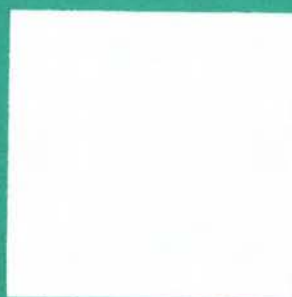


expanding




national opinion research center

1996 annual report



1



the horizon

In 1996, we at NORC celebrated our 55th anniversary. When we first began conducting surveys, we used field interviewers and paper-and-pencil questionnaires, mailing or telegraphing data back to the central office. While our field interviewers still play an integral role in our data collection, the methodology has changed greatly, moving first to telephone interviewing and then to computer-assisted telephone, personal, and self interviewing. As one of the oldest survey research organizations in the country, we are proud to say that we have been an integral part of our industry's development. As today's issues and problems become more complex and we need better and faster data, we at NORC have advanced the horizon of survey technology and methodology in order to provide the useful research and data that helps all of us sort through and understand the intricacies we face. In the pages that follow, you will see the progress we have made this year in enhancing and enriching not only our program of studies, but the way in which those studies are conducted. You will see that at NORC we continue to expand the horizon.

D e c e m b e r 1 9 9 6

At NORC, 1996 has been a year in which we have made many advances. These changes have been exciting, and we are extremely proud of the innovative work we have done. In addition to our large portfolio of survey research, we have added a new Research Vice President and a new Director for our Survey Operations Center. We have also conducted some truly original studies, and we are in the midst of several others whose results promise to be vital to their respective fields. Last year, we told you about some of our plans to enhance survey operations at NORC, and this year we are pleased to be able to share with you how we have made those plans become realities.

In the pages that follow, you will meet Michael Pergamit who has joined NORC after a distinguished career at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Mike will oversee all the projects in our new Economic Studies Division. You will also meet Robert Santos, our new Survey Operations Center Director, who came to NORC after serving as the Director of Survey Research at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. We are pleased and proud to have Mike and Rob with us and we look forward to their contributions to our research.

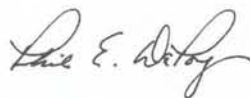
In last year's annual report, we introduced NORCSUITE, our new standardized survey research software, which was then only in prototype. This year, we are pleased to report that NORCSUITE is now in operation across most of our projects and performing very well. NORC has developed this integrated software to standardize our processes from start to finish. The software facilitates and automates the flow of data and information seamlessly. NORCSUITE is truly unique in the industry.

Another important addition this year has been our creation of the Project Support Office, a centralized office of support staff devoted to helping field interviewers conducting computer-assisted personal interviews. Through this office, our interviewers have access to help wherever they are and whenever they need it.

In terms of NORC's research, we will highlight a few of the studies you will read about below. In January, for example, we were honored to play a major role in the National Issues Convention (NIC), the first national deliberative poll conducted in the United States. The NIC brought together registered voters from across the country to discuss the issues and question the candidates on major issues. According to Professor James Fishkin, who organized the convention, the NIC "represents what the country would think if it were really engaged in the issues."

Also this year, we conducted HIV Risk Behavior in Drug Injector Risk Networks and HIV Transmission: A Prospective Study, a ground-breaking study that combines ethnographic, epidemiologic, and survey research methodologies. Our hallmark study, the General Social Survey, has gone on-line with a revolutionary web site that allows even novice users to search the GSS database. Finally, we are involved in an effort to redesign the Current Employment Statistics, one of the most important economic indicators in the United States.

In this annual report, you will learn more about these and other studies as we expand the horizons of survey knowledge, technology, and methodology.



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*In 1996, we welcomed
a new Research
Vice President and a
Director for our Survey
Operations Center, and
we would like to take
this opportunity to
introduce them
to you.*

Michael R. Pergamit,
Vice President for Economic Research

In August, Michael Pergamit joined NORC after a distinguished 13-year career at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Although he is based in our Washington D.C. office, Mr. Pergamit is no stranger to Chicago, having earned his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Chicago in 1983. For his last 10 years at BLS, Mr. Pergamit served as Director of Longitudinal Research, overseeing and managing the entire National Longitudinal Surveys Program, which includes the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience of 1979 (NLSY79), now in its 17th round, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97), the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, and the National Longitudinal Survey of Mature Women. Mr. Pergamit also maintained a research agenda that focused most recently on studying internal job mobility as well as methodological issues such as the effect of interview length on attrition. For his first three years at BLS, Mr. Pergamit was a Research Economist, responsible for reviewing procedures and analyses of the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, the Current Population Survey (CPS), the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, and the Mass Layoff Survey.

Mr. Pergamit worked very closely with NORC staff on the NLSY program, for which we have collected data since its inception in 1979. He was responsible for designing and developing the new National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) study that will add a new cohort to the NLS surveys. In addition to his work with NORC staff, while at BLS Mr. Pergamit had a great deal of interaction with other members of the research community, and he worked to ensure that these longitudinal programs met users' needs. To ensure that data from BLS longitudinal research were used to their fullest potential, Mr. Pergamit initiated, designed, and implemented a grant program for extramural research.

At NORC, Mr. Pergamit plans to expand our economic research program by developing a staff of researchers with a broad base of knowledge. He is especially interested in exploring the impact of welfare reform and studying the economics of education and the effects of school quality and school choice. In addition, he is developing our capacity to conduct economic evaluations of government

programs. Mr. Pergamit brings to NORC his knowledge of economics and analytical methods, his experience as a government project officer, as well as his extensive background in a variety of surveys, large panel datasets, and program management. We are pleased to have our former research partner as a member of the NORC team, and we look forward to the future of his new NORC division.

R o b e r t L . S a n t o s ,
Director of the Survey Operations Center

In July, Robert Santos joined NORC, taking over as Director of our Survey Operations Center (SOC). For seven years, Mr. Santos served as Director of Survey Operations at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center (SRC). During his tenure there, SRC converted from paper-and-pencil to computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) as their standard data collection protocol. Moreover, SRC's national data collection volume grew three-fold.

Prior to his appointment at Michigan, Mr. Santos spent seven years as a Senior Survey Director and Sampling Statistician at Temple University's Institute for Survey Research (ISR). At Temple ISR, he designed the samples of such surveys as the 1985 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, the National Survey of Families and Households, and the Latino National Political Survey.

Mr. Santos brings to NORC extensive experience in sampling, project management, survey methodology, and research administration. He has Total

Quality Management (TQM) training and experience applying TQM principles and practices to survey research. Mr. Santos is an active member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the American Statistical Association. In addition, he is currently serving a four-year term as a member of the Agency for Health Care Policy Research's Health Services Research Study Section, and he is an editorial board member for *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

Since joining NORC, Mr. Santos has worked to reestablish our Senior Survey Directors as the principal SOC survey management group. He is beginning strategic planning operations geared toward establishing more efficient and effective survey processes. Mr. Santos' philosophy is to incorporate staff input into decision-making, and to build consensus through involvement. We are pleased to have Mr. Santos at NORC, and we believe that under his leadership we will see some exciting new developments in our Survey Operations Center.

expanding the horizon of survey

methodology



and technology

The crowning achievement of our 1996 advances was the introduction of NORCSUITE, an integrated suite of standardized survey software that allows us to conduct surveys more efficiently and cost-effectively. Each of the five main software packages supports a major survey research function, and because the software is integrated, data and information can flow among them easily. Thus, NORCSUITE eliminates the need for costly and time-consuming unloading, reformatting, and reloading of data from one production task to the next.

NORCSUITE begins with NORCSM, an executive information and project management system. NORCSM allows Project Directors to interface with other NORCSUITE programs and to manage all aspects of a survey.

Next in line is NORCIDS, an instrument development system that provides a user-friendly interface for defining computer-assisted questionnaires in an efficient and standardized fashion. NORCIDS offers an item repository database, which stores all questionnaire items, including question text, answer categories, routing specifications, instructions, notes, bibliographic references, OMB clearance citations, and sample domain definitions. In addition, the repository includes the results of questionnaire editing and survey response analysis. These features enable us to reuse items, sections, and instruments in future surveys without reprogramming them. To date, NORCIDS has been used to program over 30 instruments, varying in complexity from simple 10-minute computer-assisted data entry (CADE) instruments to extremely complex 3-hour computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) instruments.

After a questionnaire has been designed and programmed, it is ready for our interviewing staff and NORCCMS, our case management system.

Telephone and Field Interviewers, as well as telephone, field shop, and central office management use NORCCMS to manage each individual case from start to finish. NORCCMS contains detailed data about every case and its current status, from which NORC staff can generate standard cost, production, and case status reports, as well as specialized reports that particular studies may require.

Once the surveys have been conducted, the data are loaded into NORCDAS, a data access system that enables users to review response data. NORCDAS allows users to select variables for frequency and cross-tabulation analysis. In addition, the software also allows users to create datasets in common formats.

Working in close conjunction with NORCDAS, NORCDEP, a data editing and processing system, supports the cleaning and editing of captured survey data. NORCDEP provides an easy-to-use interface for defining rules to manipulate the response data (post-capture edits) and to create derived variables. NORCDEP builds on the NORCIDS item repository with specific information for creating final, edited datasets.

