So you’re standing in the election booth. You look at the names in front of you: McCain and Obama. Chances are, by now you know who you’re going to vote for. But what went into that decision? Did you study and evaluate the candidates’ stands on the war in Iraq? Did your wife say vote for Barack Obama, or else? Did the way the candidate pursed his mouth during debates annoy you? Do you always vote Republican, every election, regardless of who is running? For that matter, did you even make it to the election booth, or are you skipping it this year—instead hurrying to pick up some pizza in time for your favorite TV show?

Voting is a complex decision. Exit and opinion polls typically reduce the decision to the impact of simple demographics or to the influence of one or two high profile issues—say abortion or the war on terror. Results from such polls have produced useful but simplistic notions about why people vote the way they do, including catchall demographic labels like Soccer moms and NASCAR dads.

But it’s not that simple. Researchers at the Institute for Social Research (ISR) have been trying to pierce to the heart of voter behavior since the presidential election of 1948, when the Institute, then the newly founded Survey Research Center, launched what eventually became the American National Election Studies (ANES). The national survey was carried out through face-to-face interviews with the same sample of respondents just before and after the election. Based on the power and promise of that data, researchers asked the same basic set of questions for the next presidential election, and have continued to do so ever since (see sidebar on page 5 for more information about ANES). Analysis of the early data fundamentally altered what was understood about the American voter.

In fact, The American Voter, by ISR researchers and ANES survey designers Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, based on survey data from the 1952 and 1956 presidential elections, quickly became the classic text on voter behavior. Many of the central claims of the 1960 book, although not without controversy, have guided thinking about voter behavior to this day.

As articulated in The American Voter, factors influencing voter behavior could be pictured as feeding into a funnel—what the authors called the funnel of causality—with the actual vote being the outcome of all the factors. Inside the mouth of the funnel were factors long considered important: socio-demographic characteristics—such as age, gender, and income level—and party identification. But, the authors argued, to judge their impact on the eventual vote, those factors first had to travel down the narrowing funnel and be filtered through a set of “partisan attitudes,” that is, attitudes toward issues, social group interests, the parties’ performance as managers of government, and the nominees themselves. Only after this “political translation” process could the impact of the socio-demographic and party identification factors be determined.

This more nuanced analysis of voter behavior produced some unexpected conclusions. For example, the authors asserted that Independents were not the thoughtful and informed voters most observers had assumed them to be, but instead were less interested and engaged than partisans. The authors also concluded that the average voter was surprisingly unsophisticated: Most citizens didn’t make their voting
This spring, ISR celebrated the 90th birthdays of three members of its founding generation — Jean Campbell, Bob Kahn and Jim Morgan, pictured from left.

All three were born in 1918, an auspicious year, ISR Director James Jackson observed, that also brought the end of World War I and the start of the Russian Revolution.

SRC Director Bob Groves noted that from time to time, ISR has been accused of ancestor worship. “I find that people who make that accusation don’t know our ancestors,” he said.
In the coming year, ISR prepares to celebrate an important milestone – 60 years of social science in the public interest. On Friday, June 19, 2009, ISR faculty, staff and students will join friends and colleagues from near and far to celebrate the Institute’s illustrious past and engage in a bit of public prognosticating about our future. As plans for the celebration coalesce, we’ll be providing more details. In the meantime, please plan to join us for some or all of the coming anniversary events.

State of the Institute

Some of you may be wondering why we’re celebrating our 60th anniversary in 2009 instead of 2006 or 2008. As you might expect, the penchant for empiricism that inspires so much world-class ISR research has contributed to a lively, long-running debate about when ISR actually came into being. Some colleagues maintain that ISR started in 1946, when the University of Michigan established the Survey Research Center, bringing Rensis Likert, Angus Campbell, Charlie Cannell, George Katona and Leslie Kish to Ann Arbor. Others insist that ISR began in 1948, when Doc Cartwright brought the Research Center for Group Dynamics to Michigan from MIT. Still others contend that ISR really started in 1949, when the name was officially adopted by the U-M Board of Regents as the umbrella organization for the two original Centers.

What is not open to debate is the success of ISR as a landmark institution with a rich intellectual and research history. Growing from a total budget of approximately $200,000 in 1949 when it was incorporated to a total research volume of nearly $80 million today, ISR has attracted and retained some of the most distinguished social scientists of the era. We pride ourselves on being one of the original interdisciplinary institutes. But we acknowledge that excellence in inter- and multi-disciplinary research requires excellence in disciplinary research and scholarship. The first two generations of ISR scientists include many giants in their fields. A few members of this founding generation remain valuable members of our intellectual community today. As we build for the future, we truly do build upon their shoulders.

We are currently honoring one of these founders with the establishment of a new fellowship in his honor. The Robert Kahn Fellowship for the Scientific Study of Social Issues recognizes Bob’s contribution to a large set of academic fields, from organizational psychology to studies of aging, from large-scale surveys to tightly controlled randomized experiments. It also honors the inspiration he has provided to so many of us, with both his intellectual and physical vigor. At the age of 90, Bob comes to his ISR office every day — embodying the title of the book he co-authored with Jack Rowe — “Successful Aging.”

