

# SURVEY RESEARCH

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NEWSLETTER FROM THE SURVEY RESEARCH LABORATORY

## How Respondents Perceive Political Polls, Census, and Surveys, and How Those Perceptions Predict Survey Quality

Patricia A. Gwartney, University of Oregon

As we depart the 2008 elections season and anticipate Census 2010, I thought it would be interesting to examine people's images of political polls and the U.S. Census, in comparison with surveys. Specifically, this essay examines 804 respondents' narrative answers to open-ended word-association questions raised at the end of a 20-minute interview. The questions asked respondents for "the first thought" and "the first picture or image that comes to mind" when they think of a political poll, the U.S. census, or a survey. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the three question stimuli—poll, Census, or survey. The data were gathered by the Oregon Survey Research Laboratory in an omnibus RDD survey of adult Oregonians in 2001 and are not elsewhere published.

The table on the following page shows example answers to both the "thought" and "picture or image" questions. To examine patterns of response and compare across the three stimuli, I coded the 1,600 or so answers initially into 38 detailed categories reflecting similar themes. Then I grouped those into the 12 broad categories shown in the figure. The patterns of answers differ markedly by whether respondents thought about political polls, the census, or surveys, as the figure illustrates.

### Political Poll

In response to the two political poll stimuli, about seven out of ten respondents' answers fall into four categories "Elections, politics," "Negative," "Don't know and other non-answers," and "Reasons not to participate." The first group relates to

voting, ballots, political parties, lobbyists, political symbols, media treatment of elections, and named candidates and accounts for 26% of all answers. These answers also include amusing images, such as "a big, fat politician with his hand out" and "an elephant and a donkey beating each other up in a ring." Nonvisual answers include "being able to express my ideas and discuss what's going on with politics" and "distrust." Some responses are not easy to categorize as visual. For example, respondents who answered "Republicans," "elections," and "voting" may have had a specific image in mind, but we lack the detail to tell.

The second most common answers to political poll, "Negative," contain both generally negative comments and those tied to politics and government. Examples include: "a mess," "confusion," "annoyance," "boring," "not needed," "cynical," "liberal mess," "political correctness," "scary," "lies," and "slanting everything." They comprise 18% of all answers to the political poll stimuli. The next most common answers, at 17%, are "Don't know" and similar non-answers, such as "blank," "no idea," "neutral," "no clue," and "I don't know what that means," as well as homonyms, such as "barber shop pole." In the last substantial category, at 10%, respondents defined "Reasons not to participate" principally as related to time, bias, nosiness, refusal, and telemarketing. Such answers include "how much time will this take?" "someone trying to get information to try to affirm something they have already decided on," "someone trying to sell me something," and "ignore them." Few answers in these three categories had a distinct visual component.

## Example Answers to Thought and Image Questions

Political Poll	U.S. Census	Survey
<p>A big, fat politician with his hand out.            A bunch of people standing around a booth like they are voting.            A dishonest politician looking me in the eye.            A smoke filled room with the boys in the back.            Bar graphs on television.            Barber shop pole.            Biased.            Campaign headquarters.            Can be manipulated.            Cynical. I don't trust them.            Elephant and a donkey beating each other up in a ring.            Fat cats throwing money around.            Freedom of speech.            How the data will be used.            Infomercial.            Kind of a montage of backroom criminals and schemers.            Not needed.            Opinion.            Pros and cons.            The president.</p>	<p>A person with a clipboard standing at my door.            Accurate counting, keeping track.            Big brother.            Curiosity about what our population will be after the work is in.            Go away.            Government.            I always wondered what that was about.            I think it's good. I love America.            It is socially responsible.            Map of the U.S.            Masses of people.            The flag; red, white and blue.            Something we do every ten years.            Structure order.            Three gingerbread men, two white and one brown.            Uncle Sam peering over your shoulder.            Workers going out under bridges trying to count everybody.            They are doing a good job for the United States.</p>	<p>A big table of information.            A chart.            A group of you hard-working folks on the telephones.            A list of questions to check off.            A typed questionnaire.            Data.            Having a chance to put my voice in.            I pay no attention to them.            I don't have an image. None. It goes blank.            I hope it's not long.            I'll participate.            Inaccurate.            It reminds me of filling out those tests in high school.            It's pretty boring.            Like checking the heart beat—how we think we're doing.            Like voting.            Manipulation.            Paperwork.            Telemarketer with a telephone headset.            Too personal.</p>