In addition to these five main systems are three support systems: NORCECB, NORCCS, and NORCQT. NORCECB, our electronic codebook, contains a comprehensive description of a survey and its data, which allows users

to view, summarize, search, extract, and otherwise manipulate survey data. NORC coding staff use NORCCS, our coding system, which provides them with a standardized approach to extracting and coding open-ended response data to standard code frames. Finally, NORCQT is an enhanced version of WordPerfect for Windows, which NORC project staff use to create training documents in an efficient and standardized fashion. For training purposes, NORCQT converts the instrument into a WordPerfect document that looks exactly like the computer-assisted instrument that the interviewers will use.

The Project

Support

Center



The Project Support Center is primarily responsible for building and maintaining a technical support mechanism for the field staff. As more and more of our field data collection is done by computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), the Center helps field personnel with any computer-related difficulties they encounter, and maintains close ties to project and field staff to make sure that the right people address questions based on level of expertise and a pre-defined division of labor. In addition, the Center staff test instruments, produce training materials, and attend training sessions as trainers and observers. Attending the training sessions allows the members of the Center to take an active role in building and implementing the field support effort, and as partners gives them a stake in each project.

The Project Support Center offers a significant advantage for NORC and our field staff because there is now a single point of contact for personnel who are having difficulties with project-related tasks. When field staff have problems they can call our toll-free number. Many of the calls require general explanations of how to use NORC CAPI systems—typically they remind staff of issues covered in training. However, other calls are more complex and require help from other central office staff. The Center's staff have found that they can resolve most problems quickly, usually within an hour. And if they can't solve the problem themselves, they can quickly and effectively contact the appropriate personnel and

a single

point

solve almost all problems within the day. The Center's extended hours and "on-call" availability give our field staff virtually around-the-clock support.

The Center is in constant contact with the field staff and central office project staff, so they always stay abreast of project developments. In addition, they maintain a log and statistics on all calls so that we may track trends or perhaps problems that occur with certain kinds of hardware.

In addition to supporting our interviewers in the field, the Project Support Center is responsible for laptops: procuring, configuring, inventory, and maintenance. They regularly work with our computer purchasing staff to determine what types of laptops will be best for NORC. So from purchase to implementation, our new Project Support Center plays a major role in our computer-assisted interviewing.

examining public opinion

through



deliberative polling

Over the last year and a half, NORC has been honored to be involved with the **National Issues Survey and Follow-ups** and the **National Issues Convention**. For the University of Texas at Austin and Principal Investigator James Fishkin, in November of 1995, our Interviewers traveled to 387 neighborhoods across America to conduct the National Issues Survey, which asked respondents about the major issues facing the United States. This part of our work was absolutely standard, but what happened afterward can only be described as unique.

After interviewing nearly 1,000 respondents, our Interviewers persuaded approximately 500 of them to attend the National Issues Convention in Austin, Texas, the first deliberative poll ever conducted in the United States. Unlike normal polling, which measures pre-existing attitudes, a deliberative poll assesses what people think after they have been given information and had the opportunity to digest and discuss the issues. Convention delegates read discussion papers that summarized three positions on major issues, such as the economy, foreign policy, and family values. After familiarizing themselves with these issues, the delegates spent over nine hours discussing them in small groups. They then addressed questions to a panel of experts, and to Republican Presidential candidates Lamar Alexander, Senator Phil Gramm, Steve Forbes, and Senator Dick Lugar, and Democratic Vice President Al Gore. This last part of the convention, moderated by Jim Lehrer, was televised on PBS across the country.

national
issues

It is rare to bring an area-probability sample together, but by doing so, our respondents were able to meet others who represented all strata of American life and hear opinions and ideas from people with whom they would not ordinarily have contact. This was a type of social heterogeneity that people don't usually experience. As one University of Texas host noted, "America was walking off the planes." Retirees, young adults, housewives, executives, farmers, fishermen, rich, poor, black, white, well-educated, high-school drop-outs, they were all there and had the opportunity to represent others with similar backgrounds. Few welfare mothers know corporate executives, but in this setting they had the opportunity to hear from each other about how life choices were truly made, which changed many preconceived notions. The delegates often marveled at the respect shown for each other's views, and for many it was an intense emotional and intellectual experience. One delegate asked, "How did we get so close so fast? We talked more intimately than I ever did with friends!" And in terms of the survey, what was most striking between the baseline and the post-convention interviews was how many more delegates after the convention felt that they had worthwhile opinions about issues.

The candidates themselves were also impressed by the proceedings. While addressing the convention, Vice President Gore said, "I think it's a wonderful development. And if there's anybody in this group who wonders whether or not this is going anywhere or has accomplished anything, you should stop wondering because I think this has been a tremendous success and I think you've started something great here."

Although the convention itself is long over, NORC has just completed a post-election follow-up with the National Issues Survey respondents, and we are currently analyzing the results. In addition, we are discussing possibilities for future deliberative polls that will concentrate on single issues such as welfare reform and social security.

e c o n o m i c s t u d i e s

In September, NORC created a new Economic Studies Division and transferred several existing projects to this new area. The largest segment of research in this new division is the Department of Labor's NLS program. In addition, this division is also home to the Survey of Consumer Finance, a study of public policy priorities, and a study of ethnic business owners.

Under the sponsorship of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, NORC is conducting the **National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97)**. NORC is currently reviewing the results of the NLSY97 Field Test in preparation for the main study that will run from January to May, 1997. The Field Interviewers will screen approximately 96,000 households, using CAPI, in order to find 10,000 youths ages 12 to 16 years old. In addition, the survey will conduct interviews with a parent of each selected youth. This survey will provide information about young people making the transition into the labor market and adulthood, as well as their career and family formation.

In addition, in the summer of 1997 these youths will be administered the **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)**, which is sponsored by the Department of Defense. The ASVAB will also be administered to 6,000 youths who are 18 to 23 years old.

For the NLSY97 School Survey, we have mailed 8,000 school administrator questionnaires to schools in our 147 nonoverlapping Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) to collect information on school-to-work programs to assess the success in implementing school-to-work programs in schools.

NORC has recently completed Round 17 of the **National Longitudinal Survey of Youth**, which we have been conducting since 1979. Round 17 is the first round employing the new every-other-year (as opposed to annual) data collection strategy; furthermore, it also represents the first attempt to conduct follow-up interviews with the young adult respondents who were first identified during Round 16 data collection. CAPI data collection began in mid-May and was completed at the end of September. Interviews were conducted with a sample of 9,760 original main respondents, approximately 6,200 child study respondents (children of the female main respondents between the ages of 2 and 15), and approximately 2,000

young adult respondents (children of female respondents who are 15 years of age or older). NLS-17 was one of the first studies to manage all data collection activities with the new NORCCMS and has done so with excellent, cost-effective results.

Using a new sampling procedure, the count/list procedure, NORC conducted the **Contingent Valuation Public Policy Pilot Study** for the Environmental Economics Research Group in Portland, Spokane, and Salt Lake City. This study explores the interest of the public in certain public policy initiatives, such as cleaning polluted areas, by proposing a series of scenarios in which the respondent is asked to set priorities for using public funding. With the count/list procedure, the desired sample size was allocated across all selected PSU/segments, and, based on this allocation, NORC determined a sampling rate for each segment and the ordinal number of the first housing unit to be included in the sample. Field personnel went to each PSU/segment as if to list all the housing units; however, they actually listed only those housing units predetermined by the above parameters rather than every housing unit. Using this new procedure, we were able to conduct the listing component of this project in about one hour per segment (as compared to ten hours per segment using traditional listing procedures).

Interviewing in three different languages, NORC conducted the **Study of Ethnic Business Owners** in the city of Chicago. For this study, funded through an NSF grant to University of Michigan Professor Silvia Pedraza, we collected data on business owners' financial circumstances, sources of social support, and immigration history. A sample of 900 business

owners was drawn from Chamber of Commerce lists of six East Asian or Hispanic ethnicities, and questionnaires and supporting materials were translated into Chinese, Korean, and Spanish. The study's small budget and the formidable resistance within the target communities demanded creative, evolutionary data collection techniques. Initially fielded as a mail survey, this study increased its completion rate by exploiting telephone work, a "drive and deliver" strategy, and clustered in-person interviews. In "drive and deliver," trained NORC field staff drove to a site with a cluster of respondents, attempted to gain respondent cooperation, delivered questionnaires for self-administration, and then picked up the questionnaires at a later date. This method

exploits gaining cooperation techniques, a key strength of in-person interviewing, but is much less expensive because it combines several respondents into a single locating effort.

Conducted for the Federal Reserve Board, the **1995 Survey of Consumer Finances** surveyed U.S. households concerning their financial characteristics and behavior to provide guidance to policymakers in economic areas. The survey data will be used to calculate wealth accumulation in the country, as well as to model the effects of potential changes in taxation. Data were collected from a dual frame sample: a national area probability sample of households and a list sample known to include a high proportion of high-income households (in the top two percent of the American population). NORC delivered the final questionnaire and specialized coding data to the Federal Reserve Board in April of 1996. The delivery of data was significantly faster than in 1992 as a result of the use of laptops during data collection and the implementation of the NORCCS coding system.



assessing the development

of kindergarten-age

children

The **Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS)**, sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics, is an unprecedented study with the potential for landmark status. ECLS will inquire into the physical and socioemotional development of children as well as their cognitive development and school achievement, at a very early age and across a grade span for which national longitudinal data are largely lacking. In the fall of 1998, soon after the start of the school year, NORC will assess a cohort of 24,000 entering kindergartners in 1,000 public and private schools, while obtaining additional information from their teachers and parents. In the late spring of 1999, near the end of their kindergarten year, these students will be re-assessed and additional information collected from their parents and teachers, as well as school principals and school records. Under a future contract, follow-ups will take place in the spring of first through fifth grade, in the years 2000 through 2004.