The Kahn Fellowship is the newest arm of ISR’s Next Generation Initiative – an on-going effort to create a future cadre of well-trained empirical social scientists. The purpose of the fund is to support a Ph.D. candidate, providing a stipend, tuition and Grad Care for one year and allowing the candidate to complete his or her dissertation. By providing this support, the Fellowship will directly benefit the brightest young scholars at the University as they conduct new scientific research on important social problems.

Our goal is to match and exceed the $250,000 dollar-for-dollar challenge grant from an anonymous donor, and to maximize the matching monies available from U-M President Mary Sue Coleman, who will provide $1 for every $2 donated to support graduate students. Combining the challenge grant with President Coleman’s matching funds, each one dollar gift made will generate $3 for the Kahn Fund. When fully funded, the Kahn Fellowship will have an endowment of over $750,000 and produce over $30,000 annually for the scientific study of social issues, making the fund one of the largest interdisciplinary fellowships at the University of Michigan.

How fitting that as we celebrate our past, we build for our future through this Fellowship. By honoring Bob Kahn and other members of ISR’s founding generation, we provide the next generation with the inspiration and the means to become the giants of tomorrow.
IN THE NEWS

“For us not to go for it and ask, ‘Look, is it race or not?’ There’d be massive disappointment in our study.”

Arthur Lupia, co-director of the American National Election Study, about new questions designed to reveal how racial attitudes affect people’s votes in the 2008 presidential election, even when they say race doesn’t matter. – Wall Street Journal, August 2-3, 2008

“People expected very little out of the economy. Compared to what their frame of reference was, the performance of the economy was absolutely tremendous.”

Richard Curtin, director of the Reuters/University of Michigan Surveys of Consumers, about why consumers of the ’80s and ’90s were not as anxious and pessimistic as today’s consumers, who are used to decades of prosperity. – Washington Post, June 18, 2008

“There’s been a sea change in societal, cultural and individual acceptance of cohabitation. A lot of the earlier studies were relying on data that may have been gathered in the late ’80s and mid-90s. We’re talking about a moving target.”

Pamela Smock, sociologist and ISR research professor, about whether couples who live together before marriage are more or less likely than other couples to divorce in the long run.

– USA Today, July 29, 2008

“The average older person requires about five hours of help per week, but older people with severe dementia, especially Alzheimer’s disease, may need help 40 hours or more a week.”

Kenneth Langa, ISR faculty associate, about the rise of “negative inheritances,” a situation when the cost of caring for aging parents outstrips any gifts or bequests.


“‘Yes, I know that all this sounds like I’ve been brainwashed by my third-grade teacher. But it turns out it’s true. The empirical evidence is clear: Freedom is conducive to happiness.’”

Ronald Inglehart, director, ISR World Values Survey, about the study’s recent findings that happiness is highest in countries that are more tolerant and accepting of different attitudes and lifestyles.

– Los Angeles Times, July 7, 2008

Faculty Books


An examination of family attitudes, beliefs, and relationships around the globe, which posits that family changes outside the West are not destined to follow Western trends.


A look at how social and economic policies seemingly unrelated to medical well-being have dramatic consequences for the health of the American people.


A graphic portrayal of broad social trends in contemporary America, based on recent statistics and data from a variety of sources.


An interdisciplinary investigation of the impact of new voting technologies reveals the good and the bad about technological changes in voting systems.


A look at the question-answer process basic to polls and surveys, issues of validity and bias, and the scope and limitations of meaning sought through polls and surveys.


Examines several technical approaches for making linked social-spatial data available while limiting risk. Makes recommendations for education, training, research, and practice.
Voter Behavior - continued from p. 1

decisions based on policy questions, nor did they hold consistently liberal or conservative views across issues. The assessment proved contentious in some quarters, and led to political scientist V.O. Key's famous response that "voters are not fools."

But do the funnel of causality and other concepts of a book published in 1960 still apply to today's voters? According to William Jacoby—director of the ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research based at ISR, and Michigan State University political science professor—the answer is a resounding yes. Jacoby still teaches The American Voter, and says most of his colleagues do as well. More to the point, three years ago, Jacoby and three other political scientists—Michael Lewis-Beck, Helmut Norpoth, and Herbert Weisberg—decided to essentially recreate The American Voter, this time using ANES data from the 2000 and 2004 elections.

The recently published The American Voter Revisited updates the context of the original book to current times (no more Dwight D. Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson), catalogues how the field has evolved in the intervening years, and tests whether the theories in play almost 50 years ago still apply in the political environment of the 21st century. Perhaps the book's most interesting finding, Jacoby says, is the extent of overall agreement with the original, particularly "given the vast changes in the mass media, and the supposed decline of American political parties, and the supposed increase in the sophistication of the American public."

