Natioanl Survey of Lawyers' Career Satisfaction, 1984 (ICPSR 8975)

Pediatric Home Care: Results of a National Evaluation of Programs for Ventilator-Assisted Children, 1974-1983 (ICPSR 8948)

Slave Trials in Anderson and Spartanburg Counties, South Carolina, 1818-1861 (ICPSR 8674)

Social Mobility, [1973-1976]: An International Social Science Council (ISSC) Workbook in Comparative Analysis (ICPSR 8682)

Survey of Consumer Attitudes and Behavior, January 1983 - August 1984 (ICPSR 8788-8807)

Survey of Facilities for Runaway and Homeless Youth, 1983-1988 (ICPSR 9129)

Tecumseh Community Health Study, 1959-1969 (ICPSR 8969)

Uniform Crime Reports: County Level Arrest and Offense Data, 1986 (ICPSR 9119)

Violent Events in France, 1830-1860 and 1930-1960 (ICPSR 9080)

WABC-TV/ New York Daily News Poll, September 1985 (ICPSR 8590)

WLS-TV/ ABC News Chicago Democratic Primary Exit Poll, February 1987 (ICPSR 8850)

WLS-TV/ ABC News Chicago Mayoral Election Exit Poll, April 1987 (ICPSR 8851)

Agricultural and Demographic Records of 21,118 Rural Households Selected from the 1860 Manuscript Censuses (ICPSR 9117)

American Housing Survey, 1985: National Core File (ICPSR 9091)

Annual Survey of Governments, 1986: Finance Statistics (ICPSR 9164)

Attitudes and Perceptions of Police Officers in Boston, Chicago and Washington DC, 1966 (ICPSR 9087)

Autobiographical Accounts of Property Offenses by Youths at UCLA, 1983-1984 (ICPSR 8950)

Census of Population, 1910 [United States]: Public Use Sample (ICPSR 9166)

County Statistics File 3 (CO-STAT 3): [United States] (ICPSR 9168)

Crime and Mental Disorder, 1972 (ICPSR 9088)

Current Population Survey, April 1985: Veterans' Supplement (ICPSR 9132)

Current Population Survey, September 1985: United States Immunization and Smoking Survey (ICPSR 9133)

Current Population Survey, June 1987: Fertility and Birth Expectations (ICPSR 9131)

German Social Survey (ALLBUS) 1986 (ICPSR 8897)

Historical Statistics on Prisoners in State and Federal Institutions, Yearend 1925-1986: [United States] (ICPSR 8912)

Household Mailstream Study, 1977 (ICPSR 8412)

Immigrants Admitted to the United States, 1978 (ICPSR 8959)

International and National Data on the European System (INDES), 1945-1980 (ICPSR 9115)

Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of the Lifestyles and Values of Youth, 1987 (ICPSR 9079)

National Hospital Discharge Survey, 1986 (ICPSR 9095)

National Medical Care Expenditure Survey, 1977: Health Insurance/ Employer Survey, Benefit Data for the Privately Insured Population Under Age 65 (ICPSR 9076)

National Youth Survey [United States]: Wave V, 1980 (ICPSR 9112)

Patterns of Behavior in Police and Citizen Transactions: Boston, Chicago and Washington DC, 1966 (ICPSR 9086)

Population (1986) and Per Capita Income (1985) Estimates [United States]: Governmental Units (ICPSR 9167)

Robberies in Chicago, 1982-1983 (ICPSR 8951)

Sociological Study of Backcountry Users at Grand Canyon National Park, 1984-1985 (ICPSR 8543)

Survey of Consumer Attitudes and Behavior, September-December 1984, January-December 1985, January-February 1986 (ICPSR 8808-8825)

Survey of Victimization and Attitudes Towards Crime and Law Enforcement in Boston and Chicago, 1966 (ICPSR 9085)

Uniform Crime Reports: Arrest Data for the 75 Most Populous Counties in the United States, 1986 (ICPSR 9163)

World Export Data (WED), 1948-1983 (ICPSR 9116)

ACSPRI newsletter

incorporating

SSDA news

Social Science Data Archives   Australian National University

ACSPRI newsletter

SSDA news

A total of 14 courses were conducted over the two weeks, with only 4 courses not being run through lack of participants. Our thanks are again due to the lecturing staff, who contributed their time and energy to the successful staging of the Program.

...remember the photographs?

Any participants in the second week courses of the 1989 Summer Program who would like a print of the excellent group photograph taken by Lisa Coleman should contact Roger Jones. There is also an excellent photo of Lyn Richards' class in the Mac lab.

... and 1990

The next ACSPRI Summer Program will be held in **Canberra**, at the ANU, from **4-16 February 1990**. You should already have received your copy of the brochure setting out details of the Program. Extra copies of the brochure, and booklets of course outlines can be obtained from the SSDA. Postgraduate students from ACSPRI member institutions in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania should note especially the offer of reduced course fees.

Contacting ACSPRI and the SSDA

You can contact us at:

ACSPRI, Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra ACT 2601

...or by E-mail

Contributions to the newsletter and general ACSPRI and SSDA queries can be addressed to Roger Jones on rgj310@COOMBS.ANU.OZ. Requests for information on SSDA data holdings and data orders should go to Gina Roach on GAR310@CSC.ANU.OZ.

The Changing Environment of Social Science

Ken Reed

The following is an edited version of a report on the development of ACSPRI, prepared by Ken Reed, which was presented by him at the meeting of the ACSPRI Council held in June 1989.

In November, 1988, I undertook a two week study tour of universities and colleges in New South Wales, mostly in Sydney. My initial view of the purposes of the study was that it constituted a 'fact-finding mission' to enable ACSPRI to better target its existing services, and to assess the demand for new ones. However, it very quickly became clear that there were more fundamental issues involved than a set of marketing decisions. The material for this article derives mostly from my experiences in Sydney.

The environment in which ACSPRI operates has changed since its inception. Recent years have witnessed dramatic improvements in access to machine-readable social science data because of technological developments in mainframe computers, the increased power and decreased cost of personal computers, software development geared to hiding the complexity of computing operations from the user, and the increased availability of both local and international data. Consequently, more people are capable of using social science data, more people want to learn how to use it and more people are capable of teaching it.

The activities of Government agencies (independently of the activities of the ABS) have made an impact. There has been an increased reliance on survey based data by government agencies as a resource for policy formulation, decision support, better targeting of welfare resources and as a legitimation mechanism. This has had two major consequences. The first is that the Government has become a major consumer of survey data, especially through the use of external consultants and the establishment of project teams within departments. The second is that government agencies have become a major producer of survey data with current surveys of workplace industrial relations, (un)employment experience and multi-culturalism being cases in point. While much of the demand for labor and other resources has been met by the academic sector, there has been a growth in career opportunities for individuals engaged in commercial social science research.

Government policies geared to economic rationalisation have also begun to impact on ACSPRI's environment. Current policies for the restructuring of the tertiary education sector seem intent on a move closer to the application of market principles for funding. One

consequence of this is the improved capacity of social science courses which demonstrate a capacity to develop research, policy evaluation and data-management skills to attract funding. A case in point here is the Bachelor of Social Science degree at the University of New South Wales. Similarly, cost reduction constraints imposed on the ABS have resulted in attempts to set prices on data which more accurately reflect its market value. These two examples are important to ACSPRI in that they affect the value attached to data and to data analysis skills.

These two changes are also reflected to some extent in segments of society currently remote from ACSPRI. Governments increasingly make use of public information campaigns to influence the behaviour of its citizenry. The measurement of political attitudes and voting behaviour is an integral part of elections. Interest groups make use of social data to locate issues on a political agenda or to indicate support for their cause. Moral debates, such as that surrounding the issue of drug decriminalisation, frequently involve the mobilisation of social science information. Precedents have been set in the United States, UK and New Zealand for the use of attitudinal survey data as evidence of community feeling or meanings attached to brand names, corporate logos and so on. And there is increasing use of social scientists as social commentators in the media rather than the use of 'eminent persons' or 'moral experts'.

The academic sector itself is currently subject to a set of changes likely to have consequences for ACSPRI. The technological changes I described earlier have, of course, had a major impact on levels of computer literacy. Quantitative research is gaining in prestige because it is more demonstrably scientific, it attracts funding and its expert skills are more visible. Core disciplinary concerns, such as class theory, are increasingly subject to quantitative analysis as data which is explicitly designed to address such concerns becomes available. The availability of large scale generic survey data, such as the National Social Science Survey, generate pressure to operationalise and test theory. Within sociology, a discipline which attracts a disproportionately large number of female students, the acquisition of computing and quantitative analysis skills has been linked to attempts to improve the status of female academics. The attempts of Frances Lovejoy at

faced with the options of training an existing staff member or employing someone externally (e.g. a statistician or a psychologist).

Other consequences which might be noted as resulting from these changes include the reduced certainty of career opportunities for younger academics with an emerging gulf between tenured and non-tenured staff. Its importance for ACSPRI is the consequent drive towards alternative career structures and increased emphasis on multi-skilling.