ECLS will supply a general purpose dataset that will fulfill both descriptive and explanatory objectives. On the one hand, the study will

provide national data describing children's status at entry into school, transition into school, and progression through fifth grade. On the other hand, ECLS will enable researchers to study how a wide range of family, school, community, and individual variables affect early success in school. A supplemental study will identify a cohort of kindergartners who were enrolled in Head Start the previous school year and will also follow them through the

*unprecedented
study*

early grades. The four key issues to be addressed by ECLS are 1) school readiness, or children's status at entry into kindergarten; 2) children's transitions to kindergarten, first grade, and beyond; 3) the relationship between children's kindergarten experience and their elementary school performance; and 4) children's cognitive growth and progress through elementary school, and its correlates in the child's school, family, and community contexts.

Although the main study has not yet begun, NORC has been busy preparing for it. This year, we produced final versions of the various ECLS assessment batteries and questionnaires, conducted small-scale instrument and procedural pilots, as well as our fall field test in which we interviewed and conducted assessments with over 1,500 kindergartners. We are currently analyzing the fall field test and preparing for the spring field test.

Developing the instruments for this study has taken a massive effort. While the questionnaires have been constructed primarily by NORC, assessments have been developed with the help of the Educational Testing Service, the University of Michigan, and the University of Chicago. Instruments have been developed for kindergarten through second grade for children, parents, teachers, and school administrators, as well as archival records abstraction protocols. In addition, our team has developed direct assessment instruments involving social problem-solving vignettes, protocols for physical measurement needed to obtain anthropometric data such as height and weight, a psychomotor battery, cognitive assessments in mathematics, literacy and reading, and general knowledge (science and social studies). We have also developed indirect assessments to obtain information about students from their teachers or parents, such as ratings of socioemotional development and teacher ratings of cognitive development.

e d u c a t i o n s t u d i e s

In recent years, the federal role in education has continued to be most significant at the postsecondary level, reflecting in addition to research support, the heavy national investment in programs of education grants and loans for postsecondary students. A combination of factors—increases in college tuition at well above the rate of inflation, the increasingly high rate of economic return from a college degree, the perceived contribution of higher education to global competitiveness and national growth, pressures to limit federal spending, and continued concern with equality of opportunity for gender and racial/ethnic subgroups—has made postsecondary education statistics more necessary than ever. If the federal role in support of elementary and secondary education has been less clear, the interest in data at this level has been no less intense. The demand for national statistics has been fed by the desire to gauge the success of various school reform initiatives; to measure the impact of national, state, and local adoption of various content and performance standards for the curriculum and for assessments; and the wish to determine the degree of progress toward various national education goals. The movement toward setting educational standards and goals has particularly underlined the need for both descriptive and explanatory information.

Our federal clients realize that data are needed not just to measure progress toward implementing new standards and achieving national goals, but also, data are needed about educational processes to explain, for example, how and why goals are or are not being achieved. Our federal clients have also placed increasing stress on depicting the full context—community, family,

school—in which learning takes place and on approaching student learning and development from a holistic perspective that takes into account physical and health factors and social and emotional development, as well as cognitive growth. Our federal clients have put renewed emphasis on improved products that reflect advances in computing as they apply both to data collection and data dissemination, advances in statistical methodology, and in enhanced capacity to elicit valid and reliable information from informants through the application of our growing knowledge of cognitive science.

Conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics, the **Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B)** examines federal financial aid policy questions concerning the long-term impact of educational debt. B&B is the first study to explore how undergraduate debt affects students' subsequent

decisions concerning graduate study, employment, and family formation. B&B selected a national sample of 11,500 students who graduated from college in 1992-1993 and will follow these respondents for a period of 12 years, interviewing them at three- or four-year intervals. NORC conducted the first follow-up of B&B in 1994 and will conduct the second follow-up in April of 1997. B&B is NORC's first CATI-CAPI effort, which means that approximately 75 percent of respondents will be contacted from the telephone center, and all cases pending at the end of CATI data collection will be referred to Field Interviewers for CAPI follow-up. In NORC's field test this past summer, the transfer of cases from one mode to the other went extremely smoothly: two days after ending CATI data collection the laptops with the instrument and all call records for pending cases were available for field interviewer training. NORC's development of NORCCMS, which is used by both telephone and field applications, greatly enabled this efficient transfer.

College and Beyond (C&B) is currently being completed under a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It is one component of a larger Foundation research agenda on American higher education, designed in part to examine how students' undergraduate experiences and achievements in academic and non-academic areas contribute to their later professional and personal success and satisfaction. Mellon chose Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., to design, mail, and analyze paper-and-pencil (PAPI) surveys from a large sample of students who entered one of 32 selective liberal arts colleges and universities in either 1951 or 1976 (i.e., cohorts 25 years apart). NORC was asked to provide a control group of individuals who were approximately 18 years of age in those same years but who had different educational backgrounds—non-high school graduates, high school graduates only, community college enrollees, or enrollees at four-year colleges/universities other than one of the 32 institutions selected for the main study. To conduct this study, NORC converted the PAPI instrument to CATI, and completed over 4,000 CATI interviews in three months. Respondents were asked about their educational and family backgrounds, employment history, involvement in community activities, and their attitudes about schooling, work, and life.

Sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics with additional support from the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the **1992-93 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF-93)** is the most comprehensive survey ever conducted of higher education instructional and noninstructional full-time and part-time faculty. The first cycle of NSOPF was conducted in 1987-88 with a sample of 480 two-year, four-year, doctoral-granting, and other colleges and universities, over 3,000 department

chairs, and over 11,000 faculty. This second cycle, conducted by NORC, was substantially expanded to sample approximately 1,000 public and private non-profit higher education institutions and over 31,000 faculty across all types of teaching disciplines. The study provides a national profile of faculty: their professional backgrounds, responsibilities, workloads, salaries, benefits, and attitudes. In 1993 and 1994, NORC completed two NSOPF-93 surveys—one of faculty and one of institutions. However, it became clear that discrepancies exist for faculty estimates between the faculty and institution datasets, and between the NSOPF-88 (conducted by a different contractor) and NSOPF-93 datasets. Thus, NORC has prepared and implemented specifications for new weighting procedures. In addition to analytic reports being prepared for NCES, NORC and Pelavin Research Institute will prepare reports for the National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Also sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics, the **National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/94), Third Follow-up** was conducted in 1994, at which time over 14,000 members of a subsample of the second follow-up sample were surveyed with an unweighted response rate of 94 percent. In 1996, NORC saw the end of the third follow-up contract, which culminated in the publication of analysis and methodological reports and the release of three CD-ROMs spanning the base year to third follow-up. The *NELS:88 Third Follow-up Descriptive Summary Report*, focusing on the issues of access and choice in postsecondary education, received nationwide attention when the *New York Times* published the results. A second NORC report, the third follow-up methodological report, was

published by the U.S. Department of Education in 1996. In addition to these reports, data continued to be analyzed by government policy analysts and university-based researchers. The number of published articles, doctoral dissertations, presentations, and reports using NELS:88 data continues to grow, with nearly 300 entries in the current NELS:88 bibliography. NELS:88 data address such questions as: how does early access to algebra affect long-term gains in mathematics achievement? How comparatively effective are magnet schools, Catholic schools, and secular private schools, in increasing the achievement of urban high school students? Which racial/ethnic groups are more likely to take advantage of opportunities to choose among public schools? How does school climate influence gender differences in the achievement and engagement of adolescents? And how does parental involvement affect student achievement?

l o c a t i n g w i t h s o c i a l n e t w o r k s

a n d

o n - l i n e r e s o u r c e s



Our data collection support contract with the **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)** has undergone significant growth this past year—we have completed one study and initiated activities for ten additional studies. With all these studies running simultaneously, we have had to be extremely creative to balance all the challenges. Perhaps the most interesting innovations have taken place in our locating efforts. For some of the larger studies, we have worked to transfer some of the field locating techniques to our telephone centers. NORC Field Interviewers have been successfully using social networks in addition to traditional techniques to locate our respondents, and on these ATSDR studies our Telephone Interviewers have taken these same techniques and combined them with CD-ROM and Internet searches with equal success.

Our Field Interviewers are renowned throughout the industry for their ability to locate and interview elusive populations, but their exhaustive efforts can be extremely time-consuming, especially on large studies. The size and rapid turnaround required for these ATSDR studies have made finding new ways to conduct these searches more efficiently an absolute must. Using CD-ROMs and Internet services, NORC Telephone Interviewers have successfully and efficiently turned our telephone centers into locating centers. We also expect to expand these activities greatly as more and more public records become available on-line.

i n n o v a t i v e

For **ATSDR Hanford Locating**, NORC must locate the children born in the same time frame from the three counties with the highest risk of exposure to iodine-131 from the Hanford (WA) Nuclear Reservation. NORC's locating effort is beginning with 50-year-old birth certificates, and we are in the process of acquiring regional records databases on-line in order to build a single database from which we can build a profile that can be matched to our sample. Our approach to the difficult task of locating these 17,000 adults has also greatly benefitted from the efforts of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center's study of thyroid disorders related to exposure to iodine-131.