### U.S. Census

Respondents' answers when thinking about the U.S. Census tend to be more concrete and contain more images than the other two stimuli. They are also more diverse than responses to the other stimuli, with five answer categories containing about seven out of ten answers. The category for "Questionnaires and Interviewers" comprised 19% of all responses, with such answers as "the form I got," "a piece of paper with a lot of questions," "checkmarks on a form," "people counting people," "a person with a clipboard," and "the poor man who came to my mom's house to do it and my brothers scared him half to death." Next most common at 16% were "Don't Know and Other Non-Answers," such as "I always wondered what that was about."

Each of the next three categories captures 12% to 13% of all answers. The first of these is "People/Population," with example answers "masses of people," "the population of the nation as a whole," "population growth," "large groups of people," "our diversity," "New York City," and "a bunch of people running around." The second is "Research," including answers such as "getting information on community," "a head count," "the study of what the U.S. is like right now," and "paperwork." The last substantial code category comprises answers related to how people explained their "Reasons to Participate," such as "part of service to govern-

ment," "just one of those things that must be done," "necessary," "important," "helping better the world," "they're there to help us," and "the figures that they need to figure out how to distribute the money."

The census questions also generated a certain number of patriotic answers, such as "the flag" and "Uncle Sam," and appreciative remarks about census enumerators, unlike the other two stimuli. Several respondents also mentioned using census data for genealogical research as their first thought.