There is a greater involvement in consultancy work by academics, with members of several departments in New South Wales departments claiming that the capacity to bring funding to a department is replacing publication record as a measure of merit. The significance of this for ACSPRI is that there are no support services existing explicitly for academic social science consulting except the commercial arms of the universities. These seem to be generally viewed as incompetent to manage the sort of projects typically undertaken within the social sciences. This view is shared to some extent by the bodies in question. For example, the commercial arm of the University of Woollongong, the fastest growing university in Australia in terms of commercial operations, treats the social sciences as marginal to its operations.

There are two aspects of this trend which are of particular concern. The first is that much of this consulting appears to be relatively low grade work paid on the basis of the status of the practitioner rather than market value. For example, literature reviews are undertaken by relatively senior academics, at prices appropriate to their seniority, for work which could be done by third year students using CD-ROM technology in a fraction of the time at a fraction of the cost. The second is the perennial problem of standards in applied research (having to make compromises because of political expediency, the lack of a code of ethics, inappropriate price structures and so on) do not appear on the agenda in Australia. Attempts to raise this as an issue at the Empirical Social Research Conference in Brisbane, in 1988, were completely ignored.

There is an increasing reliance on technical officers, research assistants and professional officers for technical support services, in both pure and applied research. A common pattern appears to be that a senior academic mobilises

funding on the basis of his or her reputation and uses that funding to hire staff with the relevant technical expertise. ACSPRI is currently servicing a proportion of these staff through the Summer Program (14% of attendees at the 1989 Summer Program were research assistants). It must be borne in mind though, that the labour market position of individuals with data analysis skills has improved rapidly, and so those with the most marketable skills are unlikely to be found in the academic sector.

A final, relatively minor point, is that New South Wales social scientists are reporting a shift away from interest in the USA, UK and Europe and an increasing focus on Asia and the Pacific rim. In the longer term, ACSPRI will need to be ready to service this interest.

In sum then, the key changes in the environment which contextualises ACSPRI's activities are that:

• technological changes have made machine-readable social science data easier to use

• there is a growing demand for, and increased commercial value of, social data and for training in its analysis in all sectors of society

• the Government is becoming both a major consumer and a major producer of survey data

• there is a greater involvement in consultancy work by academics

• the academic sector is poorly situated to compete for personnel with good research and data analysis skills

• the academic sector increasingly operates through market principles

• student demand for courses which provide them with skills of value in the labour market is increasing

ACSPRI's current orientation towards academic social science is a consequence of its heritage rather than reflection on its situation and its interests are best served by recognising that the social science community transcends employment sectors. To the extent that ACSPRI's objectives do encompass improving the state of academic quantitative research methodology, the most rational course would be to direct its efforts towards a national campaign to improve the numerical skills of social science students. This was done in the United States during the 1960's by the American Sociological Association and is the current trend in British sociology and political science in the wake of the impact of Thatcherism and Sir Keith Joseph's attempts to restructure the tertiary education system. However, I would suggest that ACSPRI has no a priori commitment to the academic sector nor to any particular discipline within the social sciences. ACSPRI's primary concern is with empirical social science research, wherever it takes place.

Major Changes to ACSPRI Proposed

The last meeting of the ACSPRI Council held in June endorsed a proposal for a major change to the membership of ACSPRI. Since its establishment in 1976, ACSPRI membership has been institutional, with ACSPRI services available to all individuals associated with an institutional member. The new structure proposed is for two levels of membership:

. **institutional membership**, costing around $800-$900 as now;

. **departmental membership**, costing around $250.

Departmental membership would be the normal form of membership in academic institutions, with institutional membership being an option where there is sufficient departmental interest to warrant it and as the standard form of membership for non academic bodies.

The Meeting also discussed a proposal to discontinue the national membership of ICPSR which was established in 1976. Current use of ICPSR services is very low and the $6000 annual subscription is a major drain on ACSPRI resources. The options here are:

a. retain the national membership as now with the annual ICPSR subscription paid as a general expenditure item by ACSPRI, with services available free to all ACSPRI members and to non-members at a charge determined by ACSPRI;

b. retain the national membership but with the annual ICPSR subscription shared by those institutions that wish to retain free access to ICPSR services, with others having access at a charge determined by the contributing institutions; or

c. withdraw from ICPSR membership, with access to any ICPSR services left to

negotiation between ICPSR and the individual user.

Decisions on both these matters will be made at the Annual General Meeting of the ACSPRI Council to be held late in October. Anyone wishing to comment on the proposals should contact their Representative, or Roger Jones (062) 494400.

A SAMPLING FRAME FOR CDs

Roger Jones, Social Science Data Archives

In designing the sample for a national survey recently I developed an area sampling frame based on statistical local areas (SLAs) and Collectors' Districts (CDs) which might be of value to others planning national, state or more localised sample surveys. Sparsely populated areas were identified and eliminated from the sampling frame, reducing the coverage of the Australian population by less than 5%. The remaining areas are grouped into primary sampling units (PSUs) comprising the major urban centres (population of 100,000 or more), urban centres with a population of 5000-99,999, and rural PSUs defined as a combination of urban centres and localities with a population of less than 5000 and contiguous rural CDs located within one or more SLAs. The area of each rural PSU is less than 6000 square kilometres.

The sampling frame is useful for stratified designs with equal sized clusters selected within CDs and CDs selected with probability proportional to size.

Anyone wishing to use the sampling frame, which was developed using CData86, for teaching purposes or to select a sample of CDs, should write to me at the Social Science Data Archives.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Philip E. Converse

Professor Philip Converse has enjoyed a long association with the Institute for Social Research (ISR), at the University of Michigan serving along the way as a program director and director of ISR's Center for Political Studies, and since 1986, director of the Institute.

Converse's numerous publications (as author, co-author, or editor) include The American Voter, Vietnam and the Silent Majority, The Human Meaning of Social Change, The Use of Time, The Quality of American Life, and most recently, Political Representation in France, for which he and co-author Roy Pierce received the 1987 Woodrow Wilson Foundation Book Award from the American Political Science Association.

This article is the text of his address for the 1987 Henry Russel Lecture at the University of Michigan, and is reproduced from the ISR Newsletter, Volume 16, no.2, 1988/89.

From our seats in the balcony, most of us watch the ebb and flow of democratic process with a curious mixture of satisfaction and dismay. We find ourselves cycling back and forth between pride at the process and chagrin at many of its results.

People differ in the balance of pleasure or pain they feel at the process in the long run, and some of the reasons are not hard to discern. It does not do, for example, to harbor too great expectations about the outcomes of democratic process. It is especially unrewarding to imagine that the policy output of our own democracy should match one's own convictions on all issues all of the time. We encounter persons who seem to hold expectations at this exalted level, people prepared to write off the whole business of democracy as a sham and a cruel hoax when these expectations go unmet, as of course in a democracy they always will.

Demanding expectations

We need not be this demanding, however, to suffer frequent disappointment at what democracy accomplishes. In the research vineyards where I have labored, we find with great regularity that voters the world around are more pleased with the blessings of democracy when their own party is in power than when it is in opposition. And it does not take much reflection on this earthy but obvious fact to realize why we must keep our expectations modest. In fact, we should probably account ourselves lucky if we are not disgusted with what we see much more than half of the time.

Different versions of the democratic ideal produce different expectation levels as well. At one extreme, sometimes called populism, democratic functioning is seen as unsound if policy decisions depart at all from the direct popular will. For any number of reasons, including many practical ones of logistics, these are very demanding expectations and usually end in disillusionment. Less demanding is the view of democracy as the kind of representative government where leaders are chosen at the polls and then the voter merely hopes for the best until the next election. These expectations are much less bruised by reality.

Perhaps the simplest way to make democracy look good in a hurry is to ask the statistician's question "compared to what?" Winston Churchill supposedly once observed that democracy is the worst form of government ever devised by humankind, except for all the others. This puts the emphasis squarely where it deserves to be, on the fact that "fair" governance in these settings is intrinsically difficult.

This question of alternatives is also one most commonly ignored by the conventional radical critique of democratic process, which otherwise claims many grains of truth. I am often obliged to point out to local critics that their soul mates in radical student circles in places like the Brazil of 1970 or the Poland of 1980, or the China of 1985, most often feel out of tune with that critique. They are convinced instead that no real progress can be made to their political goals without first establishing some system "opening" of the kind represented by truly contested elections. When democracy can be take for granted it looks a good deal worse than when it cannot.

For many years my colleagues and I have spent much time on the study of mass elections and the processes of popular representation. However, it often surprises the outsider to learn that a great deal of work of voting studies has almost nothing to do with the analysis of democratic process itself. Instead, the materials collected are often the testing ground for an astonishing array of social processes central to various disciplines, including perception, learning, attitude formation and change, cost-benefit calculi in decision making, interpersonal influence, intergroup tensions and conflict, impact of the mass media, coalition formation,

intergenerational transmission of values, and cycles of historical change, just to name a few.

