of his own company, Market Strategies, Inc., ofLivonia, Michigan. MSI’s projects include advertisement testing and customer satisfaction research. The company has 200 full time employees and is now the 25th largest market research firm in the country. And, says Morrison, the work he’s done at both MOR and MSI has been “a direct translation of what I learned at ISR.”

Morrison earned his doctorate from UM in the mid-1970s in mass communication research, a joint degree
Andrew Morrison

program, new at the time, that combined sociology, political science, psychology and journalism. It was, says Morrison, “at its core a survey research Ph.D.” with Lloyd Johnston and Charlie Cannell, among others, on his dissertation committee. Through ISR, Morrison was involved in communications research with adolescents, focusing on media effects on drug abuse and family planning. He also did an ISR sponsored practicum at Market Opinion Research which set him on his ultimate career path.

Morrison’s connections with ISR are still strong: he hires ISR trainees and UM grads who have benefited from experiences at ISR. He also encourages his clients to send their employees to ISR’s summer programs, and he thinks his company’s relationship with ISR will become even stronger as the new Ph.D. program in survey research gets under way. “It’s been a relationship that’s been very productive on both sides,” Morrison says. “It’s wonderful to have the ISR as a resource in our own backyard.”

Frank Newport

FRANK NEWPORT

Editor-in-chief at the Gallup Poll, Frank Newport has “a personal commitment to explaining polling data in context to the public.” During the 2000 presidential campaign, Mr. Newport appeared on CNN several times a day, analyzing the polls and bringing home their full meaning to viewers. He first became aware of the importance of context in understanding survey data when he studied with ISR’s Howard Schuman, who had a habit of insisting that “one finding in isolation doesn’t have much meaning.”

Newport earned a doctorate in social psychology at the University of Michigan in 1976. He worked closely with Schuman, as well as with ISR psychologists James S. Jackson, Robert Zajonc, and Eugene Burnstein. Newport credits his Michigan experience with giving him an outstanding background in survey research and statistics. After a three year stint in academics at the University of Missouri in St. Louis, Newport returned to journalism, which had been his undergraduate major at Baylor University, and hosted radio talk shows, first in St. Louis and then in Houston. While conducting an interview with the president of a Houston media research corporation, Newport discovered that the company needed a consultant with both hands-on media experience and a background in survey research. Newport fit the bill and was hired on the spot. His combined journalism and survey research experiences eventually brought him to Gallup’s Princeton headquarters, where he now heads up the operation’s connections with sponsors CNN and USA Today. In addition to appearing on CNN, Newport supervises Gallup’s daily communications with the press and on the Internet, and writes a regular column, which can be accessed at www.gallup.com.

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And we anticipate developing commercial partnerships for this program to provide a wider array of apprenticeships and practical experiences for students, whether at the masters or doctoral levels.

We hope to receive approval to begin this program in 2002-03, along with our academic unit partners in this interdepartmental program. Once approved, it will expand many of the educational goals, many of the opportunities to link research with advanced training of students, and many of the profound commitments to internationalization of social science and of survey research that have motivated ISR’s summer training programs. Leslie Kish was at the forefront of these goals when they were set in place four decades ago. They have been key to the joint doctoral program in survey methodology currently offered by the University of Michigan through ISR, the University of Maryland, and Westat. But for me, the program will realize another phase of Leslie’s lifelong commitment to creating the basis of honest numbers and to strengthening democratic and informed decision making worldwide. We shall want this program to aspire to no less, as part of the Kish Legacy.
Howard Schuman, working with others in ISR and elsewhere, has used national surveys to explore how people remember and think about past national and world events. On the one hand, he has elicited spontaneous memories to questions that ask respondents to name important past events or changes that come to mind. Here the main findings are, first, a strong tendency for cohorts to recall events that occurred when they were in their adolescence or early adulthood. For example, World War II is remembered especially by Americans who were in their teens or twenties when that war occurred, and the same is true for the Vietnam War and for the Gulf War. Second, people tend to remember events in terms of how they themselves were affected (e.g., “my hearing was damaged during military service”), rather than as historians would describe the events (e.g., a victory or defeat).