For the **Kellogg Young Adult 1995 Follow-up**, a telephone effort to trace and locate young adults and women workers from Kellogg, Idaho, NORC used traditional locating approaches to contact sample members on the original list. However, as in most locating efforts, some sample members remained unlocatable. At this point, NORC tried something new, a "snowball" approach, using social networks within Kellogg to locate the rest of the sample. By contacting civic leaders and working in local gathering places—coffee shops, parks, taverns, salons—NORC was able to find leads and information that allowed them to locate the entire sample. For example, one interviewer was able to locate a sample member with the help of a waiter who told him when the man usually arrived. In another instance, this method helped us locate a woman who had remarried, changed her name, and moved out of state. These advances have made a great impact on our ATSDR work, and we look forward to applying them to other studies.

public health
and environmental studies

This year was an extremely busy one for the Public Health and Environmental Studies Division. In addition to beginning several new task orders for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, NORC has also begun the fifth round of the Air Force Health Study, and continued work on two gun violence studies, a study of adolescent health, and a study of DES.

Gun Violence and Physicians' Experience: A National Study examined the experiences, patient counseling practices, and attitudes toward gun violence of members of both the American College of Physicians and the American College of Surgeons. To this end, NORC conducted a national telephone survey using random samples from lists of both Colleges' members. As part of the interview, NORC gathered information on the respondents' clinical experiences with victims of gun violence; their awareness of gun-related issues and concerns; their particular patient counseling practices with respect to gun safety; and their attitudes about various proposed policy options to reduce the number of injuries caused by firearms. In the analysis phase of the project, NORC was charged with providing answers to the ACP's research questions; specifically, NORC sought to determine whether physicians and surgeons considered firearm injuries a public health problem, whether the ACP and ACS should push to limit access to guns, and whether the Colleges should adopt a particular public policy stance on gun control issues.

The other gun violence study, sponsored by the National College of Physicians and the Joyce Foundation, the **National Survey on Gun Violence and Gun Policy**, is a national survey of the general population on issues related to gun policy. The creation of public policy, particularly in its legislative form, is influenced to some extent by existing data, but is also strongly influenced by loud, well-funded voices on both sides claiming to speak for the American people. Too little is known about the opinions of the general public on certain critically important and timely gun-policy issues. A review of public opinion polls on gun policy conducted between 1987 and 1992 revealed that the surveys focused mainly on the sale and possession of guns. Surveys during that period did not adequately assess the public's opinion on topics such as the design and manufacture of guns, or the licensure and taxation of gun sellers. In an attempt to fill this void, NORC will address these issues and attempt to answer the following questions: Should gun manufacturers be held responsible in

litigation for the injuries caused by their products? Should the federal government limit the number of handguns that can be purchased? Should there be a federal agency that regulates the design of handguns? If guns were marketed as "safe" (e.g., a childproof gun) would people who presently do not have a handgun in their home now purchase one?

The **Prospective Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health** is conducted for Principal Investigator Richard Udry at the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The study explores how the social and physical environment, family life, school experience, and interpersonal relationships affect adolescent health. This study began with an in-school component in 1994-95 in which 96,000 students were surveyed. Late in 1995, NORC completed its most ambitious field data collection effort to date, Wave I of the in-home component. Some 20,777 adolescents were interviewed using computer-assisted personal interviewing and audio computer-assisted self interviewing (CAPI/ACASI). Adolescents were also administered an abridged Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Finally, a parent, typically the mother of the adolescent, was interviewed using paper-and-pencil interviewing. Between April and September 1996, NORC conducted Wave II of the in-home component. Over 14,700 adolescents who participated in Wave I were re-interviewed using CAPI/ACASI. NORC is currently preparing the data file, weights, and a Wave II methodology report.

The **DES and Cancer of the Vagina/Cervix Collaborative Studies** are the result of the efforts of consumer groups, diethylstilbestrol (DES)-exposed individuals, and the scientific community to revitalize DES research in the face of dwindling interest and resources. The National Cancer Institute is

currently funding three studies to investigate the impact of DES, a nonsteroidal estrogen first synthesized in 1938 and widely used to prevent miscarriages from the mid-1940s to the early 1970s. In 1971, Dr. Arthur L. Herbst et al. published a paper that demonstrated a connection between the use of DES during pregnancy and the occurrence of clear cell adenocarcinoma of the vagina in daughters whose mothers had taken DES. These findings were soon confirmed in another study, and the use of DES during pregnancy became contraindicated by the FDA. Since then, over 600 cases of clear cell adenocarcinoma in women born after 1938 have been reported to a registry established at the University of Chicago; approximately two-thirds of these women have documented exposure to DES or similar estrogens. This case/control study is being conducted by

Principal Investigator Herbst of the University of Chicago in collaboration with investigators at Boston University and Baylor College of Medicine.

NORC, along with Scientific Applications International Corporation (SAIC) and the Scripps Clinic, have just begun work on the fifth round of the **Air Force Health Study**. This will be the third time that NORC has been involved in this longitudinal study of the potential long-term health effects of exposure to Agent Orange during military service. This study, which has been cited as a "textbook" example of an epidemiological cohort investigation, compares the health of Air Force personnel who were involved with aerial dissemination of herbicides in Vietnam from 1962 to 1971 (as part of Operation Ranch Hand) to a group of unexposed comparisons matched on age, race, and military occupation. The study respondents are subject to a series of physical examinations and in-depth health interviews. Baseline interviews and examinations were completed with each participant in 1982, and follow-up interviews and examinations were completed in 1985, 1987, and 1992. NORC has three major roles in the 1997 Air Force Health Study: conducting the telephone effort to contact and recruit study respondents; developing the 1997 follow-up questionnaire, based on those used in previous rounds of the survey; and conducting the in-person health interviews at the examination site in La Jolla, California. In the 1997 study, for the first time, the in-person health interviews will be conducted using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI).

Above, we talked about the locating efforts undertaken on our **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)** contract. In addition to these studies, we conducted eight additional studies, each with its own interesting aspects.

In 1996, we completed the **National Exposure Registry (NER), VOC's Subregistry (TCA, TCE, and Benzene Subsets) and Dioxins Subregistry**. The National Exposure Registry is a long-term effort to collect information concerning the impact of hazardous substances on human health. The registry, which consists of multiple subregistries, is a listing of people exposed to selected hazardous substances. At the time they are enrolled, subregistry members are interviewed to collect baseline health and demographic data. To assess long-term health effects, periodic follow-ups of registrants are conducted to update the baseline information. For the 1995 NER Follow-up, we completed 6,993 CATI interviews for a 92 percent response rate and a 96 percent participation rate. In addition, we developed a CAPI version of the baseline questionnaire.

We have recently begun activities for a pilot study, **Otis ANGB**, to determine the feasibility of identifying and locating a subset of the children, teachers, and school workers for the three schools located on the Otis Air National Guard Base during the 1970s. The base, located on Cape Cod, is on the National Priorities List due to exposures related to the disposal of munitions and fuels on the base. This is our fourth data collection effort related to exposure at this site. At the request of the community, this feasibility study will be completed within three months. The results of the feasibility efforts—namely the success of locating these residents of the Cape having only limited information—will assist ATSDR in determining whether to undertake a large-scale effort to locate and interview students.

We previously described the **Hanford Locating** effort, which is being done in preparation for the **Hanford Infant Morbidity and Mortality Analysis**. This study will require NORC to abstract approximately 90,000 birth and infant death records (from 1939 to 1951) for an eight county area surrounding the Hanford, Washington Nuclear Reservation. These eight counties represent a mixture of high to low risk of exposure to iodine-131 releases. Following the abstraction and matching of these records, we will code the cause of death for infant death certificates as well as industry and occupation of both parents from all birth certificates. In addition, NORC will perform Geographic Information System (GIS) coding of these 40- to 50-year-old addresses for maternal residence at birth, and we will assign an exposure status to that address based on the dose reconstruction performed by Batelle Pacific Northwest. The challenge of this GIS coding effort will center on the age and obsolescence of the addresses. This work order represents the first step in completing the large scale study of residents in the counties surrounding the Hanford site.

The final Hanford-related activities are being conducted as the **Hanford Registry Baseline**. Phase I of this study involves the review and analysis of the dose-risk estimates derived by Batelle Pacific Northwest for exposure risk through the Columbia River pathway. This phase is largely a subcontract being performed by SENES Oak Ridge, experts in radioactive exposure risk analysis. Phase II will be a simultaneous mixed-mode (CAPI/CATI) health conditions history interview with the Hanford Locating sample. Unlike most mixed-mode studies, the CAPI/CATI efforts will be simultaneous in an effort to make data collection as efficient as possible.