These are potent distractions for the social scientist; and democratic theory itself is often lost in the shuffle. Therefore it is refreshing to return to the core concerns of the voting phenomenon from time to time, as I propose to do here, for a modest summing up, a re-examination of the balance sheet.

The Flawed Ingredients of Democratic Process

I would be pleased if I could pronounce that under the kinds of microscopic scrutiny we have exercised, democratic process looks a great deal better than it does to the naked eye. I shall not make that claim. The warts are correspondingly larger, but also seem offset in some degree by factors that often escape the more casual glance.

To begin with the downside, there is not much doubt what constitutes the largest wart of all. This is the problem of shallow levels of public information about much of what occurs in the nation's political life. In one sense there is no surprise here. Thomas Jefferson was fiercely worried about the problem 200 years ago : so worried, in fact, that he devoted enormous legislative labors toward establishing a kind of public education that he hoped might head it off, and thereby rescue democracy from its predicted deterioration to anarchy.

But one element that is indeed new under the sun since Jefferson's time is a monumental upgrading of the information environment in which we all live. At the founding of the Republic there was a fundamental barrier of pure accessibility. Word-of-mouth news traveled with some speed, even out to a far-flung population, but as with the child's game of telephone, these messages moved at the risk of much garbling. More authoritative written texts were limited in size and scope, moved more slowly, and when they did arrive, they could only be accessed directly by the limited set of the populace that was functionally literate.

However, by the current period we are so bombarded with political information from day to day that is about as hard to avoid it as it once was to find it. It is, of course, popular to rail at its current quality, and I would not care to argue for the depth of much of it, particularly in that portion of the modern-day deluge carried by the

Lippman did not deal explicitly with what we would nowadays call "information costs," i.e., the notion that information is not as "free" as it seems, even if it descends on us in a deluge: instead it requires at least some margin of time and effort, if not always money, to search out and absorb. But this more systematic version of what Lippman was talking about has become the main way of thinking about the problem.

One find here is absolutely central. This is the fact that the costs of absorbing the same piece of political information can vary dramatically from one person to the next. By "absorption" I mean that the new information will be successfully stored in some relevant pre-existing pigeonhole in the mind and will have some durable influence on the person's contextual understanding of what is going on. Lack of absorption means simply that despite exposure to and perhaps some recognition of the terms embedded in the information, the information fails to lodge anywhere, going in one ear and out the other.

Diabolical implications

This variability in absorption costs from one person to another has implications that are diabolical because the key predictor of the cost of receiving new information is the amount of relevant information already successfully stored. In other words, if you already have command of a great deal of political information, absorbing new information seems quite effortless, like breathing out and breathing in. The notion of absorption costs itself seems odd. But if you have very little information already stored, any obligation to retain new information required real work, less strenuous perhaps than the memorization of pure nonsense syllables, but not a whole lot.

Thus we see that political information and political motivation go together. It is not merely that those whose interest in politics is slight fail to pay much attention and hence lack political information. It works the other way as well: those who lack political information find it hard to accumulate, and their potential interest is dampened because a lot that they hear is not very intelligible to them. What we have here is technically called a positive feedback system; or in the vernacular, it is a process of "them what has, gets."

Writ large across an electorate, the workings of such processes mean that there are very dramatic differences in the amounts of information that various voters bring to their political evaluations. For reasons that may become clearer as I proceed, the enormous variance in information across voters may be as important for democratic functioning as the fact that absolute levels of information strike most observers as low, despite the fact that millions of voters in this country have a very great deal of relevant information indeed.

I have reviewed the issue of the cost of gaining information because it is reasonable to suppose that people will become informed about politics in the degree that the benefits outweigh the costs. It is crucial to understand that the costs are very differentially borne. But what of the benefits?

It is obvious that benefits of very different kinds can be imagined. One "benefit" of close attention to politics is akin to the enjoyment of a spectator sport, although as any American who has watched a cricket match will attest, the enjoyment is a whole lot keener if you know what is going on.

Other more tangible benefits alleged to flow from political participation have to do with returns to the participant from influencing its outcomes. But here we fall into deep logical trouble. For most voters, influence is limited to casting votes at the polls. Yet in any electorate of any size, the weight carried by any single individual's vote is vanishingly small. In a national presidential election in the current era, for example, it is about one part in 85 million or so.

There is a school of analysis of voting phenomena that works from rational economic assumptions of costs and benefits. With this equipment, it has made numerous useful contributions to our understanding of democratic process. It is amusing, however, that we can use such equipment only if we first slide by the point where the model needs to explain why more than a few people would ever bother to vote at all. The benefits that would need to be returned to the voter who has contributed one one-hundred millionth part of a national vote would have to be astronomical in some currency or other to explain the bother taken, and there are simply no tangible benefits of the

conventional kinds that fit the bill. Therefore such models must either attribute voting in large systems to ad hoc and noneconomic terms like habit or values of citizen duty; or else ignore the problem completely, and have people get to the polls by special assumption before the theory itself begins to grind away.

This much discussion of benefits derived from attending to politics, compared with the simple costs of attention, is probably enough to lend considerable weight to the Lippman diagnosis of low information levels. We should note that the thrust of this diagnosis does not lead us to expect any large permanent changes in information levels in the electorate in the near future.

Information blemish

Opinions differ as to how severe the information blemish on democratic process actually is. While the evidence of limited information and thin contextual understanding of politics is simply too clear to be denied, some observers feel that what exists is quite adequate for a healthy democratic process. Adequacy is, of course, impossible to define in any very clear and objective way, so the answer is left to some degree in the eye of optimists and pessimists alike.

There are, however, two or three properties of most electorates that soften the implications of the information problem in some degree for aggregated election outcomes. One is the fact that apart from a few systems where voting is mandatory, there is usually a substantial pool of possible voters who do not exercise the franchise. In recent national presidential elections in the United States, not much more than half of adults have voted, and in off-year national elections the fraction is lower still. It is not surprising that those who fail to turn out tend to be the less interested and informed. Thus the active electorate is discernibly more informed than the potential one.

A second process that offsets the information problem in some degree is the fact that voters who have some humility about the information they bring to the vote decision - and many voters have such humility - often take cues from others around them whose greater information they respect. Indeed, in recent years scholarly attention has increasingly been driven to investigate systems in which information is

with interview materials from individual voters drawn from a more limited set of voting districts at multiple points in time. If we examine the individual-level data, we discover that policy preferences do not seem very connected to one another, and show a great deal of instability for particular individuals from one measurement to the next. But if we take exactly the same data, now aggregating instead to the level of the voting district, we find that such districts differ from one another in substantially more stable and intelligible ways than we would have imagined with the individual data alone. Some districts are more conservative than others, showing these conservative tastes across a range of policy arenas and doing so quite stably over substantial periods of time.

In fact, students of voting behavior have historically tended to divide themselves into two camps, according to whether they work primarily with individual data from sample surveys, or with official statistics aggregated to the level of voting districts. And it is not surprising that they have developed rather different views about the performance of popular voting systems. Those working with aggregate statistics have difficulty understanding why their colleagues are so consumed with problems of low interest and information; they contend that voting is considerably more intelligible and rational than survey analysts make it out to be.

Of course both sides of this debate are correct in their own way. If we ask about the qualifications of voters to participate in democratic process, the appropriate answers come from individual protocols. If instead we ask about more aggregated system performance, as I am doing here then it is appropriate to look at aggregate evidence, a tactic that removes a good deal of confusion from the field of view. This is a highly defensible tactic, moreover, because the whole system of popular representation cannot proceed without some aggregation of this kind. It is simply a better account of how the system works, as opposed to how individuals work in the system.

I began this segment of my remarks talking about the liabilities of democratic process. The chief liability stems from the problem of shallow levels of information in the electorate. There may be some small but steady amelioration of this problem as public education advances. But our best current understanding of the roots of the problem suggests that it is not about to go away. On the other hand, we have listed several phenomena that mitigate this problem somewhat in practice, although they surely do not obliterate it.

Now let me turn to the other side of the balance sheet and consider the chief assets, or redeeming features, that might recommend democratic process to us despite its foreseeable shortfalls.

The Positive Side of the Ledger

I shall consider two such redeeming features. One is extremely familiar, and I shall deal with it only briefly. The second demands a more careful exposition.

The first and obvious feature is often discussed as the intrinsic legitimacy of democratic government, depending as it does upon the "consent of the governed." Here it need not matter vitally which construction of democracy one prefers, be it full populism or less direct representation. The pivotal matter is that there is at least some regular point of popular control, a gatekeeping in which all can participate if they wish.

Just how much control this represents can vary widely according to the more precise design of political system. Some have likened popular democracy American style to a steering system that is very loosely coupled. If events lead the public to wish some kind of midcourse correction in the direction of government, say, a veer to the right, there is a steering wheel to be pulled. However, the machine is unlikely to respond until after the next election, which may be many months away; and when it does respond further down the road, there is little telling whether it will veer 5 degrees to the right or 160.