The other form of memory explored calls for knowledge of specific past events. Can the respondent identify the Tet Offensive or a figure like Joe McCarthy? Such knowledge seemed at first due to a cohort effect also, but further study has indicated that personal impact again contributes importantly. For example, men who were of draft age during the Vietnam War are especially knowledgeable about the Tet Offensive, but women of the same age are less knowledgeable on that subject. In contrast, women and men who were adolescents at the time of Woodstock were equally likely to know about that event. Similar results bearing on the importance of personal experience occur among Russians concerning their own 20th century history.

Since arriving at ISR from Columbia in 1994, Eleanor Singer has initiated several interlinking studies on the use of monetary incentives in survey sampling. These studies are now bearing fruit, and a summary of the findings has been published in the Summer 2000 issue of Public Opinion Quarterly.

Singer and ISR colleagues John Van Hoewyk and Patty Maher, “started with the assumption that people can participate in a survey for a variety of reasons, and in recent years they seem to have fewer reasons to participate.” Monetary incentives can compensate for the absence of other kinds of motivation, such as interest in the topic of a survey or a strong sense of civic mindedness. In an experiment conducted with ISR’s Bob Groves and Amy Corning, Singer found that “incentives make more of a difference for people who have fewer other reasons to participate. For these people, incentives increase response rate and speed up the process of responding.” However, researchers have been concerned that incentives can have unexpected adverse effects on the quality of the data. Singer has not found that incentives-motivated subjects show greater incidence of item non-response, but she has discovered that incentives tend to have differential effects on different groups of people. “There is a suggestion that incentives are more effective with poorer people and some minority populations, or to turn it around another way, you have to pay more money to induce more affluent people to come into the study.” And the data suggest that people may, under the influence of incentives, give more optimistic answers to certain kinds of questions: in a survey of consumer attitudes, for example, people who received incentives gave more optimistic answers to questions that asked about their expectations for the future. “The
effects are small,” says Singer, “but important enough that they deserve a closer look.”

In recent research conducted with sociology graduate student Jack Sandberg, Sandra Hofferth is asking and answering the question “Are children overscheduled?” She has found that between 1981 and 1997 children’s free time at home indeed has gone way down, for the reason that more mothers are working outside the home. Children spend more time in daycare centers, preschools, and after school programs, and they use the free time they do have differently than they did a generation ago. They do not read books at home, ride bikes, or play casual games of catch around the neighborhood as much as they used to. Instead they are involved in structured activities such as team sports, soccer, gymnastics, music lessons, dance, and social and service clubs. Television viewing has decreased a lot, too, just because children are not at home as much.

Hofferth’s findings are drawn from a national representative sample of children aged three through twelve. In addition to collecting 24-hour diaries of children’s days, the survey included a qualitative interview with both parents and children, which sought to answer the question, “Are these changes in children’s lives good or bad?” One point made clear by both the surveys and the interviews is that parents today have “really different goals for their kids than they did twenty years ago. Parents want their kids to be good at sports, to pursue talents and opportunities that aren’t just academic. Parents really want their children to develop certain skills, and there’s a lot more pressure to put children in these organized activities.”

Do kids feel pressured, stressed out, or unhappy? For the most part, no, Hofferth says. In fact, kids who are involved in team sports tend to show fewer behavior problems, both at school and at home. Also, the parents Hofferth and colleagues talked to “seemed pretty sensitive to their kids’ needs. They watched for stress indicators such as not being able to sleep, not wanting to go to an activity” and helped kids out when necessary.

Possible negatives of the new way of life for children include a shrinking amount of time spent at family meals and time spent in pleasurable reading. All in all, though, children’s busy, structured lives don’t seem to be causing them any major harm and may do them good in the long run.

As this goes to press, Dr. Hofferth has taken a faculty position at the University of Maryland.