We recently began working on the **Wilms' Tumor Study**, which is designed to examine the associations between Wilms' Tumor (WT) risk and environmental exposures, specifically from hazardous waste sites, as well as parental occupational exposures. We will identify eligible cases from ATSDR-supplied sample files from 10 state-based tumor registries, locate and identify eligible participants (the parents of WT cases), administer data collection instruments to eligible participants and a control group using CATI technology, and perform real-time, case-control matching. The study will offer some interesting challenges because of its subject matter. When Interviewers screen potential respondents, they normally have some time to ease their way into sensitive questions. But for this study, these uncomfortable questions will need to be asked very early and our Interviewers will need to develop techniques that will be sensitive to these parents' feelings.

The **Hazardous Waste Workers Surveillance Project**. For this study, NORC traced, located, and conducted CATI follow-up interviews with hazardous waste workers. The follow-up questionnaire covered a wide range of diseases and symptoms, occupational history (including details of hazardous waste work performed), non-occupational exposures (e.g., personal habits such as cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption), diseases and injuries, and reproductive history. Approximately 35 percent of the sample of 4,500 construction workers required extensive locating. Currently, we project a final completion rate of 76 percent. In addition, based on our performance of the 1995-96 follow-up effort, ATSDR has recently awarded NORC the 1996-97 follow-up effort, which will include the addition of 900 baseline interviews completed last year.

This past year, we also began activities on **Cancer Morbidity and Mortality at National Exposure Registry Sites** (Rockford, Illinois; Times Beach, Missouri; Tomball, Texas). With ATSDR, we designed a case/control study to examine the relationship of documented toxic substance exposure to cancer morbidity and mortality at selected National Priority sites. The execution of the analytic plan has been subcontracted to Analytical Sciences, Incorporated.

We have recently begun work on the **1997 Update of the National Exposure Registry**. This effort is the next follow-up of members of the Exposure Registry described above. Our goal for this effort is to further enhance the systems previously used for the study by integrating NORCSUITE components and to surpass our previous participation and completion rates.



studying a national probability

sample of HIV

patients and their doctors

They said it couldn't be done. But in collaboration with the RAND Corporation, NORC is conducting the **HIV Cost and Services Utilization Survey (HCSUS)**, the first national probability study of HIV patients and medical providers, for the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR). HCSUS surveys a national probability sample of people who are being treated for HIV infection and their medical providers about the use and cost of medical and nonmedical services. The study will interview patients and providers four times over an eighteen month period, and because the doctors and patients are enrolled and interviewed on an ongoing basis, we have overlapping waves of data collection. In other words, the first follow-up interviews began while we were still enrolling providers and patients.

The biggest obstacle to conducting a study of this sort is gaining the cooperation of so many randomly selected medical providers and patients. Because of the confidentiality issues that are a major concern for both HIV

patients and their doctors, as well as the difficulty of interviewing doctors who are always busy, our staff members have had to be especially innovative in order to make this study a success.

The study begins by enrolling doctors into the sample, so to help our Field Interviewers gain their cooperation, our team has hired well-known local doctors to act as Site Captains. These Site Captains work to convince doctors in the area to join the study and to address any doubts and overcome any obstacles that might prevent the doctors

*the first study
of its kind*

from participating. And when our Field Interviewers and Site Captains are unable to avert a refusal, the Principal Investigators, Dr. Martin Shapiro (UCLA) and Dr. Sam Bozzette (RAND), work hard to enroll these providers. These extraordinary efforts by our Field Interviewers, Site Captains, and Principal Investigators have allowed us to exceed our enrollment goal. In addition, our Field Interviewers have had to be ingenious about finding patients who have changed doctors and/or have moved to other locations.

During the first follow-up interview, the patients are administered a mental health screener, from which we are choosing a sample and control group for a study on HIV patients' mental health. NORC will also be collecting and abstracting patient medical, billing, and pharmacy records for consenting patients.

h e a l t h c a r e s t u d i e s

This was a year of high volume data collection for NORC's largest health study—the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS)—along with important activity on other projects that addressed issues of the highest sensitivity—AIDS treatment, the life circumstances of terminally ill patients, and physician attitudes and behavior toward assisted suicide. For the sixth consecutive year, NORC conducted the Survey on Best Hospitals for *U.S. News & World Report*. This high profile project again expanded its scope, with a new analysis of HMO quality of care, done in conjunction with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Funded by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR), the **Medical Expenditure Panel Study (MEPS)** project (formerly known as NMES) continues as the latest in a series of national health care expenditure surveys that began in the 1970s. The results of the prior surveys have been used to provide national estimates of health care use, medical expenditures, and health insurance; to document major changes in health care delivery, health insurance, and the cost of health care; and to analyze health care policy with respect to these changes. In the past 12 months, the MEPS contractors have acquired and contacted a national sample of households from the NHIS frame maintained by NCHS, completed Round 1 CAPI interviews with 83 percent of these households, and are currently proceeding with Round 2. In collaboration, the contractors have designed forms and procedures for the Medical Provider Survey (MPS), and during the spring and summer of 1996, NORC Telephone Interviewers have completed a MPS pretest. The main MPS survey will begin in early 1997 and successive rounds of the MEPS Household Survey will continue.

Again this year, NORC completed *U.S. News & World Report's*

Survey on Best Hospitals in which we scored the performance of over 1,600 tertiary-care hospitals on quality of care. The results were published in the August 12, 1996 edition of the magazine, and detailed methodology for NORC's Index of Hospital Quality will appear in a future issue of the journal *Inquiry*. Perhaps more significantly, NORC also developed a Preventive Care Index to show how the nation's HMOs rate in providing preventive care to their patients. NORC's index scores the difference between an HMO's actual percentage of patients receiving care and the published, HHS-derived Healthy People 2000 targets for such preventive treatments as childhood immunizations, mammography screenings, and cervical cancer screenings. Using data

collected by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), NORC calculated how far, in sum, each HMO was from the target. Results appeared in the September 2, 1996 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*.

Funded by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, the **Survey of Family Health Experiences** examines access to health care and insurance problems of families in the United States. The data will provide important information about the effects on families of changes in the health care delivery system. The first-year data collection was conducted in person in the fall of 1995; follow-up interviews by telephone will be conducted annually and will document changes in coverage, access, and income. By taking the longitudinal perspective—examining the health access and insurance problems and experiences of sample members over the course of several years—the study will address these issues in greater depth than would be possible with a cross-sectional survey. The longitudinal, household-based design is especially appropriate given that the health care problems people face vary with changing life circumstances, and the perceptions they develop about the health care system are influenced by family experience at least as much as by individual experience.

Sponsored by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and conducted in conjunction with Principal Investigator Karen Donelan of the Harvard University School of Public Health, **Getting Behind the Numbers** studied respondents who were either uninsured for a time, reported a problem paying for medical care, or reported a problem obtaining medical care. Kaiser's goal in funding the study was to "get behind the numbers": while the public is becoming familiar with the fact that there are over 35 million uninsured people in the United States, the Foundation wished to gather and present details about how being uninsured impacts everyday lives. To that end, NORC

collected and coded verbatim responses regarding the "consequences" of these issues. Results from this study were reported in the October, 1996 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Analysis is currently underway to measure change in the respondents' lives over time.

Funded by the Commonwealth and Nathan Cummings Foundations, the **Study of Terminally Ill Patients** examines the quality of the health care experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of terminally ill patients and their caregivers by means of personal interviews. Developmental work and field tests were completed in the fall of 1995. Field Managers and Interviewers have been recruited and

trained for four of the six designated sites: Worcester, St. Louis, Tucson, and Birmingham. The Principal Investigators, Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel and Dr. Linda Emanuel, contact physicians, and gain their cooperation and participation as well as recruit patient respondents. The field work began at the first site in March, and NORC started interviews with patients in the remaining sites—Brooklyn and Mesa—in October and December, 1996. The study design includes follow-up interviews with surviving patients or bereaved caregivers during the first six months of 1997.

The **Survey of End-of-Life Practices** is a national survey of physicians' attitudes and behavior concerning physician-assisted suicide and voluntary active euthanasia. The study has two major goals: to estimate prevalence rates of physician-assisted suicide and voluntary active euthanasia in a national probability sample of physicians, and to describe the characteristics of physicians and patients involved in acts of physician-assisted dying. The Greenwall Foundation is the primary funder with additional support provided by the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation. The self-administered questionnaire was mailed to a nationally-representative sample of 3,100 physicians in specialties that tend to treat a higher proportion of patients who are terminally ill.

Sponsored by the American Medical Association (AMA), **Physicians and Family Violence** is a developmental study to assess how physicians identify and treat patients who have dealt with family violence. While assessing these patients should be a standard part of a patient's history, how physicians identify and treat violence is uneven, and there are extremely important issues surrounding the consequences of treating both the physical and emotional effects of violence. In addition, this study is also exploring the effects of experience, stress, and violence on physicians' practices and their personal and home lifestyles. NORC has recruited a panel of mental health professionals and will develop a questionnaire and conduct physician interviews and focus groups. NORC and the AMA hope that this study will lead to a larger-scale national study of physicians and family violence in the future.

r e d e s i g n i n g e c o n o m i c

i n d i c a t o r s



The **Current Employment Statistics (CES)** program's monthly estimates of employment and production statistics are among America's most important leading economic indicators. The CES is used by the White House, Congress, the Federal Reserve Board, and the states to judge the health of the economy, earning trends, and inflation. In addition, the CES is also used as part of other major economic indicators such as Personal Income, the Index of Leading Economic Indicators, and Industrial Production. Produced through a cooperative agreement between the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the states, the CES is a survey of business establishments' employment rates, and as the first economic indicator of trends each month, it is extremely important that it be accurate and representative. However, in the last few years, the CES has experienced some disturbing estimate revisions after unemployment figures were released. Thus, an independent panel of experts from the American Statistical Association has recommended a number of changes to the decades-old program to bring it up to current statistical standards. NORC, as a subcontractor to the state of Illinois, is part of the team recruited by the BLS to implement these changes and redesign a program that has remained virtually unchanged since the 1930s. The CES was established long before the advent of probability sampling, and we hope that through improved sampling and estimation methods we can help these figures more accurately

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portray the complex employment picture. The team is currently designing a probability sample, a method for incorporating new business establishments more quickly, and improved estimation processes.