But the book also illuminates current politics and reveals some changes. For both the 2000 and 2004 elections, for example, the analysis showed that negative perceptions of Democratic candidates Al Gore and John Kerry were more pivotal in putting a Republican in the White House than were positive perceptions of George W. Bush. Jacoby says the social groupings long identified with the two main political parties—such as labor with Democrats and business with Republicans—still exist, but are not as pronounced or clear-cut as they were. There are more Independents than in the 1950s, and many voters who have recently so classified themselves are politically active and informed. In addition, the authors found that while the percent of citizens who hold consistent ideological views is still small, it has increased from about 10 percent to almost 20 percent, chiefly due, Jacoby says, to "an unusually polarized period of American politics."

Jacoby is eagerly anticipating the ANES data for the 2008 election. He predicts that the trend of ideological differentiation between the two parties will continue, showing up in stronger than usual policy orientations among voters. As for that voter in the booth and whether he or she will be capable of making an informed decision, Jacoby is quick to stress that The American Voter never said that voters are fools, and that both the original and the latest round of analysis allow for some optimism in that regard. "Voters are not capricious," he says. "Using the limited tools that voters employ, they vote correctly most of the time, and make the vote that is relatively consistent with their interests."

Susan Rosegrant is a lecturer at the U-M Residential College and a contributing editor at the U-M Institute for Social Research.
No place like home: Katrina’s lasting impact

New Orleans residents who lost their homes in Hurricane Katrina were over five times more likely to experience serious psychological distress a year after the disaster than those who did not. That is one of the findings from a pilot study conducted by ISR researcher Narayan Sastry and Tulane University’s Mark VanLandingham.

A total of 144 individuals participated in the study, including many who moved away from the area after the disaster and had not returned a year later. According to Sastry, who is affiliated with both RAND and ISR, about 60 percent of study participants had no psychological distress at the time of the interview, while about 20 percent had mild-to-moderate mental illness. Another 20 percent had serious mental illness.

Almost one-third of blacks reported a high degree of distress, compared to just six percent of whites. Those with higher incomes and more education were much less likely to experience serious psychological distress, and those born in Louisiana were much more likely to have serious distress.

But the biggest factor predicting psychological distress a year after the hurricane hit was the extent of housing damage. Participants who lost their homes were five times more likely to have serious psychological distress than those who had not. In all, about 66 percent of the respondents reported that their homes were badly damaged or unlivable.

“She severe damage to one’s home is a particularly important factor behind socioeconomic disparities in psychological distress, and possibly behind the levels of psychological distress,” Sastry said. “For many people, the psychological consequences of housing loss could be profound and lasting.”

Marriage, through a glass more darkly

While our relationships with children and best friends tend to become less negative as we age, we’re more likely to see our spouses as irritating and demanding.

“There’s been a lot of research showing that marriage and other close relationships enhance well-being,” said ISR researcher Kira Birditt. “But less work has focused on the negative aspects of close relationships.”

Viewing our spouses more negatively over time may not be all bad, Birditt says. In fact, it might even be, well, positive.

“As we age, and become closer and more comfortable with one another, it could be that we’re more able to express ourselves to each other. In other words, it’s possible that negativity is a normal aspect of close relationships that include a great deal of daily contact.”

Birditt and colleagues Lisa Jackey and Toni Antonucci looked at individual changes over time, analyzing long-term patterns of relationship negativity among more than 800 adults ages 20 and older.

Participants were asked about the negativity of their relationships with three key people in their lives: their spouse or partner, a child, and a best friend. Specifically, they rated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements about each relationship: “My (spouse/partner, child, friend) gets on my nerves” and “My (spouse/partner, child, friend) makes too many demands on me.”

For all age groups, the spousal relationship was seen as the most negative and it tended to increase in negativity over time. “Interestingly, as relationships with spouses become more negative, relationships with children and friends appear to become less demanding and irritating over time.”

Birditt plans to conduct future research on how our response to negativity influences well-being. “How we respond to negativity in close relationships affects every aspect of our lives – at work and at home,” she said. “In fact, it’s likely that how we deal with it – not whether it exists – is what really matters.”

Exactly how much housework does a husband create?

Having a husband creates an extra seven hours a week of housework for women, according to an analysis of 2005 data from the ISR Panel Study of Income Dynamics. For men, the picture is very different: A wife saves men from about an hour of housework a week.

“It’s a well-known pattern,” said ISR economist Frank Stafford.
While an estimated 3.4 million Americans have dementia, defined as a loss of the ability to function independently, the researchers estimate that another 5.4 million over age 70 have memory loss that disrupts their regular routine but is not severe enough to affect their ability to complete daily activities.

The data, published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, are from the Aging, Demographics and Memory Study, part of the ISR Health and Retirement Study, and funded by the National Institute on Aging.

"Nearly every family will be faced with the challenges of caring for a family member with some form of memory impairment," said Brenda Plassman, associate research professor of psychiatry at Duke and the study's lead author.

"Even among the people age 71-79, a sizeable number had cognitive impairment. This is an age at which most people expect to have many productive years ahead."

A total of 856 study participants were assessed by a healthcare team in their home. During the assessment, the participants completed a neuropsychological examination and family members were asked to evaluate their loved one's memory, ability to complete daily activities and medical history.

A team of experts reviewed the information and assigned a diagnosis based on the general pattern and severity of the symptoms. This information was used to group patients together into subtypes for further analysis. Participants were followed from July 2001 through March 2005.