The Monitoring the Future Study of drug use in adolescence was started in 1975 by Lloyd Johnston and Jerry Bachman, who were soon joined by long-time colleague Patrick O’Malley, and subsequently by John Schulenberg and John Wallace. Monitoring the Future is one of a handful of drug use studies that follows its cohorts into adulthood, continuing to gather data from subjects who are in their twenties, thirties, and forties. The project is also unique in that it adds a new cohort of high school seniors each year. “With this design,” says Johnston, “we can tease out which kinds of change in drug use behavior are occurring, and then within each kind of change we can figure out what influences are causing it.” He notes that there are three general kinds of change which can be observed over the course of the life cycle:
1. Age related changes that are consistent across cohorts and are often explainable in terms of environmental and role transitions that people experience at different ages. For example, notes Bachman, when people get engaged, marry, and have children, drug and alcohol use consistently go down again. The reasons, he says, are a general lifestyle switch (less time spent at parties, clubs or bars), and an attitude switch (partners wanting to model “exemplary” behavior for each other). Interestingly, when couples divorce, the tendency to use drugs goes back up as individuals re-enter the mating game and the party scene. Then, if subjects remarry, their use of drugs goes down again.

2. Changes that reflect overall shifts in behaviors and attitudes in the population. These changes are observable in all age groups in a particular historical period. For example, drug use declined across all age groups in the 80s, a period when people had a first-hand chance to see many of the ravages of widespread drug use, and when news coverage of the issue, as well as ad campaigns against use, were particularly heavy.

3. Changes due to a “cohort effect.” A particular cohort will develop higher or lower drug use relative to earlier or later cohorts, and this difference will last through much or all of the life cycle. For example, in the early 1990s there was an upsurge of drug use that was specific to youth, and it has persisted with this group of youngsters as they have moved out of high school and into adulthood. Johnston and Bachman note several possible causes for this upturn of use among youth in the 90s: Congress cutting funds for drug education programs in the schools, parents becoming less vigilant about their kids’ drug use behaviors because they thought the drug problem had been “solved” in the 80s, and elements of the recording industry beginning to sing the praises of drugs once again.

**POPULATION STUDIES CENTER**

One of David Harris’s broad research hypotheses is that race is a social construction rather than a biological fact. In order to demonstrate this hypothesis, he is currently examining a large sample of mixed race adolescents, taken from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). These youths were among 20,000 seventh to twelfth graders who responded to written surveys at school and also answered questions in face-to-face interviews at home. Harris has discovered that there are considerable inconsistencies in the ways these young people responded to questions about racial identity: “When we use the responses youth give at school we find that 6.6 percent of youth are mixed race. By contrast, using the responses provided by these same youth at home reveals that only 3.6 percent are mixed race.” This large discrepancy in response rate can in part be explained, Harris believes, if you think of race as a fluid rather than static concept, a concept whose expression is largely dependent on social context. In school, where a mixed race identity may be acceptable and even desirable, and where responses on a questionnaire are totally private and confidential, students may feel more comfortable identifying themselves as mixed. Whereas at home, confronted with a live interviewer in a context where racial loyalties may have been carefully modeled or taught, students may feel less comfortable with the mixed race tag.

In future projects Harris hopes to answer more in-depth questions about the mixed race populations (White/Black, White/Asian, and White/Native American) covered in this study. For example, he says, there’s a common assumption that “mixed race kids don’t fit in anywhere” and are therefore more plagued with depression, delinquency, school problems, etc. Harris wants to find out to what extent this assumption is more true for mixed race kids than single race kids and how much it varies between the various types of racial mixes.

John Knodel is looking at the AIDS epidemic in Thailand from a unique angle. Along with colleagues Wassana Im-em and Chanpen Saengtietchai of Thailand’s Mahidol University Institute for Population and Social Research, and Mark VanLandingham of Tulane University, Knodel is studying older Thai people who must care for their adult children with AIDS. Knodel and his team gathered information on 963 cases of AIDS from local key informants in rural and urban communities in northern Thailand. “Results indicate,” they say, “that a substantial proportion of persons with AIDS move back to their communities of origin at some stage of the illness. Two thirds of the adults who died of AIDS either lived with or adjacent to a parent by the terminal
stage of the illness. A parent, usually the mother, acted as a main caregiver for about half. For 70 percent, either a parent or other older generation relative provided at least some care.”