NORC first provided a framework for the steps in estimation, and then proceeded to address specific steps in the process. BLS has tested NORC's proposed estimator for employment in simulations, and the estimator is planned for implementation. NORC has also recommended procedures for estimating the variances of employment estimates. We provided BLS with input on the sample design and highlighted quality issues relating the CES variables with auxiliary information. Currently, we are working on improved estimators for the production statistics.

BLS has recently announced that funds are available to extend our work beyond the original time frame. In addition, we will also be working to develop estimators for states to produce employment estimates for smaller geographic areas and other custom domains beyond the scope of BLS' program.

s t a t i s t i c s a n d m e t h o d o l o g y
r e s e a r c h

The Statistics and Methodology Division continued to grow in strength and capability in order to fuel and support NORC's growth. During the past 12 months, we increased our staff to meet the demands of current and new projects, and we built and standardized some of the company's production processes in order to operate more efficiently with higher quality.

In 1996, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) sponsored NORC's **Sample Design for a Statistically Valid Evaluation of Accuracy and Completeness of an Establishment's OSHA Mandated Employer Records**, which reviewed previous pilot work assessing the accuracy of OSHA record-keeping in order to recommend a statistically valid and cost effective evaluation scheme and sampling strategy for further evaluation. For this study, NORC developed options for data sampling as well as a complete sampling design, confidence interval specifications, sample size contingencies based on statistical power considerations, and annotated tables for use by field staff in selecting and reviewing records.

Under a contract from the National Center for Health Statistics, NORC conducted three **Sensitive Topics** studies designed to assess respondents' perceptions of risk and loss when reporting sensitive information in surveys. The first study judged whether a respondent would respond truthfully, and what risks and losses the respondent would perceive when asked about an abortion during a survey interview. The second study asked subjects to view a videotape of a staged interview about abortion in a respondent's house. Using changing scenarios—a respondent home alone or with her family,

Interviewer or self-administered questionnaire, and Interviewers who were the same age or older than the respondent—subjects were asked to report how the respondent would answer and how she would judge risks and losses associated with truthful responding. In the third study, NORC interviewed respondents recruited from a women's health clinic about their pregnancies and abortions, and asked them questions about their own perceptions of risks and losses associated with truthful responding. With the respondents' permission, NORC collected abortion information from the health clinic in order to validate responses.

NORC found in each of these three studies that concerns about disclosure to immediate family outweighed concerns about disclosure in a general sense (e.g., people within government agencies learning individual answers to sensitive questions). There is some evidence to support the notion that if respondents express concerns before the interview, and are allowed to rate those concerns in terms of likelihood, they will admit to themselves that what they are concerned about is unlikely to happen and will then be more truthful in their reporting.

Sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics and the National Immunization Program, **Research on Response Errors in Survey Questions of Children's Immunization** attempts to pinpoint the sources of error in parents' reports about their children's vaccinations and to explore methods for improving the accuracy of those reports. Two methodological studies have been completed so far and a third one is in progress. The first study consisted of interviews with parents as they were leaving the pediatrician's office, just after their child had been immunized. Even at that point, most parents had difficulty naming the vaccines the child had received that day. A second study compared several different sets of vaccination questions; unfortunately, none of them improved the accuracy of the parents' reports. (We assessed accuracy by comparing the parents' reports with physician records of the child's vaccinations.) The final study, which is still in the field, examines whether parents can answer questions about the frequency of their visits to the pediatrician. Responses to these questions may give a better indication of whether a child has received all the recommended vaccinations rather than questions that directly ask which vaccinations a child has received.

Under a subcontract from Battelle Institute, NORC is writing a series of reports for **Department of Transportation Task Orders** to help local transportation planning agencies conduct longitudinal personal transportation surveys. The project is sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration to assist local planning agencies and to promote standardization in travel surveys.

One report will be a primer on panel surveys; another will examine methods for reducing nonresponse; a third will look at methods for compensating for nonresponse.

This year, we worked with **Fannie Mae** and **Freddie Mac**, stockholder-owned corporations chartered by Congress, whose mandate is to

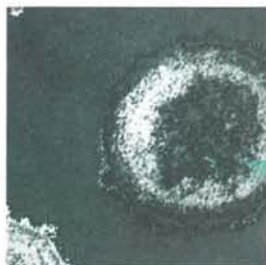
buy investment-quality mortgages from lenders and thus increase the supply of money available to home buyers and multi-family investors. The mortgages are repackaged as securities and sold to investors such as insurance companies and pension funds. The Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight (OFHEO), which regulates both corporations, recently selected a "benchmark mortgage experience" consisting of approximately 10,000 mortgages originated in 1983 and 1984 in the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Oklahoma from which it will draw inferences about default and severity rate. Both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac believe, however, that inferences drawn from these data are flawed because they reflect inappropriate assumptions about the sample and because appropriate adjustments have not been made. Thus, NORC is analyzing the properties of the benchmark mortgage experience data and evaluating the validity of using this group of loans to forecast future default and severity rates.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is considering a plan called **IL-Elk** to reintroduce elk into state parks in southern Illinois in order to attract more tourists and sportsmen from other parts of the state. As part of the approval process, the Department of Natural Resources asked NORC to conduct a mail survey of state residents concerning the plan.

In the early 1970s, NORC developed the **Automated National Sampling Package (ANSPACK)** to maintain the NORC National Sampling Frame and to draw area probability samples of housing units for surveys. The software has gone through some revision over the years due to changing computer environments. For example, in 1993, NORC rewrote ANSPACK in the PC-based Paradox database management system. This version performs many of the originally intended functions, however, the number of sampling frames and the size of the housing unit listing files has grown beyond what this simple

application could handle. To assure that we maintain high quality data, and with an eye towards future growth, we have begun an upgrade process for ANSPACK. NORC has transferred all relevant data into one common Paradox database, which will eventually be transferred into NORC's enterprise database management system, Informix. Once the database is built, software will be developed to access and manipulate the data. These tools will perform such tasks as building frames, sampling from frames, replenishing depleted frames, and checking the quality of the data.

combining



analyzing HIV risk

and transmission

in social networks

Although research has been done on both HIV risk behavior and social networks, **HIV Risk Behavior in Drug Injector Risk Networks and HIV Transmission: A Prospective Study** is the first study to combine epidemiological and ethnographic methods with CAPI-based survey data collection methods and innovative network sampling and statistical analysis techniques. This study sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) was conducted in carefully selected neighborhoods in Chicago and Washington, D.C. The results led us to formulate a Resource Access theory on how microeconomic and power relationships in social networks affect the risk of transmission of the AIDS virus through needle sharing and unprotected sex.

Rather than studying drug users' individual behaviors, NORC's study focused on the dyadic relationships among group members to see how these relationships affected individuals' behavior. We focused on the sexual and drug injection networks of individual drug users to better understand the factors

that contribute to the initiation, continuation, and reduction of HIV risk behavior and to explain why injection drug users (IDUs) are not equally at risk of HIV infection even when they are involved in similar types of risk behavior.

Some of our initial findings are quite striking. For example, female IDUs were less represented in drug injection networks. Their

methodologies
in new ways

links to the network were usually established through a male IDU. But their link to and reliance on their male partners put them at significant risk because of the substantial amount of unsafe sex and injection behaviors in which they engaged. And while African-American IDUs reported similar overall levels of risky injection behavior as white and Hispanic IDUs, African-American networks included a substantially higher percentage of members engaged in risky injection behavior than white, Hispanic, or mixed-ethnicity networks.

substance abuse, mental health, and disability studies

NORC has a history of important contributions to research on alcohol, drug, and mental health problems and physical disabilities. Today our portfolio of substance abuse, mental health, and disability studies includes more than a dozen contracts and grants involving data collection, analysis, and dissemination, qualifying NORC as a significant national presence in the relevant research community. In 1996, our work fell into four main areas: analytical studies; local epidemiological studies; program evaluations; and panel studies for outside Principal Investigators (PIs).

1992-93 Reports on Drug Use (RDU) from the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) was a 28-month contract from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), under which we completed two *Main Findings* reports, numerous quick turn-around analytical projects, and disseminated about 100 sets of public use tapes or CDs of the NHSDA. In addition, we completed four research monographs: *Trends in Incidence of Drug Use in the United States, 1919-1992*; *Drug Use Among U.S. Workers: Prevalence and Trends by Occupation and Industry*; *The Relationship Between Family Structure and Adolescent Drug Use*; and *The Prevalence and Correlates of Treatment for Drug Problems* (please see the bibliography for complete citations). The findings from these studies were striking and received public attention. The *Workers* study gained widespread press attention last spring, finding that prevalence of drug use in the work force has dropped substantially over the previous decade and that prevalence is lowest among law enforcement officers, teachers, and health technicians, and highest in construction, food service, and blue-collar occupations.