ISR co-authors of the study were Kenneth Langa, Gwenith Fisher, Steven Heeringa, David Weir, Mary Beth Ofstedal, Willard Rodgers, and Robert Willis.

New Center to focus on minority health

ISR researcher Ana Diez-Roux is directing the newly established Michigan Center for Integrative Approaches to Health Disparities (CIAHD). With co-director James Jackson, Diez-Roux plans to use a multi-level approach to identifying the factors driving persistent racial/ethnic health disparities.

"There is a growing sense that current approaches to understanding these disparities are insufficient," said Diez-Roux, who is also a professor of epidemiology at the U-M School of Public Health. "Fragmenting the problem into distinct social and biological components is insufficient, not only from the point of view of scientific understanding but..."
Achievement gaps within racial groups

One of the first studies to analyze elementary school reading and math achievement within racial groups has found that there are high achievers within all groups and that a substantial proportion of children catch up to the high achievers in their groups over time.

The study analyzed data on a national sample of 8,060 students, collected at four points in time, starting in kindergarten and ending in the spring of fifth grade.

“We found significant achievement gaps within racial and ethnic groups,” said Pamela Davis-Keane, a developmental psychologist at ISR who conducted the study with U-M post-doctoral fellow Justin Jager.

“We also found a significant proportion of students who caught up to the high achievers in their groups by the end of fifth grade, especially in reading. This shows that schooling does have an impact in closing the achievement gap for substantial numbers of children.”

“In general, our nation is not looking too bad in terms of reading achievement,” she said. “That makes sense because in the first years of school, reading gets the bulk of time and attention. But in math, the situation is very different. There are fewer high achievers in all the groups than there are in reading, and there are many more students who seem stuck in lower achievement trajectories. This suggests that schooling doesn’t have as strong an impact on math achievement as it does in reading.”

Overall, Davis-Keane notes, the findings of the study have some important implications for improving the nation’s effectiveness in reducing the stubborn achievement gap between racial and ethnic groups.

“By identifying what the characteristics are of students who can catch up on their own, and what the characteristics are of children who are persistent low-achievers, hopefully we can focus our time and money on the children who really need extra help in order to catch up,” she said.

The research was funded by the American Educational Research Association. Davis-Keane directs the ISR Center for the Analysis of Pathways from Childhood to Adulthood (CAPCA), which is funded by the National Science Foundation.

More information on the Center: www.rcgd.isr.umich.edu/capca/

Spanish-language version of news release: www.ns.umich.edu/Fs/story_es.php?id=6384

New project probes Americans’ values

As the fall elections draw near, an innovative new ISR project is probing the values behind Americans’ political decisions. The project website, www.ourvalues.org, will provide visitors with a chance to weigh in on a changing array of hot-button issues from polygamy to patriotism to same-sex marriage.

Public comments and responses to “flash poll” questions on the site will inform the content of a major survey on Americans’ Evolving Values, to be fielded by ISR.

“I am very enthusiastic about this website,” said Wayne Baker, a professor at the U-M Ross School of Business and an ISR faculty associate.

“It represents a new, ‘open source’ approach to research that is based on the wisdom of crowds’ rather than only the insights of a small group of academics.”

Baker, a sociologist, is developing the content and leading the discussions on the new website, which offers site visitors a
chance to comment on the topic of the day, or on other issues on their minds. For the coming nationally representative survey on Americans’ Evolving Values, Baker is collaborating with social psychologist James Jackson, who directs the ISR.

“We live in a time when there is more debate than ever about what being an American means,” said Jackson. “As we move forward, it is vital to understand the underlying values and principles that Americans of all ages and backgrounds share. An important goal of this larger project is to clarify how basic values are linked with political, economic, and religious behavior.”

Happiness is on the rise

People in most countries around the world are happier than they’ve been in the past, according to newly released data from the ISR World Values Survey. Data from representative national surveys conducted from 1981 to 2007 show that happiness rose in an overwhelming majority of nations studied.

“It’s a surprising finding,” said ISR political scientist Ronald Inglehart, who directs the World Values Survey and is the lead author of a recently published article on the topic. “It’s widely believed that it’s almost impossible to raise an entire country’s happiness level.”

Denmark is the happiest nation in the world and Zimbabwe the unhappiest. The U.S. ranks 16th on the list, immediately after New Zealand.

During the past 26 years, the World Values Survey has asked more than 350,000 people how happy they are, using the same two questions. “Taking all things together, would you say you are very happy, rather happy, not very happy, not at all happy?” And “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?”

In the 52 countries for which a substantial time series is available (covering 17 years on average), this index rose in 40 countries and fell in only 12. The average percentage of people who said they were “very happy” increased by almost seven points.

“Most earlier research has suggested that happiness levels are stable,” said Inglehart. “Important events like winning the lottery or learning you have cancer can lead to short-term changes, but in the long run most previous research suggests that people and nations are stuck on a ‘hedonic treadmill.’”

The people of rich countries tend to be happier than those of poor countries, but even controlling for economic factors, certain types of societies are much happier than others.