Knodel explains that researchers in the US, while devoting a great deal of attention to the impact of AIDS on the victims themselves and on their orphans, have simply not looked at the burden the epidemic can place on the victims’ parents. In the US, support for AIDS patients tends to come from the health care and social service systems, and from partners and friends in the gay community. However, these supports don’t exist to the same extent in Thailand, partly because professional health care is less well developed, and partly because the epidemic there is largely heterosexual. Therefore, AIDS patients in Thailand are far more likely to turn to their families of origin when their condition deteriorates. This situation goes against cultural expectations in a society where parents rely on their adult children to care for them in old age. Knodel and his colleagues have found that AIDS impacts the parents of adult patients through effects on their finances, health, time commitments, and social relationships, and that the death of an adult child causes intense emotional stress. They suspect that the Thai pattern of parental and family involvement in the care of AIDS patients, though not prominent in the US, is common in the third world, and future research plans will explore this likelihood.

RESEARCH CENTER FOR GROUP DYNAMICS

Denise Park heads up four interlinking research programs that look at the fundamental ways in which memory changes with age.

1. For twenty years Park and her colleagues have been conducting laboratory behavioral research “where we have carefully mapped age related declines in memory and cognition as well as areas that remain intact during the aging process.”

2. In an offshoot of this original study, Park’s team is now using neuroimaging techniques “to look at the aging mind and what parts of the brain are activated while people are performing various types of tasks.” In particular, Park is interested in comparing brain activation in young and older adults and assessing how older adults might recruit more brain function or different brain sites to perform the same tasks that young adults do, the idea being that the plasticity of the brain might allow for some compensation for the loss of cognition in older adults.

3. In the related Culture, Aging and Cognition Program, Park and ISR colleagues Richard Nisbett and Trey Hedden are “looking at how age related changes in cognitive function might be the same or different across cultures.” With funding from the National Institute on Aging, this project compares styles of cognitive processing in young and older Asians and young and older Americans and explores how cultural saturation of experience interacts with neurobiological decline. The study is examining two contradictory predictions: First, that the differences between people from separate cultures should increase with age because they’ve had more time to absorb their own culture; and second, that intercultural differences in cognition should decrease with age because neurobiology gives all people’s brains less flexibility. Park calls it “a really interesting look at the crossover between environment and neurobiology.”

4. The Center on Cognitive Aging is looking at the role of declining cognitive resources in the way older adults process medical information and how they function in medical environments. “Once again,” says Park, “you have declining cognitive resources, but you have increasing knowledge and increasing experience with the medical system. So we find, for example, that younger adults are less likely to accurately take their medication. Cognitive function doesn’t predict medication behavior, a busy lifestyle predicts it. Older people remember better because they’re not as busy or distracted.”

A common theme in all four inter-related studies, Park asserts, is that declining cognitive function as people get older is balanced and compensated for by their increased experience, knowledge, and wisdom.
Ted Brader, who joined ISR’s Center for Political Studies in the fall of 2000, is completing a book on the ways in which political advertising effects emotions. The book will expand on his dissertation research, which was completed at Harvard in 1999. Brader is one of a handful of researchers who are systematically looking at emotions as targets of political advertising. Emotions, he says, have long been recognized as an important part of the political process, but “little effort has been made to define the role of emotions specifically or concretely in either theory or evidence in any area of political science.”