The *Family Structure* report also gained public attention because of its striking findings, showing that the risks of adolescent drug use and dependence are generally highest in families with:

- a biological or adoptive father and no mother or stepmother
- a biological or adoptive father and a stepmother
- a married adolescent and his or her spouse
- a single mother living with a nonrelative
- a single mother

Adolescents living with two biological or adoptive parents have the lowest risk of drug use of any family type. This finding supports research that shows that adolescents living with two biological parents also have the lowest risks of school dropout, teenage pregnancy, and delinquency. The report also shows that mother-only families have a more adverse effect on the risk of drug use among girls than among boys. In addition, regardless of family type, black adolescents have a lower risk of past-year substance use and dependence than either white or Hispanic adolescents.

The *Incidence* study was the first analysis comparing multiple types of drug-use incidence over a long time period. Due to timing and precision limits, the analysis did not include the teenage cohort whose drug use is now attracting so much interest; but this report paints a very clear picture of changing drug-use patterns among youths by previous cohorts. We have continued to apply cohort analysis methods to the NHSDA data, and we expect to update this study in the near future.

We are continuing work on SAMHSA's **1994-1996 Reports on Drug Use (RDU-2)**, which will continue through 1998. The *1994 Main Findings* and a monograph on *Mental Health and Substance Use* were published in the fall. We are currently writing the *1995 Main Findings* report and three monographs covering *Drug Use Among Women*; a methodological study of *Household Proxy Reports and Self-Reports of Smoking Status*; and *Employment and Drug Use*.

Work has begun in earnest on several task orders for SAMHSA's **National Archive and Analytical Center for Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Data (NAAC)**. The NAAC is designed to disseminate and analyze SAMHSA's large scale epidemiological and treatment services data collections. NORC leads a team that includes ISR/ICPSR at the University of Michigan, the Alcohol Research Group of the Western Consortium for Public Health (UC Berkeley), and The Lewin Group. Work is nearly completed on the *1996 SAMHSA Statistical Sourcebook* and on disclosure analysis for developing public-use access files for several large-scale national treatment system datasets, as well as a number of quick turnaround analytical projects. We are now negotiating with SAMHSA to begin several major analytical efforts in the areas of drug and alcohol treatment, prevention, and mental health services.

In 1995, the longitudinal study of **Vulnerability to Drug Abuse in High-Risk Youth**, sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), completed its third follow-up of 600 families and nearly 2,000 parent and adolescent respondents in Minnesota, maintaining a response rate of better than 95 percent. NORC Principal Investigator Susan Su and other NORC researchers have published several articles and have presented numerous papers at conferences on the study's results, most of which concern the age- and gender-specific effects of parental chemical dependency, psychiatric problems, psychological supportiveness, and family income on the development of conduct problems in adolescent children.

This year, we also completed a secondary analysis of results from the **California Drug and Alcohol Treatment Assessment (CALDATA)**—an NORC study completed in 1994) under a contract with the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. This study sought to estimate the prevalence, costs, and benefits of drug and alcohol recovery services for welfare recipients. The report was released at a January, 1997 conference on welfare reform.

NORC completed analysis and a final supplemental data collection on the **National Treatment Improvement Evaluation Study (NTIES)**, which is sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT). NTIES included multiple CAPI interviews with a cohort of 6,600 receiving treatment during 1993-1995, as well as 2,000 self-administered questionnaires from administrators and clinicians, representing programs that participated in several CSAT demonstration programs. We collected official arrest records data in two states with the largest fraction of enrolled programs to compare with self-reports of arrest history. A *Preliminary Report* was released by CSAT

at a press conference in September featuring national drug policy director McCaffrey and HHS Secretary Shalala. The general contours of the report, which covered only one dimension of the research, were that after treatment:

- overall drug use was cut in half
- dollars spent on drugs were reduced by two-thirds
- arrests went down by two-thirds
- homelessness went down by about 40 percent
- employment went up by about 20 percent
- welfare enrollment went down by about 10 percent
- medical visits, mental health problems, and HIV risk behaviors all declined

The **Services Research Outcomes Study (SROS)** completed data collection and began datafile preparation and analytical work. SROS is a 5-year "cold" follow-up of a national multistage probability sample of 3,000 participants in drug and alcohol treatment. The results will provide the first nationally representative picture of long-term outcomes of drug treatment. Preliminary data are now under review at SAMHSA, and a final report is due in May, 1997. While NORC Field Interviewers often go above and beyond the call, on this study not only did they locate and interview an impressive number of respondents in this elusive population, but one of our Field Interviewers even saved a life. After learning that the respondent's relatives had not heard from the woman recently, our Interviewer checked with the police. The police happened to know her, and they and our Interviewer eventually located her, nearly dead, in a hotel room. The woman was then transported to a local hospital for appropriate treatment.

After working with Principal Investigators Sharon and Richard Wilsnack to complete the design work, NORC began the data collection for the national longitudinal survey of **Women's Health and Life Styles**, which we are conducting for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and the University of North Dakota School of Medicine. Because information is scarce about the patterns, antecedents, and consequences of drinking among women in the general population, this four-wave study, begun in 1981, investigates alcohol use and alcohol-linked behaviors. The survey focuses on alcohol consumption, drinking context, sexual behavior, and problems related to alcohol consumption and alcohol dependence among women. Its findings have shed light on the distribution, correlates, and development of drinking problems among women, and can be used to help target prevention and treatment programs

more precisely and effectively. In addition, the survey also evaluates the reliability and utility of retrospective lifetime drinking histories for analyzing time-ordered relationships in cross-sectional surveys. In the 1996 survey, NORC is interviewing 550 women previously interviewed and 450 of their spouses or significant others.

We have completed virtually all field work on a follow-up study of **Drug Use and Problem Behavior** in a cohort of approximately 1,330 African American and Puerto Rican youths and a subsample of their mothers, in East Harlem, New York. This is the second wave of a longitudinal study for Principal Investigator Judith Brook at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York and the National Institute on

Drug Abuse. The study will assess the stages of involvement with drug use in an inner-city sample and examine the interrelationships of acculturation, family, personality, peers, and drug context domains. The first data collection took place in 1990, and in this second wave, we have been able to locate more than 92 percent of this very mobile population, and attained a response rate of nearly 90 percent.

We have recently begun collecting the first wave of CATI data from a sample of police departments for the Urban Institute and Principal Investigator Jeffrey Roth, who received a grant from the National Institute of Justice to evaluate the **Community Oriented Policing Strategies (COPS)** program, a flagship component of the 1994 Crime Act. Community oriented policing is generally defined as a shift in police efforts from a solely reactive response to crime to a proactive response in which the officers work with the residents to prevent crime. Accordingly, the COPS program is designed to restore some of the direct contact between police officers and the public that has been lost because officers now operate from squad cars instead of "walking a beat" in a particular neighborhood. In order to evaluate this program, NORC will conduct a two-wave national telephone survey of police administrators (chiefs or their designees) who either receive COPS funding or who chose not to apply for it.

The **Twin Study of Vulnerability to Alcoholism** supports the research of Michael Lyons of Boston University and Harvard Medical School, Seth Eisen of Washington University in St. Louis, and Bill Kremens of the University of California at Davis School of Medicine for the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. For this study, NORC is locating and securing the cooperation of a targeted sample of approximately 400 twin pairs. These researchers are attempting to understand how psychological and biological factors contribute to an individual's tendencies to use or not use alcohol. They will administer a six- to eight-hour examination to selected respondents, which includes an in-person interview; a self-administered questionnaire; tests of memory, problem-solving, and attention; and a psychophysiological assessment.

In the area of disability studies, the National Center for Health Statistics recently awarded NORC the contract to perform the **Second Longitudinal Study of Aging (LSOA II)**. This

will be a mixed-mode survey of approximately 10,000 individuals 72 years and older to assess their functional health status, living arrangements, and health care. LSOA I and the initial selection of LSOA II were conducted for NCHS by the Bureau of the Census. LSOA II is a project of singular importance as the nation moves through a transitional era in the demography of its aging population and in the public financing of health care services. These two dynamics are fatefully linked: a high proportion of Medicaid funds support nursing home care for elderly individuals, and Medicare funds are increasingly shifting from supporting heroic inpatient procedures undertaken in short-stay hospitals during the final months of life to providing long-term outpatient care for the functional management of chronic, disabling diseases beyond the 70th year of life. There are indications that the overall health and functional status of the elderly, the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population, is improving slowly but steadily, for reasons that are not yet fully in focus. Meanwhile, like other parts of the health care delivery system, health care financing for the elderly is also moving toward managed care, which opens major questions about how these changes will affect the organic and functional health status and quality of care of health services received by the elderly. Like its predecessor, LSOA II has the potential to contribute substantially to our ability to evaluate the effects of both kinds of changes and to project forward into the uncertain fiscal future the very certain arrival of larger and larger birth cohorts into these advanced years.



making data accessible

to the public

NORC's **General Social Survey** is "one of the country's true national research treasures," according to *Washington Post* Polling Director Richard Morin. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation and led by Principal Investigators Jim Davis and Tom Smith, for 21 years the GSS has held a mirror up to American society by collecting data on people's attitudes, beliefs, and practices. This year NORC has placed that mirror directly in the hands of the American public for the first time. NORC staff have developed an on-line system that not only makes the GSS available over the Internet, but also enables anyone interested to perform research tasks that would otherwise be daunting even for GSS experts.