This is, on the fact of it, an exciting way to drive, particularly when the driver - the public - sees the surrounding terrain only dimly in any event. It is the kind of loosely coupled steering mechanism that the progressive movement of a century ago sought to tighten with such "good-government" measures as the recall, for speeding up response time, and the referendum, for specifying direction a little more clearly.

But fine-tuned or no, the redeeming feature is that there is some kind of steering system, locally frustrating though it may be. If we all crash, it somehow matters at a level that is absolutely fundamental that we have in any event done it to ourselves. It has not been forced on us by outside powers.

This is the democratic difference. It does not hinge on the faith that the majority is always right, a faith hard to sustain over a period of any length. What it hinges on instead is the consent of the governed, with the basic legitimacy that such a design uniquely confers.

I would like to suggest a second redeeming feature of a democratic organization of political life. This is the possibility that whereas democratic process may succeed in picking the better of two alternatives only about half the time, it is at least some insurance against picking the same poor alternative over and over and over, an outcome that more autocratic regimes have not always avoided.

This proposition is arguable and there are some versions of it that I would reject as failing to fit the evidence. But let me suggest how it may indeed be argued.

Democracy or autocracy, it may be useful to think of governments as adaptive systems, attempting to select among an array of options that are conceivable at any point in time as responses to the changing environment, internal as well as external. At the risk of some simplification, it is also useful to think of these options as arrayed across a spectrum from one extreme to its opposite, with more moderate options in between.

This kind of spectrum between extremes is of course a very familiar way of looking at policy debate. It defines extremists and moderates even in a two-party system; and the extent of such a spectrum of options is even more self-evident in democracies with multi-party systems. A satirical manual for French candidates in 1906 explained that the Extreme Right was for national investment in "great big boats" like battleships; the Moderate Right preferred to invest in plain "big boats" like cruisers; the Center wanted just "average sized boats"; the Moderate Left wanted "small boats"; and the Extreme Left wanted "no boats at all". (Siegfried, 1948)

any particular locations in these spaces of political conflict, whatever the detailed content of these locations may be at any given time and place.

One version of our hypothesis is that democracy is somehow center-seeking. Here it becomes important to split the discussion into two parts, one referring to democratic leadership and another for the workings of popular voting.

Within the structure of our democratic system, for example, a self-conscious and detailed architecture of checks and balances tends to produce compromise across leadership factions; and compromise itself seems centrist. Some years ago Charles Lindblom wrote a volume called The Intelligence of Democracy (1965) focusing upon types of what he calls "partisan mutual adjustment", a phenomenon he feels is encouraged by democratic forms. These are the processes of accommodation at an elite level - between leadership factions. Clearly they tend to inhibit extremism to one side or the other, and favor relative centrism. But these pressures toward the center involve elite negotiation, and we are inquiring here after effects that can be associated with consultations of the mass electorate.

Some very strong centrist pressures in voting systems have been conjectured to exist within the same rational decision-making models that give marvellous insights about voting once past the problem that they cannot find a motivation to vote in the first place. In a nutshell, let us start with three quite plausible conditions: (1) a two-party system, (2) a distribution of voter policy preferences that has a single peak near the center of the policy space, and (3) campaign strategists more interested in maximizing the votes garnered by their party and its candidates than in implementing personal ideological convictions. Given these three conditions, it can be shown that the pair of competing parties or candidates will vie for position near the center of the policy space, for the simple reason that this is, by construction, where the votes are. This produces a politics of tweedledum and tweedledee, a matter that enrages true believers of every stripe, and has very little to recommend it save that it is some protection against extremist excesses of any stripe.

Betraying the faith

These pressures explain a lot of behavior in our system, even when honored in the breach. That is, if candidates pursue honest convictions that lie at some distance from the center of the road, as did Goldwater in 1964 or McGovern in 1972, rather than acting mainly to maximize votes, they pay the piper at the polls. Or again, Ronald Reagan is not the first president to be chided by the extreme wing of his party for betraying the faith and catering too much to the center. This is a fairly standard pattern. There is evidence that democratic politicians most of the time are preoccupied - one might even say obsessed - with the problem of surviving the next election. Indeed, this form of democratic accountability as anticipated reactions in the minds of officeholders may well represent more effective pressures than vote retribution would actually turn out to be, and it has the virtue of operating between elections. The attendant pressures are more often than not centrist, because, again, that is where the votes are usually perceived to be.

All of these center-seeking mechanisms, however, reside in the minds of persons who are highly informed politically: office-holders, campaign managers, and the like. Is there any center-seeking mechanism that is, as it were, indigenous to the grass-roots part of the electorate? Here the pickings are slim, but perhaps not nonexistent.

Radical and dangerous

When campaign accusations that some candidate is "extremist" are made to stick at all in the minds of prospective voters, they will surely diminish the candidate's attractiveness. Extremism is unquestionably a political swear word for the public at large. On the other hand, it is not always clear when the public will resonate to such accusations and when it will ignore them. And a major part of the uncertainty carried us back full circle to the information problem. Well-informed voters undoubtedly know where the center and the extremes are with respect to many policy debates. But it can readily be shown that well-informed voters are scarcely center-seeking; if anything they are center-avoiding.

And while there may be millions of such well-informed voters in the country, they are in a very distinct minority. Within the less-informed majority, the kinds of contextual information that would locate particular policy options as more or less extreme in one direction or another is exactly what is in short supply. Thus some voters will reliably dub as unacceptably radical and dangerous, policy arrangements that have been in effect, and consensually so, for generations. They may on the other hand fail to detect radical implications of other more extreme options that may be presented to them. Thus if there even were a center-seeking appetite here, which there probably is not, it could not be reliably expressed.

I commented earlier on a "shape" of public opinion that often rises to its highest single peak in the center of whatever policy space may be involved. While such a distribution is in fact found much more often than not, the peak in the middle is no symptom whatever of center-seeking proclivities. The center is populated much more by default than by conviction. For the voter unfamiliar with the terms of a given policy debate, the safe place to locate oneself when asked is in a middling position, and poorly informed people do so in droves.

In fact, when an electorate is asked the kinds of questions that permit its members' preferences to be arrayed in some policy space from one extreme to its opposite pole, it turns out that levels of political involvement usually form a great U-shape across the policy continuum, with involvement highest toward the extremes and at its lowest ebb in the middle, where most the voters are. This is not, of course, a natural law, but something to be found a great disproportion of the time.

There are some immediate corollaries of this structure. Since political candidates are highly involved, one would predict that they are rarely very centrist, which is true. With voters bunching toward the center and candidates moving away from it, it follows that a majority of voters must vote for candidates who are more extreme on the issues than they themselves. Again, this turns out to be very true. It is scarcely center-seeking behavior.

No-man's land

But is this not merely the result of a two-party system where the center is some no-man's land between opposing camps? What do we find in multi-party systems, where it is possible for third parties to establish themselves firmly as

high, and we have reported back a rather modest result, although one that should be some solace at those many points where we suffer chagrin at the egregious errors of democratic process.

E.M. Forster once wrote an essay entitled "Two Cheers for Democracy". This count seems about right.

DATA SHARING - THE CURRENT DEBATE

Perry Sperling, Social Science Data Archives

The fundamental principle that lies behind the establishment and on-going existence of the Social Science Data Archives is that of data sharing. As archive personnel, we are only too aware of the existence of both positive and negative attitudes to this principle. However, as the technology to assist in data file transfer processes becomes more refined, ethical and moral debates on "data sharing as a public good" continue.

Two recent guest editorials in the American Sociological Review (Baron,1988) (Hauser,1987) and a wealth of public electronic-mail highlight the current international debate on data sharing and citation of data files.

"Data sharing promotes cumulative progress within a discipline by encouraging researchers to use common research tools and to expand on previous studies" maintains Baron (1988).

Hauser (1987) summarises the U.S. 1985 NAS-NRC Report (Fienberg, Martin and Straf 1985) listing the following benefits of data sharing:

> "...reinforcement of open scientific inquiry; the verification, refutation or refinement of original results; the promotion of new research through existing data; encouragement of more appropriate use of empirical data in policy formulation and evaluation; improvement of measurement and data collection methods; development of theoretical knowledge and knowledge of analytic techniques; encouragement of multiple perspectives; provision of resources for training in research; and protection against faulty data."

Below is a range of electronic-mail replies from the U.S. (quoted anonymously) , offered in ponse to a recent request for opinions on ⁾priety of data and data sharing.

> "A common view in the circles I travel in (economics) seems to be that the person who put the time and effort into collecting data has pseudo-propriety rights over it for a 'reasonable' time, usually meant as long enough to publish a first-round of articles based on the data. After that, intellectual honesty and scientific ethics require making the data public domain so that others can try to replicate, extend and challenge the original research. ...... As for who the initial 'owner' is, almost always the PI who conceived the idea and invested his/her effort, reputation and career advancement in the project. Almost never the financial sponsor - if this is academic research, then a corporate sponsor must respect academic standards. If it's commercial research, that's a different matter."