Now, however, Brader and other political scientists are returning to an interest in emotion and are using the findings of neuroscience and psychology to make predictions in their own field. Brader’s own research focuses on fear (anxiety) and enthusiasm, the two emotions that psychology defines as fundamental. Brader’s study involved experiments modeled on those done by ISR’s Don Kinder and others on the effect of news and campaign ads. In Brader’s experiments, subjects were shown an actual segment of local TV news with simulated campaign ads, designed by Brader himself, inserted into regular advertising spots. The simulated ads used background imagery and music to arouse either fear or enthusiasm. One group of subjects saw only a “fear” ad, another group saw only an “enthusiasm” ad, while a control group saw no ad at all. Subjects were interviewed before the TV viewing to ascertain general demographic and political opinion information. They were then interviewed again after the viewing to find out if the attempts to sway their views via emotional manipulation had had any effect.

Results showed highly significant effects for both types of ads. The enthusiasm ads tended to increase people’s intention to vote and to reinforce party or candidate loyalties. These ads, Brader claims, “did not convince those who were still on the fence,” but they did tend to polarize and motivate the already committed electorate. The fear ads, on the other hand, tended to undermine (though not necessarily change) people’s party loyalties and to arouse a desire to seek out new information. Swing voters were more likely to pay attention to the content of the fear ads.

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by an intense disagreement over methodology: was it better to use quota sampling or probability sampling?

Commercial pollsters like George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and Archibald Crossley had developed quota sampling as an improvement over biased magazine samples such as the one used by the Literary Digest Survey, that had proved useless as a predictor in the 1936 election. But from the point of view of statistically sophisticated academics like Rensis Likert, Angus Campbell, Leslie Kish, and Charles Cannell, all of whom eventually became founders of ISR, quota samples did not work accurately enough as predictors, nor could they easily be corrected for biases.

Likert, who invented the renowned Likert Scale and was head of Program Surveys in the Department of Agriculture during the war, gave Leslie Kish the assignment of figuring out how to draw up the first true probability sample. Kish and his colleagues successfully did so, using census data and area maps to select households with known probabilities. Early evidence suggested that the probability samples were more accurate and reliable than the quota samples, but the probability samples were also more complex, more time consuming, more expensive, and more in need of specially trained experts. Commercial pollsters and government officials could not yet be convinced that the probability samples provided enough improved reliability to justify the extra trouble and expense.

Charles Cannell, an ISR founder and Emeritus Senior Research Scientist who worked for Likert at the Department of Agriculture during the heady pioneering days of survey research, remembers that Likert refused to accept the pollsters’ dismissal of probability sampling: “Ren was president of the American Statistical Association at the time, and he used this as a bully pulpit to sell probability sampling,” despite the fact that it was as “expensive as the dickens.”

TRUMAN BEATS DEWEY

The true test of probability sampling came after the war, during the Truman/Dewey election of 1948. The fledgling ISR had just come into being, with Likert as its director, and Angus Campbell as the head of the Survey Research Center. Other social-psychologists and statisticians who’d worked together during the war, Kish, Cannell, Robert Kahn, and Daniel Katz among them, made up the initial ISR team.
AAPOR had also just been formed, and the researchers at the new ISR were sought-after early members.

In the late fall of 1948, the coders at ISR began to tabulate data from a small probability survey of 800 respondents, selected to be representative of the entire country. According to Leslie Kish, emeritus professor of sociology at U of M, who sadly passed away in the fall of 2000, the survey was attempting to assess people’s attitudes toward foreign policy and was not really interested in political preferences. But because it was an election year, and because people’s political opinions might logically have some bearing on their foreign policy views, it was decided to tack on two additional questions: “In the presidential elections next month, are you almost certain to vote, uncertain, or won’t you vote?” and “(If certain or uncertain) Do you plan to vote Republican, Democratic, or something else?”

As the results of these questionnaires came in, Cannell remembers that the coders kept a running tab of election preferences on a blackboard right next to his office door. Down to the wire, Cannell says, Truman and Dewey were neck and neck in the ISR survey, and then, as the last results came in, Truman inched ahead and held on to his tiny lead.

In the meantime, the commercial pollsters had predicted a Dewey landslide. Surprisingly, the actual election results almost exactly mirrored the results of the ISR probability sample. A grinning Truman was famously photographed holding up the mistaken Chicago Tribune headline that announced, “Dewey Beats Truman.”