The system is called GSSDIRS (General Social Survey Data and Information Retrieval System) and can be accessed at: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/gss>. This new user-friendly system is organized around the survey questions and the responses to those questions. Users click on the question and are instantly directed to all relevant sections: a table show-

ing how responses to the survey question have changed over the years; methodological documentation about how the question was asked; other conceptually related variables; and abstracts of research articles that used the same variables in their analyses. But the users do not have to begin with a specific GSS question. Instead, they can search on a key word ("race," "trust," "malaise") at any point in the system and be quickly routed to the variables of interest and to previous analyses that used these variables. GSSDIRS is

general
social survey

designed to continually suggest new relationships between variables, and new lines of inquiry. There are other datasets that are accessible through web pages but these have minimal integration: the user can click on an icon to obtain and download a dataset. But the GSS system goes much further, both in organizing the information in (and around) the enormous, intricate GSS dataset and in conveying that information quickly and clearly to the user.

"We organized the web page around the question because the question is at the heart of survey research," says Tom W. Smith, the chief architect of the new system. "What the user really wants to know is, basically, everything about the question—its results, its trends, any peculiarities about the way it was asked, and who else has looked at that question and what they found."

The system enables less experienced users to conduct simple analyses such as cross-tabulations between one variable and another. The more sophisticated user can download the data or subsets of it. Because of the wide range of services it offers, this new system is equally useful to students, journalists, the interested public, and experienced data analysts.

Since it was first made available this summer, GSSDIRS has been used by hundreds of people each day. NORC will continue to develop and maintain the GSSDIRS as part of its mandate to collect and disseminate GSS data, and Mr. Smith expects this system to be a prototype for data dissemination in the 21st century.

The Ogburn-Stouffer Center for the Study of Social Organization

The Ogburn-Stouffer Center (OSC) has had a very busy year fulfilling its three fold mission: to house and support funded social organizational research, to provide start-up support and related assistance to junior faculty in the early years of their appointments, and to provide practical research training for graduate students in the Department of Sociology.

Now in its fourth year, the Sloan Study on Youth and Social Development continues to attract students from different disciplines in the University who are interested in studying how young people go about visualizing their future occupational roles, what steps they are taking to prepare for them, and how career decisions become crystallized in adolescence. Several new ideas have emerged from this work as well as a new book, *Images of Adolescent Work*, by Charles Bidwell, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Larry V. Hedges, and Barbara Schneider, which will be published by Cambridge University Press.

The William T. Grant Foundation sponsors Constructive Paths Toward Future Well-Being, which is designed to identify positive and adaptive responses to stressful circumstances faced by adolescents in their lives both in and out of school. Specifically, the study will address how adolescents of different ages and racial and ethnic backgrounds, living in different types of communities, experience and overcome adversity.

The NSF project, Improving Mathematics and Science Learning, continues to develop new analytical models for identifying mechanisms in the classroom and school that are instrumental in fostering mathematics and

science learning. The project will publish two books, *Redesigning American Schools* and *How Teachers' Work is Organized: The Content and Consequences of the Structure of the High School Workplace* (by Charles Bidwell, Anthony Bryk, Kenneth Frank, and Jeffrey Yasumoto). In addition, "Public School Choice: Some Evidence from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988," by Barbara Schneider, Kathryn Schiller, and James S. Coleman, was published in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* in Spring 1996. Barbara Schneider co-authored with James McPartland of Johns Hopkins University an article entitled "Opportunities to Learn and Student Diversity: Prospects and Pitfalls of a Common Core

Curriculum," which was published in a special issue of *Sociology of Education*.

The Social Demography of Interpersonal Relations project extends work on the social organization of sexuality begun with the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHLS) in 1992. The major publication from the original survey, *The Social Organization of Sexuality* by Edward Laumann, Robert Michael, John Gagnon, and Stuart Michaels, published in 1994, received the University of Chicago Press' 1996 Laing Award. Analysis of the NHLS data continues with a second book in progress that is expected to be published next year.

A survey fielded in 1995, the Chicago Health and Social Life Survey (CHSL), focused on a single metropolitan area, Chicago, and includes qualitative interviews with local community leaders and service providers as well as representative surveys of adults ages 18 to 59 residing throughout Cook County (including Chicago) and in each of four selected neighborhood areas within the city. The data promise to shed light on important social problems, such as the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, adult outcomes of early sexual abuse, domestic violence, and sexual dysfunction. More positively, the study also measures sexual satisfaction and sexual health. Innovative network information from the population survey and rich textual data from the key informant interviews will permit analysts of the CHSL to amplify and refine the NHLS findings.

The NSF project, *Dynamic Sequencing Methods for Studying Turning Points in the Criminal Career*, integrates a new methodology of optimal matching for event sequences with a substantive theory of crime and deviance over the life course. Narrative life records of the sequence of job and marital histories have been coded and are being analyzed in conjunction with existing data

on criminal careers and criminal justice sanctioning histories from an ongoing longitudinal study of 500 delinquents and 500 nondelinquents followed from adolescence until age 32.

The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN) is studying the influence of community, family, and peers on individual development in a neighborhood setting, with particular attention to violent and criminal behaviors.

P o p u l a t i o n R e s e a r c h C e n t e r

We are pleased to report that the past year has been another productive one for the Population Research Center (PRC). During the past year, our Research Associates have continued our record of successfully submitting applications for external funding, and receiving new awards from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Science Foundation.

Unlike some research institutes, PRC has as one critical mission—the training of students to become future leaders in the field of demography. Our training activities are conducted under the auspices of the Committee on Demographic Training (CDT), through which we offer fellowships to University of Chicago students through several training grants. The CDT has received and administers T32 training grants from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute on Aging. Each provide for four predoctoral and two postdoctoral trainees. Current predoctoral students are drawn from the Departments of Economics and Sociology and the Harris School of Public Policy Studies. The PRC also supports training through a grant from the Hewlett Foundation for students from developing countries and through a grant from the Mellon Foundation that funds United States citizens to do research on developing countries.

During the past year we have greatly upgraded our home page on the World Wide Web, providing links to other NORC components, SPC², other demography centers, related federal agencies, and other university functions. With costs increasing for hard-copy dissemination of information and the ease of electronic means of transmission continually improving, we are working to distribute all documents electronically. During the coming year, we expect to have all new working papers available via the World Wide Web.

Center on Demography and Economics of Aging

The Center on Demography and Economics of Aging (CoA) is an "exploratory" center funded in 1994 for a period of five years by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), one of nine such centers around the country. The CoA seeks to increase the amount of research done in Chicago in demography and economics of our aging populations. Research Associates are faculty members of the University of Chicago; Affiliates are either faculty at other Chicago-area institutions or collaborators with Research Associates. We are pleased to report that our second year has been, like the first, a very productive one for the Center on Demography and Economics of Aging. Over the past year, we have consolidated the infrastructure for the Center and each of its major initiatives.

At NORC, the CoA is supported in part by the Population Research Center (PRC), which provides administrative staffing for CoA initiatives. In addition, several programs, such as the Demography Workshop and the Data Archive, are jointly supported by the two centers. During the past year, the CoA also became affiliated with the Division of the Social Sciences of the University of Chicago, thus establishing a formal status within the University community.

The CoA currently has 20 faculty-level Research Associates representing several different disciplines. Counting primary positions only, the faculty appointments are distributed as follows: three in Economics, one in Psychology, four in Sociology, four in the Graduate School of Business, six in the Pritzker School of Medicine, one in the School of Social Service Administration, and one in the Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies.

The Center on Aging continues to work together with the PRC to provide services to our Research Associates and the greater community of demographic researchers and policymakers. During the past year a home page on the World Wide Web was created, which describes on-going activities of the center, including a schedule of upcoming workshops and events, and is linked to the home pages of PRC, SPC² and the Data Archive, NORC, other NIA-funded aging centers, other demography centers, and related government agencies. We are also in the process of submitting the first of an annual series of Policy Briefs, to be distributed through the network of NIA exploratory centers and through the CoA web page.

Another function of the CoA is to sponsor outreach efforts to the broader research community. As part of this effort, the Center on Aging cosponsored the 8th Meeting of the International Network on Health Expectancy (REVES 8), in October, 1995, which brought researchers together from around the world to examine "Policy Implications of Measures and Trends in Health Expectancy."

In September of 1996, we hosted a small meeting cosponsored by NIA and the Bureau of the Census focusing on aging populations in Latin America, which included participants from throughout the Western Hemisphere. In October, we held another conference to introduce participants to the Union Army dataset, being readied for public use by a team led by CoA Research Associate Robert Fogel. Another conference currently being planned will bring together researchers and survey professionals to take a first look at the problem of minority attrition and item nonresponse in longitudinal surveys. This meeting will be cosponsored by the Institute on Survey Research at the University of Michigan and NORC's Survey Operations Center. We hope that through conferences such as these we can further establish the CoA as a research center within the university community.

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