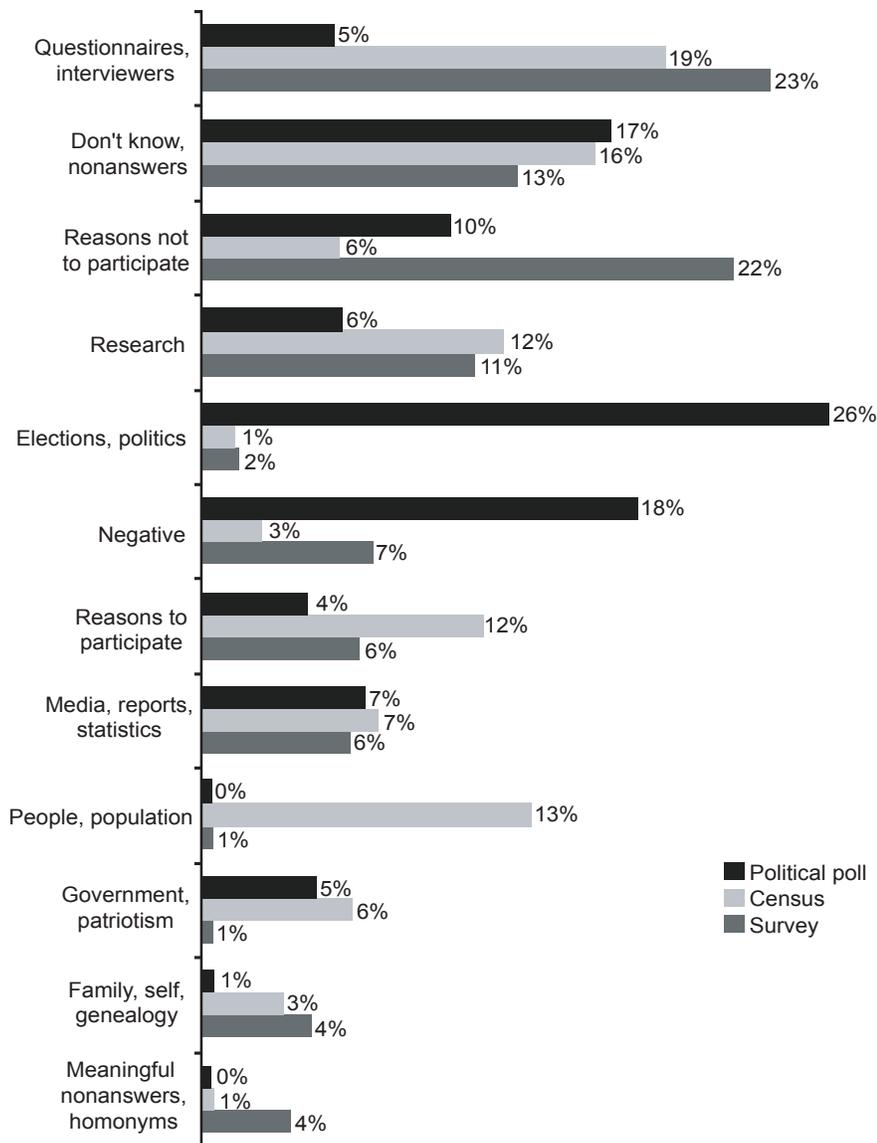
### Survey

Four categories contain about seven out of ten answers for the survey stimuli. The most frequent

"...word associations are simply a remarkably easy and efficient way of determining the contents of human minds without having those contents expressed in the full discursive structure of language."

L. B. Szalay & J. Deese, *Subjective meaning and culture: An assessment through word associations* (p. 9). 1978. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates.

## Perceptions of Political Polls, the U.S. Census, and Surveys



answers concerned “Questionnaires and Interviewers” (23%), the same as the census stimuli and with similar answers. The second and third “Reasons not to Participate” (22%) and “Don’t Know” (13%) are like the results for the political poll stimuli and with similar answers. The fourth, “Research” (11%), matches the census stimuli, but respondents’ answers related more to opinion, e.g., “gathering opinion on a subject,” “social science,” “finding out what people think,” “finding the interests of the people,” “evaluating people’s views.” One thoughtful person said: “I see it as a two-way street. I am offering my time and thought, but I am certainly being provoked to deeper thought as well.”

In summary, respondents were more favorably inclined to the U.S. Census than to political polls or surveys and offered more concrete images about it. While a substantial 16% did not know what it is

offhand, those who did offered more varied first thoughts and images than for the other two stimuli. Roughly 40% of first thoughts on both the census and surveys concerned the research process, that is, questionnaires, interviewers, being interviewed, reports, statistics, and the like. But less than half of the respondents who received the political poll stimuli said the same, perhaps because their strong skepticism about political polls overwhelmed their other thoughts. Respondents voiced significant distrust, cynicism, and lack of enthusiasm for political polls. Many of their negative comments concerned politics, politicians, and elections. While far fewer respondents voiced negative impressions of surveys, over one-fifth volunteered that their first thought was how they might escape them.

## Affective Imagery and Survey Quality

Why “first thoughts?” And why focus on the pictures or images that respondents carry in their minds? These are known as affective images among psychologists. They represent the evaluative feelings of good/positive or bad/negative that people associate with particu-

lar concepts or stimuli. These feelings occur quickly and unconsciously, guiding individuals’ evaluations and decision making. Researchers typically stimulate affective images with word association questions that elicit short, open-ended responses, which they then categorize by relevant theory. Psychologists have long used word association techniques, for example, in drug treatment to assess clients’ images of the substances they abuse as one step in charting treatment.

My graduate students and I have experimented with using affective images to understand respondents’ survey behaviors. In several surveys, we evoked affective images with open-ended word association questions using stimuli appropriate to the study topic, including “global warming,” “inequality,” “organic food,” “farm safety experts,” and “cloning.” Interviewers

recorded respondents' exact narrative replies, and then we coded the answers to assess respondents' patterns of meanings to each stimulus and correlated them with other survey measures.

As it turns out, respondents' answers to these word association questions associate with their behaviors as survey respondents. In particular, respondents who answer with a clear visual image give fewer "don't know" answers, utter more words per open-ended answer, and more often say that participating in surveys is important. These "visualizers" tend to have slightly shorter interviews, volunteer more "other – specify" answers, and believe that surveys will impact their lives.

Thus, answers to these word association questions can be used to predict survey quality, for visualizers tend to be more dedicated to the survey task than others. However, we have found that about 40% of respondents in most surveys cannot provide a picture or image, even when probed. In the future, perhaps interviewers can be trained to use a quick word association question at the beginning of the conversation to determine if a respondent is a visualizer or not, and then adapt their interviewing skills appropriately to maximize the quality of survey response.