Congress held an investigation to find out why the commercial pollsters had gotten it so wrong, and why ISR had been right. According to Cannell, “as soon as [Congress] got the real statisticians in there, the faults of the polls became very evident. It was the end of catch-as-catch-can election polls because it could be demonstrated that if you did it the way [the commercial pollsters] had been doing it, the probabilities would just go wrong on you.”

Unfortunately, Rensis Likert published an article in *Scientific American* which the commercial pollsters saw as a smear piece. They were insulted, and the ISR researchers, for their part, took offense because the commercial pollsters did not immediately give up on the quota sampling method. Cannell asserts that Likert, Campbell, and other ISR researchers refused to join AAPOR because many members of that organization were still supporting quota sampling.

As the years went by, ISR researchers continued to develop and refine probability sampling techniques. They found ways of making these techniques both efficient and cost effective. Under the directorship of Leslie Kish, they developed a hugely successful summer training program that has familiarized researchers, not only from academia, but also from commercial and government sectors, with sophisticated survey methods.

For more than two decades, ISR faculty tended to stay away from AAPOR, and those who did maintain a membership, like Charlie Cannell, kept a low profile. Angus Campbell and Rensis Likert were both honored with AAPOR Awards for distinguished service, in 1962 and 1973 respectively, but neither of these pioneering researchers ever truly reconciled with the organization.

Then, in the late 1960’s, a young researcher named Howard Schuman, recently arrived as a sociology faculty member and ISR researcher, began to attend the AAPOR meetings. Schuman had read about AAPOR in *Public Opinion Quarterly* and had become intrigued. He claims to have known nothing about the strained relations between ISR and AAPOR: “Somebody told me afterwards,” he says, “that joining was probably a mistake.” Unaware of the history, Schuman and another young faculty member, John Robinson, now at the University of Maryland, persisted in attending the AAPOR meetings. They
became active in the organization and, in the 1970s, persuaded a large cadre of students to join as well, among them Stanley Presser, Mike Traugott, Diane Colasanto, and Elizabeth Martin, all of whom have gone on to become leaders in various branches of the public opinion field.

In 1985, Schuman, who is a former director of ISR’s Survey Research Center and a former editor of *POQ*, became the first research scientist to be elected president of AAPOR, and since the mid-1980s ISR researchers have become increasingly visible in the organization. ISR’s increased participation has helped to fulfill one small part of the AAPOR founders’ dream: that their organization would provide a meeting place for everyone involved in public opinion research. In the last ten years, ISR’s AAPOR members have joined with their colleagues in the association to propose standards in survey research practices for the entire field. In this way, the rapprochement between ISR and AAPOR has been fully achieved.

— By Margaret Nesse

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AAPOR PRESIDENTS WITH LINKS TO ISR
Howard Schuman 1985-86
Eleanor Singer 1987-88
Stanley Presser 1993-94
Robert Groves 1995-96
Diane Colasanto 1996-97
Michael Traugott 1999-00

ISR RESEARCHERS WHO RECEIVED THE AAPOR AWARD
1962 Angus Campbell
1973 Rensis Likert
1985 Daniel Katz
1986 Philip Converse
1994 Howard Schuman
1995 Eleanor Singer
1999 Charles Cannell

MYRON GUTMANN BECOMES DIRECTOR OF ICPSR

Myron P Gutmann has accepted the position of Director of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research and will begin a five-year term effective August 1, 2001. Gutmann, who earned his master’s and doctoral degrees from Princeton University, is currently Director of the Population Research Center and Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin. He has been a leader in the interdisciplinary study of history for the past 25 years. His general areas of interest are the economic, social, environmental, and demographic histories of Europe and the Americas.

Gutmann is currently the Treasurer of the Social Science History Association and has served on the editorial boards of several scholarly journals and on various committees for professional associations and for the National Institutes of Health and for the National Research Council/ National Academy of Sciences.

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