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> "This item raises a serious topic that rarely receives the attention that it warrants. As the co-ordinator of our university's Data Library, I have on a number of occasions asked researchers to deposit their data files with our archive. The response has been mixed. Two camps of thought seem to summarise the feelings of the majority of those with whom I've dealt. Some researchers clearly view their data as a 'public good' gathered at public expense; the other camp tends to see data as intellectual property and argue that data should be treated just like the authorship of a book. The latter group feels that they should be able to sell their data or receive royalties from it. .... A very recent development by at least one scholarly journal in economics has been to require authors of published articles to make their data available. .... Intellectual honesty and scientific ethics should be the bottom line; nevertheless, we need to advance this topic within our research communities and to promote the ethic of archiving data."

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> "I have been working on that material in one way or another for over 15 years. I did it because I wanted to be able to find out about certain connections between things which I continue to find on a daily basis. I

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Whilst we recognise that this is a step towards
mandatory archiving (a condition of future
funding with some overseas grant agencies) it
must be acknowledged that, as yet, this is only an
"Advice to Applicants" and not a "Requirement
on Receipt of a Grant". At present few grant
recipients follow this advice. Is it possible for
researchers to comply with this advice as it
currently stands, or it is necessary for the ARC to
ammend its guidelines in order to make data
sharing a condition of future funding (a trend
emerging amongst international grant
agencies)? There is a certainly precedent for
placing conditions on future funding by the
ARC. For example the ARC requires successful
applicants to submit a final report within six
months of the conclusion of the final year of
support - applicants who do not comply with
this may not receive any further ARC funding.

The previous discussion merely touches upon
the issues in this important debate. There are
strong feelings both for and against data sharing
in the Australian research community. We are
interested in publishing Australian responses to
this topic in subsequent issues of the ACSPRI
Newsletter. What do you think about citation of
machine-readable data files in journal articles?
What would your response be to the mandatory
archiving of data files as a condition for further
ARC funding? What is your opinion on data
sharing in general? By providing a forum to air
thoughts on this topic we hope to be able to
alleviate some of the anticipated procedural
problems and engender an ethic of "data sharing
for public good" in the research community.
Responses should be addressed to

Social Science Data Archives, Australian
National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra ACT
2601

or sent via electronic mail to the following
address:

rgj310@COOMBS.ANU.OZ

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BRITISH AND EUROPEAN NEWS

The following notes of interest have been
extracted from various recent issues of the ESRC
Data Archive Bulletin and the European
Political Data Newsletter.

European Community Studies Association

The European Community Studies Association
(ECSA) was founded in March 1988, by a group
of scholars in the US interested in the European
Community.

The Association will promote the study of the
EC by: facilitating research projects and other
collaborative works among association
members; encouraging links between the
Association and European individuals and
counterpart associations for the purpose of
transatlantic cooperation; publishing a
newsletter; holding conferences and workshops
sponsored by other organisations; seeking and
disbursing funds to support the Association's
activities; and drawing upon the membership to
speak publicly on EC issues.

More information on subscriptions to the ECSA
Newsletter and membership of the association
can be sought from

ECSA, c/o Prof. Leon Hurwitz, Department of
Political Science, Cleveland State University,
Cleveland OHIO 44115 U.S.A.

New Director of the ESRC Data Archive

Professor Catherine Hakim has taken over the
directorship of the ESRC Data Archive, and will
become the Archive's first full-time director.
She also holds a chair in sociology in the
University of Essex. Prof. Hakim replaces Prof.
Howard Newby, who has moved on to become
Chairman of the Economic and Social Research
Council

Prof. Hakim is a professional social scientist with
wide-ranging experience of research and
consultancy for government and business. Her
main interests are in the analysis of major

national government surveys, in research
design and research management, and in the
sociology of the labour market and labour law -
in particular changing patterns of work and
flexibility, marginal workers and labour market
segmentation. Publications in these fields
include *Secondary Analysis* (1982), *Home Based
Work in Britain* (1987), and *Research Design*
(1987).

International Association for Regional and Urban Statistics (IARUS)

IARUS, which is a section of the International
Statistical Institute, has established a new
occasional paper series, called *Cities and
Regions*. Each issue will contain papers on a
theme selected from the following: regional and
spatial policy in Europe; regional industrial
development; internal migration; the financing
of local and regional government; urban and
regional labour market analysis; developments
and applications in spatial demography;
methodological developments and applications
in urban and regional analysis; and
developments and applications of Geographic
Information Systems.

Offers of papers should be forwarded to:

Dr. L Worrall, c/o Policy Unit, Wrekin Council,
P.O. Box 213, Malinslee House, Telford TF3 4LD
Shropshire UK.

CONFERENCES

The following are notices of conferences to be
held in Australia and overseas in the next six to
nine months. Readers interested in obtaining
more details should contact the organisers
listed.

If you want to publicise a conference or
workshop to be held in the near future, or you
want to report on a recent conference, contact us
at ACSPRI.

NSW Society for Technical Communication Seminar

21-22 October 1989

Organised in association with the School of
Library and Information Studies, at the Kuring-
gai College of Advanced Education. The aim of
this two day seminar is to provide technical
writers, illustrators, trainers and other technical

13th International Online Information Meeting

12-14 December 1989

To be held in London. Preliminary call for papers. Contact

Learned Information Ltd. Woodside, Hinksey Hill, Oxford OX1 5AU UK.

International Sociological Association: 12th World Congress

9-13 July 1990

To be held in Madrid, with the theme "Sociology for One World - Unity and Diversity".

A session is being organised for this conference by Dr. Martin Bulmer, from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Jennifer Platt, University of Sussex, on the History of Empirical Social Research. Papers will deal with aspects of the history of social investigation in sociology and related fields since 1800, including research in different styles both quantitative and qualitative, the changing logics of research procedure and methods of analysis, how empirical inquiry was institutionalised, and the rhetoric of research.

For information on this particular session, contact either

Dr. Martin Bulmer, London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE UK

or

Jennifer Platt, School of Social Sciences, University of Sussex, Arts D, Falmer Brighton BN1 9QN E. Sussex UK

For details on conference organisation in general, contact

International Sociological Association, Pinar 2528006 Madrid Spain.

UPDATE ON AARNet

The Australian academic community is about to reap the benefits from the development of a dedicated Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet) of computer facilities for the networking of information at a national, state and international level.

The AARNet proposal was first put to the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee and the Australian Committee of Directors and Principals in early 1988. Since then, a Steering Committee (chaired by Prof. Ken MacKinnon, from the University of Wollongong) and a Technical Committee (headed by Dr. Robin Erskine, the Director of Computing Services at the ANU) have been formed. A Technical Manager, Geoff Huston, has been seconded from the ANU for two years to work on the project.

Of immediate benefit to the academic community will be the provision of a reliable electronic mail facility; connection to the USENET News network; remote interactive access; and efficient file transfer. At a later date, AARNet aims to offer a number of other services and to support various activities such as student lecturer mail; distance lectures; study centre support; access to learning resources; access to courses and administration; library activities; database access; and publicity and press services. AARNet will also assist in the administration of tertiary administration services.

As an approximate timetable, the AARNet group has been working throughout the second half of 1989 to implement the Backbone (national) network and regional networks for each state. Plans for 1990 involve the integration of existing network services, including ACSnet; interfaces to Austpac-connected services and international network links. The latter half of the year should also be involved with planning activity for the inclusion of additional services into the network structure.

Further details can be obtained from Geoff Huston, AARNet Technical Manager, at the Australian National University (ph. (062) 493385).

MICROCOMPUTER NEWS

The following is a useful review of MicrOsiris which came down the wires to the SSDA via E-mail. Charles Humphrey is at Computing Services, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

MicrOsiris (tm)

Charles Humphrey (August 1989)

I have been an OSIRIS user for more than sixteen years. During that time I have worked with three mainframe versions: II, III and IV. Now, I have had the opportunity to use the newest member in the OSIRIS lineage - MicrOsiris (MO). This PC version is the offspring of Neal Van Eck, who in earlier times directed the mainframe development of OSIRIS IV while serving as Director of Computing Support at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research.

SAS, SPSS, BMDP, P-STAT, MINITAB and OSIRIS all share similar origins; in particular, each was born in a university setting during the mid to late 1960's. However, by the 1980's all except OSIRIS have become private, commercial ventures. While the profits from these other statistical systems were channelled into building expansionary software houses, OSIRIS had to survive through the fiscal vicissitudes of a public university. The fact that MO even exists is somewhat of a surprise since the software was not developed in-house at the University of Michigan. Rather, MO was programmed by Van Eck Computer Consulting under a contract with the University of Michigan.