## CURRENT RESEARCH

*Further information on the studies described in this section should be obtained from the organizations conducting the studies at the addresses given at the beginning of each organization's listing. Neither Survey Research nor the Survey Research Laboratory can provide this information. Study summaries are accepted by Survey Research with the understanding that additional information can be released to others.*

### CALIFORNIA

#### Survey Research Center (SRC)

##### University of California at Berkeley

2538 Channing Way, #5100, Berkeley, CA 94720-5100  
510-642-6578; fax: 510-643-8292;  
info@src.berkeley.edu; <http://srcweb.berkeley.edu/>

**Maternal and Infant Health Assessment (MIHA).** 2008 is the 10<sup>th</sup> year of data collection for this project. The study involves sending a mail questionnaire to a list sample of

5,000 California women who have given birth four months prior to data collection. Telephone interviews are conducted with nonresponders to the mail effort. Approximately 3,000 interviews are completed each year. Interviews are conducted in English and Spanish. SRC is in the field with the 2008 MIHA project. *Principal Investigator:* Paula Braveman (UC San Francisco), *Project Director:* Madonna Camel, *Contact Person:* Robert Lee.

#### Public Agendas and Citizen Engagement Survey

**(PACES).** The 2008 version of PACES is an ongoing study using a national list-assisted RDD sample to recruit participants at least 18 years old. The subject areas include governmental priorities, political participation, and issues that affect political activism. A total of 1,047 interviews were completed in 2008. SRC is now conducting follow-up interviews with both the 2008 and the 2006 cohorts of the PACES project to determine voting behavior in the 2008 presidential election. *Principal Investigator:* J. Merrill Shanks (UC Berkeley), *Project Director:* Robert Lee.

### ILLINOIS

#### Survey Research Laboratory

##### University of Illinois at Chicago

412 S. Peoria St., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Chicago, IL 60607-7069  
312-996-5300; fax: 312-996-3358, or  
505 E. Green St., Suite 3, Champaign, IL 61820-5723  
217-333-4273; fax: 217-244-4408  
info@srl.uic.edu; [www.srl.uic.edu](http://www.srl.uic.edu)

**Substance Abuse Policy Research.** Illinois has a substance abuse treatment priority population policy requiring certain groups of clients to receive treatment immediately or with only a minimal waiting period. The treatment need for these populations has been growing in recent years, and the number of admissions from these populations has substantially increased over the last decade. The growth in priority treatment populations can influence the quality and effectiveness of treatment provided to both priority and non-priority populations. To evaluate the treatment system, SRL analyzed 12 years of treatment data and found a significant increase in treatment referrals from the criminal justice system as well as a steady decrease in retention rates among self-referred clients. This decrease may be attributable to the increase in clients referred by the criminal justice system. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded the study. *Principal Investigator:* Young Ik Cho.

**Oral Cancer Early Detection.** This project is seeking to measure the effect of a community-based intervention aimed at increasing oral cancer early detection knowledge and practices among African-American men. The study design involves a pre- and post-intervention CATI survey in two Chicago neighborhoods. One is the site of an intervention project, while the other was included as a control. The pre-intervention survey was completed by SRL in 2006, in which 100 baseline interviews were conducted in

each neighborhood. The post-intervention survey began in December. *Principal Investigator*: Charles Lehew (Univ. of Illinois at Chicago), *Project Coordinator*: Kara Pennoyer.

**Determinants of Disparities in Age-Related Health Outcomes among Hispanics: Pilot Study.** The purpose of the study is to test the feasibility of conducting a larger block listing and screening project in the City of Chicago. Interviews with members of three racial/ethnic groups (Mexican, Puerto Rican, and non-Hispanic White) in three Chicago communities began in December. *Principal Investigator*: Carlos Mendes de Leon (Rush Univ. Medical Center), *Project Coordinator*: Ingrid Graf.

**U.S. Biofuels Industry Survey.** To add to our understanding of uncertainty resolution and resource development strategies used by companies in the biofuel business, SRL is conducting a mail/Web survey of senior managers in the industry. Data collection will begin in early 2009. *Principal Investigator*: Rajshree Agarwal (Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), *Project Coordinator*: Sowmya Anand.