“The results clearly show that the happiest societies are those that allow people the freedom to choose how to live their lives,” said Inglehart.

The World Values Survey in the U.S. and in several other countries are funded by the National Science Foundation. Additional funding for the surveys comes from a variety of agencies and foundations around the world, including the Swedish and Netherlands Foreign Ministries.

More information on the World Values Survey:

www.worldvaluessurvey.org

Why disability is declining among older Americans

Recent research by Robert Schoeni, Vicki Freedman of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, and Linda Martin of the RAND Corporation, showed that better medical care and more education—not positive life-style changes—are the major factors in the decades-long decline in disability rates among older Americans.

The study, funded by the National Institute on Aging, was published in the March 2008 issue of The Milbank Quarterly.

The widespread use of everyday devices and services—microwaves, cordless phones and direct deposit banking, for example—has also played an important role in freeing a greater proportion of older Americans from disabilities, according to Schoeni and colleagues. So has the use of canes and walkers and home modifications such as grab bars in the bathroom.

Surprisingly, the study found that reductions in smoking are not among the major reasons that the prevalence of disabilities among the aged has fallen from 22 percent in 1983 to 14 percent in 2005. Although smokers have higher rates of disability than those who never smoked or quit smoking, smoking patterns have not changed that much among the elderly since the early 1980s, so smoking cannot account for the improvements in disability.

“The declining late-life disability prevalence is one of the most significant advances in the health and well-being of Americans in the past quarter century,” said Schoeni. “Understanding what led to these improvements is much more than an academic exercise. With the first baby boomers turning 65 in 2011, it is imperative that policymakers and clinicians have a clear sense of what led to declining disability rates so they can have the best chance of achieving future reductions that will allow millions of Americans to function independently well into old age.”
With the help of a growing number of individual donors, including ISR faculty members, alumni/ae, and corporations, the Institute is now assisting more than 30 young scholars.

Part of the ISR Next Generation Initiative, these gifts allow graduate students, fellows, and junior faculty to strengthen their understanding of their disciplines through research support, travel, conferences, research collaborations and other activities that cannot be funded through traditional sources.

We are proud to present the winners of the 2008 Next Generation Initiative Awards.

ISR Innovation in Social Research Award


Daniel Katz Graduate Fellowship Fund

Heather Fuller-Iglesias, doctoral student, U-M Psychology Department, “Social Relations and Well-Being in Mexico: The Impact of Emigration.”

Roy Pierce Scholar’s Fund


A. Regula Herzog Young Investigators Award


Charles Cannell Fund in Survey Methodology


Joaquin Aguilar and Brooke Foucault, doctoral students, Northwestern University, “Understanding the Role of Rapport in the Interview Process.”

Nielsen Support

Ashley Bowers, doctoral student in the Michigan Program in Survey Methodology, is receiving support from the Nielsen Company. Bowers is interested in survey design and the impact of human resource management practices on survey data quality and cost.

Kenneth Organski Scholar’s Fund

Papia Debroy, doctoral student, U-M Department of Political Science, “Achieving Breadth and Depth in International Multilateral Agreements: The Strategic Design of Membership Provisions.”
Class, race, and gender in higher education

The first in her family to graduate from college, Tiffany Griffin is now working toward her Ph.D. in social psychology at the U-M. When she gets it, she’ll join a select group – only 1.4 percent of Ph.D.s are first-generation college students. What has made the difference for Griffin, winner of the 2008 ISR Innovation in Social Research Award? “I am 1,000 percent grateful for all of the informal and formal mentoring I’ve had,” said Griffin. “I truly believe that ‘I am because we are.’”

For her dissertation, Griffin is collecting data for a study that’s close to her heart: she is examining the intersections of class, race and gender in higher education. She is focusing on three places – Michigan, California, and New England – where affirmative action was recently banned, banned a decade ago, and still being practiced, respectively. Study participants will decide how much help characters in on-line vignettes should receive in the form of tutoring, scholarships and other kinds of aid. She will manipulate characters’ race, gender and social class by using different character names, work experiences, and parental occupations.

“I’m expecting that there will be a larger bias against Black and female students in places where affirmative action have been banned as these social identities are particularly salient there,” said Griffin, who hopes that her study will produce new knowledge about the ways that context affects the likelihood of success in college. “Initially, I was solely interested in how students from low-income and low-status groups navigate educational institutions,” she said. “I’m definitely still interested in that, but now I’ve come to realize that you can be the most motivated and high-achieving person in the world, but there are still forces outside of your control that can affect your chances of success.”

Griffin, who graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in psychology and communications from Boston College, grew up in Springfield, MA. Before starting graduate school, she worked at Boston Medical Center as a research associate on an NIH-funded study of the relationship between HIV, Hepatitis C and alcoholism. Before applying to graduate programs, she visited several and was most impressed with Michigan. Currently, as a fourth-year Ph.D. student, she works closely with ISR Director James Jackson and psychologists Tabbye Chavous and Richard Gonzalez. “Tiffany has the potential to be a superb social scientist,” said Jackson. “She is an ideal recipient of this important award.”