MO closely resembles OSIRIS IV in its documentation, user interface, and collection of procedures. The documentation for MO is largely drawn from the OSIRIS IV manual using the same layout and appearing in a loose-leaf binder. This manual - like its mainframe parent - is a reference work. Outside a twelve page section entitled, DATA MANAGEMENT, this document does not offer tutorial assistance. As a reference manual, the document is well done and provides examples of commands and output with each procedure.

The user interface for MO follows OSIRIS IV's use of a monitor to handle control language commands and file assignments. This monitor is oriented to line by line input and output. The control language is structured to accept sequentially i/o file assignments, a filter to subset cases, and global parameters and standard keywords for a procedure. Unlike PC SAS and SPSS/PC+, MO does not use windows. Standard output simply rolls off the screen unless it is captured on or piped to another medium. Like its mainframe counterpart, MO's output really is designed to be printed on paper, although the default setting for output is a monitor - 24 lines by 80 columns.

MO currently consists of 30 procedures and offers most of the basic univariate and multivariate statistical routines found in OSIRIS IV (which had 52 procedures with release 12.) These routines include descriptive statistics (e.g., TABLES and USTATS), regression, correlation, one-way analysis of variance, means testing, multiple classification analysis, factor analysis and cluster analysis. The commands for these procedures are largely the same in both the PC and mainframe releases - the most notable difference is that all OSIRIS IV routines are prefixed with an & while MO does not use this convention.

Included in OSIRIS IV, but not available in this release of MO, are nine procedures for managing structured data files, including SBUILD, SENTRY, DBUILD, and DLOOK. Also missing are several specialized statistical procedures, such as SEARCH, PSALMS, PSRATIO, PSTABLE, PSTOTAL, and MINISSA. However, Van Eck Computer Consulting claims that further additions will be made to MO, although no indication of the nature of these extensions is given in their promotional material.

MO does offer some OSIRIS IV procedures that makes it unique among PC stats packages. These routines assist with cleaning and editing data. I use OSIRIS IV primarily for its data management features, which includes its structured file procedures, its procedures to convert data from other package formats into OSIRIS dictionaries and data files, its variable and case subsetting capabilities, and its data cleaning routines. These latter procedures are especially important since no other major statistical package offers this type of assistance.•1.

While teaching with the Summer Institute on the Quantitative Analysis of Social Data over the past several years, I have written a workbook about cleaning data that includes exercises using OSIRIS IV's procedures for completeness checks, univariate wildcodes and multivariate inconsistencies. After a few minor changes to the code of my OSIRIS IV command files, I was able to run all of these exercises on a PC using MO. I was also able to use a downloaded type five OSIRIS dictionary and data file directly with MO.

I am quite happy with MO and am eager to see this product grow, but then, I too am a fan of OSIRIS. I share Richard Roistacher's sentiments

in his 1980 review of OSIRIS IV in SIGSOC Bulletin (Vol 11,no. 3-4), "OSIRIS IV should be part of the library of every computing center with a data analytic clientele." It is my hope that more of the valuable data management tools in OSIRIS IV will make their way into MO's repertoire of procedures.

• 1. Data entry routines are available with PC SAS and SPSS/PC+ which offer some data checking features. Thus, the approach taken by SAS and SPSS has been to isolate cleaning tasks at the data entry stage, although their data checking features are not as comprehensive as the collection of OSIRIS routines.

DISCLAIMER : Neither I nor my family have any financial interests in MicrOsiris nor in OSIRIS IV.

Endnote - The Definitive Macintosh Bibliography Program

This is the title of an extensive review of the features of *Endnote* „ produced by Dr. Ken Reed from the Dept. of Biochemistry, The Faculties, ANU, and published in **Secrets of Lisa Macintosh. An Occasional Newsletter Published by the ANU Apple Consortium User Group** (Volume 2, No.3, August 1989). *Endnote* according to Reed, is a program for "handling reference databases, publications and bibliographies which is so useful as to be indispensable." It "has a most delightful, transparent Mac interface; its formatting for reference databases, text citations and compiled bibliographies is just what the doctor ordered, and can be customised painlessly and infinitely".

In support of these glowing references, the review produces detailed examples of the program's many functions, including dumps of menus and screens to illustrate the program's presentation. Write to

Dr. Martin Ward, Mathematics, The Faculties, Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra City ACT 2601 (ph (062) 492905)

for information on the newsletter and complete copies of the review.

SSDA News

In this issue of SSDA News, we present our regular list of recently acquired SSDA studies, as well as those on recent release from ICPSR; information from the ABS; the 1987 British Election Study; and a brief note on the development of a data archive in Austria. In addition, an extensive article on a proposal to introduce CATI and survey research facilities at the SSDA begins this issue. Comments and suggestions on this proposal are especially welcomed.

ACademic Consortium for Economic and Social Surveys - (ACCESS) ?

The SSDA is presently examining the feasibility of setting up a telephone survey facility, incorporating computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) techniques and taking advantage of the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet) currently being developed (see the brief article on AARNet in this issue of the ACSPRI Newsletter).

The following is an edited version of a preliminary proposal document prepared by Roger Jones of the SSDA, for consideration by the Research School of Social Sciences. It outlines the basic features of telephone interviewing systems, and the options for their application in the Australian context.

The CASES software (see below) is currently being evaluated in its PC version with a view to implementation of the mainframe version on a Pyramid 9825 under UNIX. Sample design options and the costs of additional equipment required to establish a local survey facility and of conducting telephone interviews will be assessed and a report prepared. Interest from academic institutions connected to AARNet will be sought with a view to establishing a consortium capable of serving academic demand for both national and local studies.

Background

The Research School of Social Sciences at the ANU has a long history of conducting major survey-based research projects, in some cases organising and

managing, even undertaking, the fieldwork itself and in others relying on contracted market research agencies. Both approaches are fraught with difficulties.

The organisation required to carry out a national survey with personal interviews requires a massive effort and commitment of resources which few have been willing to contemplate. One consequence of this for academic research has been that most surveys undertaken have had limited geographic coverage. Contracting fieldwork to market research agencies has also been problematic, due to the limited experience Australian firms have had with this type of research. The alternative approach of using mailed questionnaires may now be threatened by the Privacy Act placing restrictions on the use of the Electoral Roll, the only adequate sampling frame for this type of survey. And mailed questionnaires are innappropriate for subgroups of the population which cannot be readily identified from the sampling frame.

Telephone Interviewing

Telephone interviewing is now well established in Australia and overseas where levels of telephone access have reached acceptable levels. In Australia telephone interviewing is used extensively for market research and opinion polling and is being considered by the ABS for business surveys and, in conjunction with personal interviews, for their labour force surveys. In the United States, the Institute for Social Research (ISR) and the National Opinion Research Centre (NORC) rely almost exclusively on telephone interviewing for their surveys and many other universities have established telephone survey facilities.

The major advance in survey research over the last decade has been the development of **Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)** systems. These systems combine most of the features of questionnaire design, data entry, error checking and data file documentation as well as allowing close monitoring of the interviewers' work. The survey

questionnaire is displayed to the interviewer on a video screen and responses are entered directly into the computer. Error and logic checks can be run as the interview is in progress allowing inconsistencies to be identified and checked with the respondent. Different routes through the questionnaire can be programmed in to ensure appropriate question sequencing through the interview. Question order and the order of response categories presented to respondents can be randomised over the sample to test for order and context effects. And interviewers can be closely monitored so that 'good' and 'bad' interviewers can quickly be identified and action taken.

Early concerns about the use of telephone interviews have now largely been overcome. Telephone access levels are now high, over 90% among most subgroups in Australia, and people are more comfortable with telephone use. Improved methods of sample selection have been developed. Response rates are generally higher than for the cheaper self-completion mail survey approach and would be expected to exceed those normally achieved by Australian market research companies contracted to do face-to-face interviewers. Research has been conducted on ways of overcoming the lack of show cards and other visual aids used in personal interviews. Studies requiring extensive interviews on complex topics have been conducted successfully.

A number of different CATI systems are now in use, each of them originally developed for a somewhat specialised user community. One of the earliest and most widely used is the Computer-Assisted Survey Execution System (CASES) developed by the Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program (CSM) at the University of California, Berkeley. The Director of CSM, Professor Merrill Shanks, recently visited the ANU to speak about this system.

The development of CASES at Berkeley began in the late 1970's with a strong commitment to the UNIX operating system and the software has been ported and tested on a variety of hardware and UNIX implementations, including the Pyramid system operated by the School. In addition, CSM has converted their software to operate in the MS-DOS and VMS environments and is assessing the feasibility of conversion to other non-UNIX environments.

Any consideration of a telephone interviewing survey facility in Australia capable of conducting national

surveys must take account of the relatively high cost of inter-State telephone calls. Clearly the cost of telephone interviewing from a single location, in Canberra for example, would be much higher than if a number of interviewing facilities were established in the State capital cities when most of the interviews would be conducted as local calls. A distributed system of facilities is therefore an essential basis for a national CATI system.