## IOWA

### Iowa State University

#### Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology

2625 North Loop Dr., Building 2, Ste. 2140

Ames, IA 50010-8615

515-294-3451; fax: 515-294-2456

<http://cssm.iastate.edu/>

**CIRAS Biobased Products Survey.** CATI interviews were conducted in 2008 with approximately 975 business executives in North America, Australia, and the United Kingdom whose companies manufacture or distribute biobased products. Questions focused on employment, research and development, capital investment, and marketing trends. Study results will be used to develop policies and classification protocols to track this rapidly changing industry. *Project Coordinator*: Janice Larson, *Project Manager*: Allison Tyler.

**Use of Switch Grass as a Biofuel in Iowa.** This CATI survey was conducted with over 600 Iowa farmers to determine their interest in growing and harvesting switch grass for biofuel production instead of or in addition to using corn. The purpose of the study was to gain an estimate of Iowa's real potential for switch grass harvest. *Project Coordinator*: Janice Larson, *Project Manager*: Allison Tyler.

**Impact of Bioeconomy Technologies in Iowa Communities.** A white pages CATI survey of over 350 Iowans was done to assess local reaction to biorenewable initiatives, specifically ethanol plants. The target population for this project consisted of adults in four Iowa counties, two urban and two rural. Two of the counties, one urban and one rural, have existing ethanol plants. *Project Coordinator*: Janice Larson, *Project Manager*: Allison Tyler.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Center for Marketing Research (CMR)

#### University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

200 Mill Rd.

Fairhaven, MA 02719

508-999-8756; fax: 508-910-6297

[NBarnes@umassd.edu](mailto:NBarnes@umassd.edu); [www.umassd.edu/cmcr](http://www.umassd.edu/cmcr)

**Social Media in the Inc. 500: The First Longitudinal Study.** CMR conducted one of the first statistically significant longitudinal studies on the usage of social media in corporations. This study revisits the Inc. 500 approximately one year later (using the 2007 list) in the first longitudinal study on corporate use of these new technologies. Given that previous research now shows that just 12% of the Fortune 500 currently have a public blog, it is astounding to see that 39% of the Inc. 500 are blogging. The addition of 4% more Fortune 500 companies to the blogosphere pales in comparison to the addition of 20% more of the Inc. 500 companies after the same time period. *Project Directors*: Nora Ganim Barnes and Eric Mattson.

#### The Game Has Changed: College Admissions Outpace Corporations in Embracing Social Media (One Year Later).

This study examines the familiarity with, usage of, and attitude towards social media by the admissions offices of 453 U.S. colleges and universities in May 2007. The results drive our statistically-based knowledge of organizational social media habits even farther forward. Generally, the marketing teams of academic institutions are more familiar with and adopting social media faster (especially blogs) than even the innovative companies of the Inc. 500, and they are using social media and search engines to research potential students. No longer can applicants behave irresponsibly online without potential consequences to their futures. *Project Directors*: Nora Ganim Barnes and Eric Mattson.

#### Blogging for the Hearts of Donors: Largest Charities Use Social Media.

CMR conducted a nationwide phone survey of those nonprofits named by Forbes Magazine to their list of the 200 largest U.S. charities for 2006 under the direction of researchers Eric Mattson and Nora Ganim Barnes. All interviews took place in the spring of 2007. Over one-third of the Forbes 200 list participated, making this research statistically valid. Forbes Magazine's list of the 200 largest U.S. charities is based on the amount of private, nongovernmental support a charity received in the latest available fiscal year. The list excludes academic institutions, nonprofits that are either funded by a tiny number of donors (such as most private foundations) or don't solicit, and religious organizations that don't report numbers.

## MICHIGAN

### Survey Research Center (SRC) Institute for Social Research

University of Michigan  
P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248  
734-647-2223; fax: 734-647-6371  
bpennell@isr.umich.edu; www.isr.umich.edu

**Woman-to-Woman Health Study (WWHS).** This NIH-funded study will assess the incidence, prevalence, and remission of the medical condition “vulvodynia” among a panel of 2,500 women in southeastern Michigan. Over a 12-month period, these RDD respondents will complete a screener, followed by a more detailed self-administered Web or paper questionnaire. They also will complete a brief self-administered instrument every six months over three years. A portion of these women who exhibit symptoms will be asked to participate in an in-office exam. A control group matching this group’s age/ethnicity profile will participate in an in-office exam as well. *Principal Investigators:* Barbara Reed and Hope Haefner (UM Medical School), *Survey Director:* ZoAnne Blackburn.