By Diane Swanbrow

2008 Survey Methodology Graduates

One Ph.D. recipient and eight Master’s degree recipients graduated from the Michigan Program in Survey Methodology in 2008.

From left to right, the graduates are: Marie Komanecky, Amy Lin, Julie Pacer, Erica Zawacki, Qi Dong, Rachel Orlowski, and Kristen Olson.

The second person to earn a Ph.D. from the program, Olson is now an assistant professor at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Not pictured: Marie Clay and John LaFrance.
In Memoriam

Dorwin ‘Doc’ Cartwright, one of the founders of the field of group dynamics, died July 18, 2008 in Santa Barbara, CA. He was 93 years old.

“Doc Cartwright was one of the pioneers in the field of social psychology,” said ISR Director James S. Jackson.

Cartwright, founding director of the ISR Research Center for Group Dynamics, was “one of the true early giants in the study of group interactions on individual and group performance,” said Stanford University psychologist Robert Zajonc, one of Cartwright’s earliest doctoral students and a long-time colleague at ISR. “He demonstrated that there were systematic patterns in the behavior of groups and that these patterns could be studied experimentally. This work is the foundation for the contemporary behavioral studies that are now revolutionizing all fields of social science and economics.”

“Cartwright was a major figure in the study of group dynamics,” said U-M psychologist Richard Nisbett. “His book with Alvin Zander on the topic was the primary resource for the field for more than 20 years. He made important contributions to the topics of group cohesiveness, group pressures, group goals, leadership and group performance, and the formal, structural properties of groups.”

“Doc and Frank Harary were the first to demonstrate how mathematics in the form of graph theory could be used to analyze social networks,” said U-M psychologist Eugene Burnstein, one of Cartwright’s first students at Michigan. “This approach allowed social networks to be analyzed both as objective systems – who helps, talks to or beats up whom, for example – as well as psychological or cognitive systems – how people perceive or represent these objective systems in their heads. In fact, the latter application led to some of the most important work on Fritz Heider’s theory of structural balance, which is arguably the foundation of modern cognitive social psychology, including attribution theory.”

During WWII, Cartwright joined the Division of Programs and Surveys in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where he met Rensis Likert and Angus Campbell. His studies of motives for the purchase of war bonds and the effect of bombing on civilian morale in Germany were among the first social surveys to use psychological concepts. In 1945, Cartwright helped Kurt Lewin found the Research Center for Group Dynamics (RCGD) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Following Lewin’s death in 1946, Cartwright became the Center’s director, and brought the RCGD to the University of Michigan where it joined with the Survey Research Center to create the Institute for Social Research (ISR).

In Ann Arbor, Cartwright led research projects that included work with a United Auto Workers Local to provide an objective evaluation of a program designed to improve acceptance of minority group members. In another lab experiment, Cartwright and colleagues investigated how discrimination affected group morale. Working with labor unions, corporations and educational institutions, Cartwright and colleagues deliberately moved the developing field of group dynamics out of the ivory tower and into practical use.

In his 31 years at Michigan, Cartwright was an intellectual leader who developed and nurtured the field of group dynamics. His research and writings on the mathematical foundations of group dynamics, sources of social power, the nature of group structure, the causes of risk taking in groups, and other topics have won him world-wide recognition.

Cartwright was born in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1915, the son of a preacher. He moved often throughout the country during his early years. He received his A.B. from Swarthmore College in 1937 and his M.A. from Harvard University in 1938. In 1940, he received his Ph.D. in psychology from Harvard, and spent a postdoctoral period working with Kurt Lewin at the State University of Iowa.

Cartwright is survived by Barbara, his wife of nearly 70 years; children Patricia Alice Thomas of Leesburg, OH; Susan Cartwright Clark of Charlottesville, VA; and Peter of Durham, N.C., along with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A memorial service in Ann Arbor is being planned. For more information, contact Patrick Shields at (734) 764-8369 or email peshield@umich.edu.

Ronald Freedman, a leader in world-wide demographic research on fertility and family planning and the founder of the U-M Population Studies Center, died Nov. 21, 2007, at the age of 90.

Freedman helped to shape the field of demography in the late 1940s when he advocated bringing a broader sociological perspective to the study of fertility and family planning. One of the first demographers to use sample surveys in his research, he was also among the first to ask women direct questions about their childbearing intentions and desires, and one of the first to recognize that desires and intentions often differed from actual behavior.

Born in Winnipeg, Canada, Freedman grew up in Waukegan, IL, a suburb of Chicago. He received his B.A. in history and economics from U-M in 1939 and his M.A. in sociology from U-M in 1940. He went to the University of Chicago and completed prelims for his Ph.D. in sociology before joining the U.S. Army in 1942. He served in the Army Air Corps Weather Service, and four decades later remarked, “When I talk about demography, I always apply what I learned as a weather forecaster – that is, don’t look out the window when you’re making a weather forecast. Short-run trends are not the significant thing.”
In 1946, he resumed work on his dissertation, receiving a Ph.D. in 1947. He also joined the faculty of the University of Michigan, where he remained throughout his career. In 1951, Freedman and Angus Campbell established the Detroit Area Study. Envisioned as a “laboratory for social scientists,” the Study gave researchers and students an opportunity to design, collect, and analyze data from the Detroit metro area. The study served as the basis for more than 400 articles and 20 books, and launched numerous careers.