There are three possible forms that a distributed telephone interviewing system might take:

> multiple personal computer facilities;

> hierarchical facilities of multi- and single-user systems; and

> geographically separate facilities operating under central control.

CSM, in association with the US Department of Agriculture, has already implemented systems operating on each of these configurations.

For a national system, the first two of these forms would require a group of co-operating institutions to each establish a local telephone interviewing facility. Each facility would operate independently on local surveys, conducting local interviews for national surveys on a co-operative or sub-contracted basis. Completed cases from the local facilities would be sent to a central location for integration into the master data file where additional coding might be added or new variables computed, a codebook prepared and the data set up for analysis. With the proposed implementation of AARNet, transfer of files from the local facilities to a central facility responsible for the overall management of a project should be as simple and safe as using a local area network.

However, in order to operate on a national basis, the same software would need to be implemented on each machine in each facility in order to minimise the development costs involved in setting up the CATI survey instrument.

The third form that a distributed telephone interviewing system could take is much more closely associated with and dependent on the establishment of AARNet. With AARNet in place, a single centralised facility can be established with responsibility for maintaining and developing the

software. Inter-State facilities would simply require terminal access to AARNet which would allow them to log on to the central facility and run the CATI programs. All data would automatically be loaded to the central computing system and added to the master file. While trained interviewers would still be required in each centre, the expertise required for programming questionnaires and survey management procedures would be centralised. Local surveys would then be undertaken by arrangement with the central facility and the local centre.

The choice between the distributed and centralised forms of the system depends on the balance between local and national demand. Given a strong demand from State-based facilities to carry out surveys, it is unlikely that a centralised facility could cope with the demands placed on it for program development and testing. On the other hand, if demand is low, it would be difficult to maintain the expertise required in each State location, and the loss of one local facility would degrade the whole system from a national standpoint.

ABS UPDATES

Australia's 12th National Census

In May this year, the Minister Assisting the Treasurer, Mr. Morris, announced that the next Australian Census will be conducted in 1991. Content of the 1991 Census will be similar to 1986, with however, the following topics not being considered "justified" for inclusion:

> . year first married (duration of marriage)
> . whether married more than once
> . issue (number of children ever born)
> . ethnic origin
> . reason dwelling unoccupied

The ABS plans to upgrade its computer facilities, and with the use of optical mark recognition technology and computer assisted coding at the processing stage, expects to have preliminary census counts within nine months of the census day. For more information, get a copy of the ABS Information Paper **1991 Census of Population and Housing: Content and Procedures** (cat. no. 2613.0) from your nearest ABS office.

1988 Housing Survey, Australia

The ABS has recently produced a helpful information booklet listing statistics currently or about to be made available from the 1988 Housing Survey. Topic areas planned for release include housing costs and occupancy; housing finance of purchasers; housing history and intentions; dwelling characteristics of households; and housing costs for each State. Details of coverage of tabulations, and costs are also provided, along with expected release dates. Contact Information Services at your State ABS office for more information.

1987 BRITISH ELECTION STUDY

As part of our continuing interest in updating holdings of series surveys from foreign archives, the SSDA has recently obtained data and documentation from the 1987 British Election Study (ESRC Sn.2568), a study of the British electorate following the 1987 General Election.

In general, the British Election Study (BES) project aims to study the voting behaviour and political attitudes of the mass electorate at the time of General Elections. The project was also designed to continue the series of studies initiated by Donald Stokes and David Butler (Political Change in Britain 1963-70) and continued by Ivor Crewe and Bo Sarlvik in 1974 and 1979 (the first in the BES series). The SSDA already holds data from the 1974 and 1979 surveys, as well as data and documentation for the 1983 British Election Study (ESRC Sn.2005) conducted by Heath, Jowell and Curtice, and collected by Social and Community Planning Research.

The 1987 study covers similar ground to the 1983 study, and many of the questions are replicated from previous BES studies, and from the related British Social Attitudes (BSA) surveys (which are also held by the SSDA).

In this extensive data set, variables cover: interest and participation in the election campaign; perception of the party system; vote; second choice party; reason for voting; vote in 1983; party identification; negative partisanship; attitudes towards party leaders; images of political parties; wide variety of questions on political attitudes (to such issues as unemployment, tax, defence, education, health and social services) and perceptions of where parties stand on political attitudes; importance of issues in

influencing vote; mother and father's vote; father's, respondent's and spouse's occupation including Goldthorpe class schema; self assigned class; trade union membership; car ownership; use of private · medicine and education; perception of trends in household income; receipt of state benefit; education and qualifications; religion; ethnic origin; gender; household tenure; marital status; party membership; region; and parliamentary consistuency.

A continuity guide to repeated questions up to and including 1983 has been produced, so hopefully this publication will be extended to include the latest survey in the near future. The SSDA can provide further details on this and earlier surveys in the BES series.

WISDOM - AUSTRIAN DATA ARCHIVE

From the December 1988 issue of the European Political Data Newsletter, we've extracted information from a longer article describing WISDOM (Wiener Institut fur Sozialwissenschaftliche Dokumentation und Metodik), the Austrian Social Science Data Archive, located in Vienna. Although Austrian social science research has developed over a number of decades, WISDOM was only founded in 1985, and currently receives a considerable amount of its annual funding from the Austrian Ministry of Science and Research.

WISDOM carries out the usual documentation, data processing and archival work on data from studies deposited, but does not currently produce a printed catalogue. Instead, their documentation database storing study descriptions works as an information retrieval system, allowing the archive to respond to individual queries concerning available data in a particular subject area. As at June 1988, 200 studies had been incorporated into this database, including Austrian Microcensus data, multiple topic and specific topic surveys from survey institutions such as the Institute for Empirical Social Research (IFES), and academic social survey data.

WISDOM has also developed stronger links with the Austrian academic community, and now canvasses potential depositors, including those who receive research grants through the Ministry of Science and Research, and the Jubilee Fund of the Austrian National Bank.

The SSDA would be happy to contact WISDOM on behalf on Australian researchers interested in finding out the extent of data collections and subject areas.

AUSTRALIAN DATA AVAILABLE

Additions to SSDA holdings are listed below. Please note that some of these carry an Access Category which should be interpreted as follows:

A: the depositor wishes to be informed (by the Archives) of use being made of the data, in order to comment on that use and make contact with colleagues of similar interests

B: the depositor wishes to be informed of each request to use the data in order to give or withhold permission

E: there is an embargo period: no access is permitted until after the date specified

S: there are special access conditions peculiar to the data set in question

U: as specified in the User Undertaking Form, the user is required to obtain the permission in writing of the original depositor of the data, or an authorised representative, before publishing any interpretation of such materials

t.b.a: to be advised (currently unknown)

For datasets listed as having no special Access Category, users must still sign a standard SSDA User Undertaking Form prior to access.

Data can be ordered in writing from the SSDA, and intending users should specify particular magnetic tape or floppy disk requirements at this time. Charges for data can be supplied on request. Users can also request information or order data using E-mail.

Update - The Social Structure of Australia (SSDA No. 493)

SSDA Study No. 493, The Social Structure of Australia, 1986, has now been released for general access, after previously being embargoed. (See ACSPRI Newsletter/SSDA News No. 19, March 1989, for a description of the study). Contact the SSDA for further information on the range of variables available, and general access details.

Norman J. Smith, La Trobe University **Social Workers in Australia: Attitudes to Working Roles 1978-1983** (SSDA No. 533)
This survey set out to examine the background, professional characteristics and work expectations of newly qualified social workers completing their professional education in Australia at the end of 1979, and to follow their professional careers over a two or three year period. Respondents were first questioned in June 1980, and subsequently in 1983-1984. Data from these two stages has been combined into one data file.

Separate sections of the initial questionnaire dealt with tertiary study in social work, including an assessment of the most and least useful courses studied, and the focus and philosophy of the course undertaken; social work as an occupation, including ratings of various occupations according to value to society and maintenance of the status quo, and membership of professional organisations; and respondents' employment since graduation, including job classification, hours worked, reasons for not working in a social work area, previous employment history, and if currently working in the social work field, an indication of the amount of working time spent on a range of tasks.

Background variables cover birthplace of respondent and parents, ethnic group, parents' occupations, sex, age, marital status and dependents.

The second questionnaire dealt with further employment history and in a detailed manner, with satisfaction and dissatisfaction with many aspects of the job; influences on work role; professional development; work and personal values; work stress; and opinions on the professional role of the social worker.

Access Category: B

Kate Elliott and Phillipa Lowrey, Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Australia **Alcohol and Other Drug Consumption Among Women, ACT 1989** (SSDA No. 541)
The purpose of this study was to ascertain the level of knowledge, amongst women in the ACT, on safe levels of alcohol and other drug consumption as well as to gather data on current levels of drug and alcohol consumption in the sample population.