**Cross-Cultural Survey Guidelines (CCSG).** In recognition of the increase in number and scope of cross-cultural surveys over the past decade, SRC’s Survey Operations unit, in collaboration with the Cross-Cultural Survey Design and Implementation (CSDI) group, has mounted a Web-based tool (<http://ccsg.isr.umich.edu>) designed to develop and promote internationally recognized guidelines that highlight best practice to ensure the collection of high-quality comparative data. The intended audience includes researchers and survey practitioners planning or engaged in cross-cultural or cross-national research. The guidelines cover all aspects of the survey life-cycle: (1) study and organizational structure; (2) tenders, bids, and contracts; (3) ethical considerations; (4) sample design; (5) questionnaire design; (6) translation; (7) adaptation; (8) survey instrument design; (9) pretesting; (10) interviewer recruitment and training; (11) data collection; (12) harmonization of survey and statistical data; (13) data processing and statistical adjustment; (14) dissemination of survey and statistical data; and (15) assessing quality for cross-cultural surveys. *Principal Investigators:* Beth-Ellen Pennell, Kirsten Alcser, and Janet Harkness (Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln).

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Social and Statistical Sciences RTI International

3040 Cornwallis Rd., P.O. Box 12194  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194  
919-541-7008, fax: 919-541-7004  
tig@rti.org; www.rti.org

**Data Collection Methods for the National Crime Victimization Survey.** The purpose of this project is to assist the

Bureau of Justice Statistics with evaluating whether respondents can be encouraged to participate in the survey using less expensive modes of enumeration. RTI will implement a mixed-mode data collection, evaluate an address-based sampling frame, and evaluate the number of persons per household to interview. *Project Director:* Lisa Carley-Baxter.

### Follow-ups of Patients Enrolled in the Combining Medications and Behavioral Interventions (COMBINE) Study and Other Treatment Cohorts.

RTI will assist the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in designing and establishing a longitudinal registry of clinical trial participants. In following treatment cohorts across four annual data collections, RTI will use innovative methods to elucidate complex behaviors and decision making around alcoholism treatment and recovery. RTI will conduct both telephone computer-assisted self-interviews (T-ACASI) with the cohort as well as qualitative interviewing. *RTI Principal Investigator:* Paul Pulliam.

**Family Functioning and Soldier PTSD.** The purpose of this DoD-funded study is to identify family-level facilitators of mental health treatment engagement among soldiers screening positive for post-traumatic stress disorder upon return from deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan. Soldiers based at Fort Bragg, NC, and their spouses will complete a telephone interview to assess family functioning, spouse and child mental health symptoms, use of mental health services, and soldier job satisfaction. *RTI Principal Investigator:* Leyla Stambaugh.

## VIRGINIA

### Center for Survey Research University of Virginia

P.O. Box 400767  
2400 Old Ivy Rd., Ste. 224  
Charlottesville, VA 22903-4827  
434-243-5232; fax: 434-243-5233  
surveys@virginia.edu; www.virginia.edu/surveys

### 2008 Prince William County Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

Since 1992, CSR has conducted an annual citizen satisfaction survey for the County of Prince William, Virginia. It serves as a measure of resident’s perception of overall quality of life as well as an assessment of satisfaction with services provided by the county. Telephone interviews with 1,666 residents were done in summer of 2008. For the first time, this year CSR showed that cell-phone surveys are feasible and that they can significantly improve the degree to which a telephone survey sample from a small area can represent the full population, including the young, renters, the unmarried, and minorities. *Project Director:* Tom Guterbock, *Project Coordinator:* Abdoulaye Diop.

**2007 Virginia Business Climate Survey.** This mail and Web survey was designed to highlight areas of priority for further enhancements of the state’s business climate and

was based on responses of over 800 Virginia businesses. The Council on Virginia's Future, chaired by State Governor Tim Kaine commissioned the study; results were report to the Commission in fall 2008. *Project Director*: Tom Guterbock, *Project Coordinator*: James Ellis.