In 1955, Freedman co-directed the Growth of American Families Survey, the first national scientific sample survey to include questions about fertility and family planning, and the precursor to the current National Survey of Family Growth. In 1960, the Population Council asked Freedman to collect similar data on fertility in a developing nation, and he began a series of surveys in Taiwan that provided invaluable information on fertility trends and their underlying social and economic dynamics. In 1961, he founded the U-M Population Studies Center, now part of ISR. At the Center, he established a much-emulated apprenticeship system for training graduate students from around the world.

Joseph Veroff, a U-M professor of psychology and ISR research scientist who directed a landmark study on American values, attitudes and behaviors, died Sept. 30, 2007, at age 77.

Veroff directed a national study that provided some of the first empirical data showing how American values, behavior, and attitudes toward work, marriage and parenthood shifted during the sixties, a critical time for the nation. With Elizabeth Douvan and Richard Kulka, Veroff co-authored two influential books based on findings from two nationally representative ISR surveys on these topics: *The Inner American: A Self-Portrait from 1957 to 1976* and *Mental Health in America: Patterns of Help-Seeking from 1957 to 1976*.

Throughout a long and productive career, Veroff co-authored several other books, including *Marital Instability: A Social and Behavioral Study of the Early Years*, with Douvan and Shirley J. Hatchett, and *Thrice Told Tales: Married Couples Tell Their Stories*, with Diane Homberg and Terri Orbuch. These volumes are based on data from the ISR Early Years of Marriage Project, initiated in 1986.

In his last book, *Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience*, written with Fred Bryant of Loyola University of Chicago, Veroff focused explicitly on measuring and studying the “capacity to attend to, appreciate and enhance the positive experiences in one’s life.” This emphasis on the importance of joy and pleasure in life was a central theme in Veroff’s work, as in his life.

With Douvan, Veroff was a founding member of the Family and Sex Roles (later the Life Course Development) Program at ISR. From this base, he brought research on the family and concern about changing sex roles to a new level by conducting high quality, innovative research addressing issues faced by people of all ages. From here he launched the groundbreaking, now longitudinal study of marriage.

He taught and mentored generations of young scholars with a combination of the highest intellectual standards, clear expectations of hard work, the fun and excitement of research, a wry sense of humor, and good food. “It is hard to pass the old Veroff house without thinking of the many casual get-togethers for faculty and students, replete with wonderful home-cooked dishes, engaging conversation and good company that he and Jody provided for scores of scholars over the years,” said Toni Antonucci, the Elizabeth M. Douvan Collegiate Professor of Psychology, Director of the ISR Life Course Development Program, and a former post-doctoral fellow and later long-time colleague of Veroff.

“He was a warm and welcoming man, adapting to the trials and tribulations of living with the after effects of polio, with a common sense and matter-of-factness that was a model to us all,” said Antonucci. “It was truly a privilege to know him.”


A 1948 graduate of the U-M Medical School, Dr. Brown developed a keen interest in population issues, which transformed the San Francisco Bay area so dramatically during the second half of the 20th century. She discussed her observations with PSC research professor emeritus Albert Hermalin on many occasions, both in Ann Arbor and at her home on the west coast.

“Dr. Brown was very concerned about rapid population growth and the hardships it meant for many women and children in the developing world,” said Hermalin.

Through her estate plan, Dr. Brown provided a bequest to the ISR Population Studies Center that is expected to be in the high six figures — the largest estate gift in ISR history. The gift will come in the form of an unrestricted endowment, allowing the greatest possible flexibility in using the funds to advance the science of population studies.

“She will be missed,” said Hermalin. “But there is comfort in knowing that the generous bequest she made will help perpetuate the work she cared deeply about and will help sustain her multifaceted legacy.”
Mick Couper
won the 2008 Warren J. Mitofsky Innovators Award from the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) for innovation in “recognizing the vast potential of paradata and showing the research community practical ways to exploit its power.” Couper is a research professor at the ISR Survey Research Center and the Program in Survey Methodology.

Robert Groves
received the 2008 Julius Shiskin Award, sponsored by the Washington Statistical Society, the National Association for Business Economics, and the Business and Economics Section of the American Statistical Association. The award recognizes unusually original and important contributions in the development of economic statistics or the use of statistics in interpreting the economy. Groves directs the ISR Survey Research Center.

Groves and Couper jointly received the 2008 AAPOR Book Award for *Nonresponse in Household Interview Surveys*. Published in 1998, the book was honored for its lasting influence on the science of survey research.

Jacquelynne Eccles
presented the 2008 Distinguished Senior Faculty Lecture at the U-M, an honor bestowed upon an accomplished scholar that highlights the strengths of a liberal arts education. Eccles is a researcher professor at ISR and is the Wilbert J. McKeachie Collegiate Professor of Psychology at the U-M College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Allan Hicken
received a University Undergraduate Teaching Award, designed to honor early-career faculty for outstanding teaching ability. Hicken, an associate professor of political science, is affiliated with the ISR Center for Political Studies.