Variables include: type of exposure to safe drug level

information; age; marital status; employment status; highest education level reached; country of birth; length of time in the ACT and in Australia; number of children; perceived knowledge of safe levels of drug and alcohol consumption; amount of alcohol consumed, place and time of alcohol consumption and who alcohol was consumed in the presence of for each of the past seven days; amount of Benzodiazepines, Marijuana, Amphetamines and Speed used in the past week, month and year.

Access Category: none

Geoff Parkinson, Department of Employment, Education and Training **Australian Longitudinal Survey, 1989: Wave 4, Level 2 (Area Sample)** (SSDA No. 542)

This is the fourth wave of the youth area sample component of the Australian Longitudinal Survey . (See also SSDA Studies No. 377, 410, 420 and 491 for details of the four waves of the ALS list sample, and SSDA Studies No. 413, 421 and 489 for the first three waves of the youth area sample). The 1988 wave consisted of 6151 interviews with people aged 18 to 27. A multi-stage household based sample designed to represent all Australians in the age cohort, except those residing in sparsely settled areas, was employed.

The survey aims mainly at providing data on the dynamics of the youth labour market, and in particular to address questions which are not readily covered with available sources of cross sectional data. Labour market variables include job history, job search behaviour, job training and transition from school/study to work. Background variables and topics related to the main labour market theme include education, occupation and health. Basic demographic variables include age, sex, size of household, country of birth, racial origin, parental education and occupation, spouse's education, religion, income, and whether resident in an urban or rural area.

Access Category: S

Tourism Tasmania, **Tasmanian Visitor Surveys, 1984 and 1986.** (SSDA Nos. 543 and 544)

The Tasmania Visitor Surveys have been conducted since 1978 by Tasmania Tourism. There are now 4 surveys held by the SSDA, the 1978 and 1981 studies

(SSDA No. 332, 333) and the surveys conducted in 1984 and 1986. Combined, these surveys cover responses from approxiately 24,000 visitors to Tasmania over 1978 to 1986. Since 1988 Tasmania Tourism has decided to carry out the surveys on an annual basis.

There have been a number of small changes to question categories over the period, in addition to some new questions itinery. On the whole however, there are few changes to question items. Variables include purpose of visit; booking, arrival and departure choices; transport and accommodation use; regional coverage, places visited and activities participated in; satisfaction with visit to Tasmania, previous visits and intention to return; spending and credit card use; and background variables such as age, sex, income, postcode (if Australian) or country (if an international visitor).

Access Category: A

Australian Association of Graduate Employers **Graduate Employers' Survey, Australia, 1989** (SSDA No. 546)

The aim of this survey was to gather information on the demand for graduates among employers, focussing particularly on disciplines and skills required. Over 200 employers, who together employed more than 2500 graduates in 1988 and 1989, took part in the survey.

Topics covered include: place of recruitment; numbers of recruits; qualifications of recruites and discipline studied; starting salary of recruits in each discipline and for each qualification; salary benefits given to recruits; attributes used to asses quality of graduates; availability of graduates in each discipline; predicted proportion of graduates from each discipline for 1990; time of year offers of employment are made for each discipline; recruiting procedures used and their effectiveness; training and development programs offered to new graduates; skills necessary for career progression; proportion of current graduate recruits expected to remain with employer; major reasons for resignations. Background variables include : total number of employees, type of organisation; present and future financial contributions to Higher Education of employees.

Access Category: none

Jonathan Kelley, National Social Science Survey, ANU **NSSS Panel Survey 1987** (SSDA No. 548)

The National Social Science Survey, conducted since 1984-85 by the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University is one of Australia's principal social science survey projects.

In 1984-85 data for the first NSSS were collected in face-to-face interviews in urban areas and by a mail questionnaire in rural areas (see SSDA Study No. 423). In 1987 these respondents were contacted again by mail. All respondents whose address was known and who had not expressed opposition to being contacted again were approached; they comprised over 80 per cent of the original sample.

The survey was conducted at the time of the 1987 federal election. The majority of responses came just before the federal election (held on 11 July) with most of the remainder coming before the end of July. The completion rate was 60 percent, yielding 1311 respondents. Cross checks with other data sources indicate that the sample is representative of the population, save for slight over-representation of Labor voters.

The NSSS Panel Survey includes all the responses from the orginal NSSS in addition to questions collected in 1987. The 1987 questions cover attitudes to individuals' ability to be involved in the political process; issues such as the death penalty, child rearing practices, and authority; opinions on unemployment, inflation, the national debt, social services and the federal system. Political data includes party preference and voting intention in State and Federal elections. A feeling thermometer is used to assess perceptions of some Australian politicians, political parties and other countries, including the superpowers and most major countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The NSSS Panel 1987 is the first political panel survey conducted in Australia since the 1967 panel component of the Australian Political Attitudes Surveys.

Access Category: none

W. A and R. Scott, Australian National University **Cross Cultural Secondary Student Survey of Satisfaction and Academic Success, 1989** (SSDA No. 549)

This study examines some aspects of adjustment to high school of high school students in eight communities: Hong Kong, Taipei, Osaka, Berlin, Winnipeg, Phoenix, Canberra and Brisbane. English-language questionnaires were translated into Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese and German. Communities were selected to seek a diversity in family pattern and school structure, however final inclusion in the survey was dependent on voluntary participation. Five files record reponses to three questionnaires that were administered : 2 student files, 2 parent files and 1 teacher file.

The research aimed at identifying some distinctive associations between specific adaptive problems and personality characteristics, on the one hand, and specific family patterns on the other. Students were surveyed to provide information on their: academic performance, sociometric popularity and students' own satisfaction with school friends and academic performance. Parents and teachers were also surveyed to provide information about the students' personalities (self-esteem, anxiety, interpersonal competence and hostility) and family relations (solidarity, parental nurturance, permissiveness and punitiveness).

Access Category: E

ICPSR ADDITIONS TO HOLDINGS

The following titles have been extracted from the ICPSR Bulletins dated February 1989 and May 1989. Datasets are not currently held by the SSDA, but can be ordered from ICPSR on request. Contact the SSDA for more details.

ABC News Polls: Super Tuesday Pre-Election Tracking and Primary Election Exit Polls, 1988 (ICPSR 8995); Primary Election Exit Polls, February-June 1988 (ICPSR 8994); General Election Exit Poll, November 1988 (ICPSR 9118); General Election Exit Polls, 1985 (ICPSR 8588); Ginsburg Poll, November 1987 (ICPSR 8885); Pre-Election Spot Poll: New Hampshire 1988 (ICPSR 8996); Primary Election Exit Polls, 1985 (ICPSR 8595)

ABC New/ Washington Post Polls: November 1985 (ICPSR

8593); September 1987 (ICPSR 8891); Post Summit Poll, December 1987 (ICPSR 8923); Pre-Election Tracking Poll: California 1988 (ICPSR 9060); Pre-Election Tracking Poll: Illinois 1988 (ICPSR 8999); Pre-Election Tracking Poll, New Hampshire 1988 (ICPSR 8997); Pre-Election Tracking Poll: New York 1988 (ICPSR 9059)

American National Election Study, 1988: The Presidential Nomination Process [Super Tuesday] (ICPSR 9093)

Australian National Social Science Survey, 1984 (ICPSR 9084)

Bureau of Health Professions Area Resource File, 1940-1987 [United States] (ICPSR 9075)

British Social Attitudes Survey, 1986 (ICPSR 8910)

CBS News/ New York Times/ Soviet Institute for Sociological Research Survey of Moscow Residents, May 1988 (ICPSR 9111)

CBS News/ Tokyo Broadcasting System Collaborative National Surveys of the United States and Japan, 1988 (ICPSR 9105)

Census of Population, 1860 [United States]: Urban Household Sample (ICPSR 8930)

Census of Utah Territory, 1880 (ICPSR 8879)

Consolidated Federal Funds Report (CFFR), Fiscal Year 1987 (ICPSR 9081)

Consumer Expenditure Surveys, 1986: Diary Survey and Interview Survey (ICPSR 9114 and 9113)

Current Population Survey: Annual Demographic File, 1988 (ICPSR 9090)

Danish Election Studies Continuity File, 1971-1981 (ICPSR 8946)

Effects of Sentemces on Subsequent Criminal Behavior, New Jersey, 1976-1977 (ICPSR 8986)

Euro-Barometer 26: Energy Problems, November 1986 (ICPSR 8680)

Factors Influencing the Quality and Utility of Government Sponsored Criminal Justice Research in the United States, 1975-1986 (ICPSR 9089)

Immigrants Admitted to the United States, 1972-1977, 1980-1986 (ICPSR 8952-8958, 8960-8966)

Metropolitan Structure and Intermarriage in the United States, 1970: Testing a Macrostructural Theory (ICPSR 8870)

National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, 1985 (ICPSR 8902)

National Black Election Study, 1984 (ICPSR 8938)

National Health Interview Survey, 1986 (ICPSR 8976)

National Lesbian Health Care survey, 1984-1985 (ICPSR 8991)