**2007 Reston Community Center Citizen Survey.** This telephone survey of the residents of Reston, VA, served to provide information to the Community Center on satisfaction with available services and to gain insight into evolving issues. It replicated work done by CSR in 1999, 2001, and 2004. Results, including significant trends, were reported to the RCC Board of Governors in May 2008. *Project Director*: Tom Guterbock, *Project Coordinator*: Robin Bebel.

## WYOMING

### Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center University of Wyoming

Dept. 3925  
1000 E. University Avenue  
Laramie, WY 82071  
307-766-2189; fax: 307-766-2759  
wysac@uwoyo.edu; www.uwoyo.edu/wysac/

**Health District of Northern Larimer County Community Health Survey 2007.** WYSAC completed the data collection in December 2007 and comprehensive reporting of the results in June 2008. Over 3,000 completed PAPI questionnaires were obtained. The survey administration involved a methodological study to test the feasibility of moving away from the method of participant recruitment used in previous iterations of this study—over the phone, to a hybrid method of recruitment. An RDD sample with reverse look up of addresses was used, which made direct mail recruitment possible for most of the sample. The hybrid method was used alongside the traditional method. The hybrid method yielded superior response rates and proved to be slightly less expensive. *Project Director*: Bistra Anatchkova.

**Using Web-Based Panels to Measure Willingness to Pay.** The study is sponsored by the EPA and designed to measure how Web-based panels compare to traditional sampling frames in willingness to pay studies. A unimodal questionnaire designed to measure willingness to pay for sustaining clean air in National Parks was administered via mail, phone and on a Knowledge Networks Web-based panel. About 1,000 completes were obtained from each mode of data collection. Data collection concluded in September 2008. The comparative analysis is to be completed in the next month. *Principal Investigator*: Burke Grandjean.

## CANADA

### Institute for Social Research (ISR) York University

4700 Keele St., Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3, Canada  
416-736-5061; fax: 416-736-5749  
isrnews@yorku.ca; www.isr.yorku.ca

**Health Trajectories and Health Care Utilization Among Injured Workers in Ontario.** This study documents the impact of serious injuries on workers' physical and mental health right after their injuries and for several years afterwards. Injured workers provide information on their health care needs and their utilization of the health care system. These findings are then compared with health care utilization of Ontarians who have not suffered a workplace injury. This research is being conducted on behalf of Peri Ballantyne, a sociologist at Trent Univ. and member of the Research Action Alliance on the Consequences of Work Injury. The Institute conducted approximately 500 extended telephone interviews in the summer and fall of 2008 with injured workers who were recruited for the study through the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), which also funds the research. *Study Director*: David Northrup.

### Population Research Laboratory (PRL) Department of Sociology University of Alberta

1-62 HM Tory Building, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2H4  
780-492-4659; fax 780-492-2589  
donnaafong@ualberta.ca; www.ualberta.ca/prl

**2008 Alberta Survey.** The telephone survey of 1,200 Albertans is the 20<sup>th</sup> annual survey administered by the PRL on behalf of academic researchers, government departments, and nonprofit organizations. The topics of the 2008 survey were physical and lifestyle activities, voting behavior, genetic testing, youth participation in the labor market, climate change issues, risk behavior in teenagers, avian flu, and nanotechnology. Data sets, code books, and methodology reports are archived at the Univ. of Alberta's Data Library for academic and community use. *Research Coordinators*: Janet Ngo and Tracy Kennedy.

**Business Indicator Surveys.** Data collection for the quarterly telephone survey of over 400 business firms in six key sectors of the Alberta economy has been conducted by the PRL on behalf of the Western Centre for Economic Research (WCER), School of Business, Univ. of Alberta, since 2006. WCER constructs the ATB Financial Business Sentiments Index™ and issues press releases with ATB Financial institution each quarter. The Q1 2009 survey sampled 410 firms between November 17 and December 4, 2008, and for the first time in two years, sentiment has dipped below the neutral value of 100, to 99.7. An index value more than 100 indicates optimism, and less than 100 indicates pessimism in the coming quarter. *Research Coordinators*: Rosanna Shih and Erin Stepney.