Yu Xie
was named the Otis Dudley Duncan Distinguished University Professor of Sociology at the U-M. The award recognizes exceptional scholarly achievement, national and international reputation, and superior teaching skills. He also received the 2008 Clifford C. Clogg Award from the Population Association of America in recognition of early career achievement in population studies and demography. A professor of sociology and statistics, Yu Xie directs the ISR Quantitative Methodology Program.

Brenda Volling
received a U-M Faculty Recognition Award for early-career faculty who have demonstrated substantive contributions to the University through scholarly research, excellence as a teacher, adviser and mentor, and service to the University. Volling is a professor of psychology and a research professor at ISR and at the U-M Center for Human Growth and Development.

James House
was named the Angus Campbell Distinguished University Professor of Sociology and Survey Research. The honor recognizes exceptional scholarly achievement, national and international reputation, and superior teaching skills.

Denise Sekaquaptewa
was named a Fellow by the National Center for Institutional Diversity. The award is to further research on environmental factors that improve the educational climate for women students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Sekaquaptewa is a faculty associate at the ISR Research Center for Group Dynamics.

Norbert Schwarz
was named Charles Horton Cooley Collegiate Professor of Psychology. A research professor at the ISR Research Center for Group Dynamics, Schwarz is also a professor at the Stephen M Ross School of Business.
I N S T I T U T E  F O R  S O C I A L  R E S E A R C H

ISR Sampler, Summer 2008

ISR Alumna Diane Colasanto

Diane Colasanto hit on her life’s work early.

When her senior high school English teacher assigned a research paper, Colasanto decided to do a survey about television censorship. Armed with a list of questions, she went to the State of Connecticut Health Department, where her mother worked, and interviewed a number of bemused employees.

Colasanto, who would later become chief methodologist for the Gallup Organization, declares flatly that her methodology then was “pathetic.” Nevertheless, a passion had been ignited. “I was really interested in public opinion and what people thought,” Colasanto recalls, “and I liked the idea of framing questions to get at the nuances of people’s thinking about issues of the day.”

Colasanto came to Ann Arbor as a graduate student in 1973, determined to master research methods. Like the rest of her fellow sociology students, she was soon enmeshed in the Detroit Area Study (DAS), a three-semester course co-run by the Institute for Social Research and the Sociology Department that was both famous and feared.

Working with faculty investigators, students designed research surveys, drew samples, then moved to dorm rooms in Detroit and over the course of a week went door-to-door to assigned houses in selected neighborhoods to convince residents to participate in hour-long interviews.

Getting strangers to “tell very personal things about themselves” was difficult. “It took a lot of knocking on doors and going back and going back again to get those 15 interviews,” she recalls. This was followed by coding, data analysis, and a paper on the survey results. Concludes Colasanto: “I loved it.”

Colasanto had expected to leave Michigan as an applied researcher. But in the 1970s, she says, the Sociology Department groomed its students for academia. After getting her Ph.D., Colasanto began teaching research methods and analysis at the University of Wisconsin in 1977, but the fit was not quite right. “I was interested in all kinds of content,” she explains, “which is not very good if you want to be an academic sociologist.”

Six years later, Colasanto made the jump to Gallup. As chief methodologist, the pace was chaotic. She helped project directors with data analysis, designed the samples for all the surveys, consulted with clients, and tackled tricky measurement problems. “I had finally found what I loved to do,” she says, “and I never looked back.”

In 1988, an outside market research firm bought Gallup. A year later, Colasanto and Andrew Kohut, who had been Gallup president before the acquisition, started a new opinion research firm, Princeton Survey Research Associates, specializing in media, politics, and public policy studies.

Colasanto and Kohut married in 1998, and five years later they sold their company and moved to Washington, D.C., where Kohut is president of the Pew Research Center.

Colasanto has retired, but she continues to consult and volunteer. At Michigan, as part of an advisory committee affiliated with the Program on Survey Methodology, housed at ISR, she is looking for ways that companies and research organizations can support students who are training to become survey researchers.

The program’s focus on preparing students for applied research is “terrific,” Colasanto says, and fills a gap. “It would have been great when I was in graduate school to have something that helped prepare you for that kind of career.”

By Susan Rosegrant
Iraqi journalists discuss findings from World Values Survey

In May 2008 a group of Iraqi journalists met at ISR with PSC research affiliate Mansoor Moaddel to discuss research from the ISR World Values Survey on Iraqi attitudes. The visit was part of the U.S. Department of State’s Foreign Press Center reporting tour.

Moaddel, a professor of sociology at Eastern Michigan University, has carried out surveys in Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia as well as in Iraq. He is interested in the causes and consequences of the values and attitudes of Middle Eastern and Islamic publics.

Among Moaddel’s recent findings: the political values of Iraqis are becoming increasingly secular and nationalistic.

More on Moaddel’s research:
www.ns.umich.edu/htdocs/releases/story.php?id=6019