**National Survey of Aboriginal Community Economic Development Officers (EDOs).** The purpose of the survey was to determine EDO interests in certification training offered by the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO), identify barriers to job performance and continuing education, and clarify training preferences including online training. The telephone survey was conducted June–July 2008, and study highlights were presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual CANDO National Conference in Montreal, Quebec in October 2008. *Research Consultant:* Andrea Werner-Leonard, *Research Coordinator:* Tracy Kennedy.

**The Tomorrow Project: Alberta Cohort Study (Phases 1–9).** The PRL has been contracted by the Alberta Cancer Board (ACB), Division of Population Health and Information, since 2000 to recruit Albertans age 35–69 who have never been diagnosed with cancer for a population-based longitudinal study. The goal of the RDD recruitment is to achieve a sample of 50,000 individuals who will regularly contribute information to the ACB about their health, lifestyle and occurrence of illnesses until age 85 or death. *Research Coordinator:* Rosanna Shih.

**What Grown-ups Understand about Child Development: A Provincial Benchmark Study.** The PRL was contracted in 2007–2008 by the Alberta Centre for Child, Family & Community Research (ACCFRC) to conduct a province-wide telephone survey of 1,200 Albertans. The purpose of the survey was to determine the level of knowledge that Albertans have about child development and parenting practices. Two project partners, Success By 6 and the Calgary Children's Initiative, sought an additional sample of at least 400 respondents from the City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary, respectively. *Research Coordinator:* Janet Ngo.

## PATRONS

- American Association for Public Opinion Research
- Institute for Survey Research, Temple University
- Marketing Systems Group
- Mathematica Policy Research
- Master of Science in Marketing Research Program, University of Texas at Arlington
- Survey Research Center, University of Michigan
- Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Westat

**Acculturation, Leisure, Gambling, and Quality of Life Study.** The PRL will conduct a telephone survey of 200 Chinese living in the City of Calgary, Alberta, who immigrated to Canada from Mainland China, in five waves, from March 2008 to March 2010. The purpose of the study will be to examine the relationships among gambling, acculturation, and subjective well-being. *Principal Investigator:* Gordon Walker (Univ. of Alberta), *Research Coordinator:* Rosanna Shih.



## ANNOUNCEMENT

### CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS: *American Journal of Media Psychology (AJMP)*

The AJMP is a peer-reviewed scientific journal that publishes theoretical and empirical papers that advance an understanding of media effects and processes on individuals in society. AJMP seeks submissions that have a psychological focus, which means the level of analysis should focus on individuals and their interaction with or relationship to mass media content and institutions. All theoretical and methodological perspectives are welcomed. For instructions on submitting a manuscript, please visit [www.marquettejournals.org/submissionguidelines.html](http://www.marquettejournals.org/submissionguidelines.html). Questions about this call for manuscripts can be directed to AJMP Editor Michael Elasmr at [elasmr@bu.edu](mailto:elasmr@bu.edu).



## PERSONNEL NOTES

Survey Research reports on the new appointments and promotions of professional staff at academic and not-for-profit survey research organizations, as well as those of the for-profit organizations that are patrons of the newsletter.

RTI International's Survey Research Division has been joined by Survey Specialists **Gretchen McHenry**, **Diana Greene**, **Diana Smith**, **Dustin Williams**, **Lu Liu-Ward**, and **Christina Touarti** and Survey Methodologist **Emilia Peytcheva**, while the Computing Division welcomes Senior Research Programmer/Analyst **Paul Kizakevich** and Programmers/Analysts **Wayne Huggins**, **Nelima Kunta**, and **Leslie Hill**. Education Analyst **Jamie Wescott** and Research Education Analyst **Michael Bryan** have joined RTI's Education Studies Division. **Jill Dever** and **Phil Kott** joined the Statistics and Epidemiology Unit as Senior Survey Statisticians.



## PUBLICATIONS

The following is a list of publications related to survey research. They are not available from Survey Research nor the Survey Research Laboratory.

Baruch, Y., & Holtom, B. C. (2008). Survey response rate levels and trends in organizational research. *Human Relations, 61*, 1139–60.

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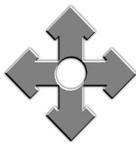
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### *Survey Research* Staff

Editor: Lisa Kelly-Wilson

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