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*A national organization for research
at the University of Chicago*



2000
ANNUAL REPORT

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NORC is a national organization for research at the University of Chicago—with offices on the University's campus, in Chicago's downtown Loop, and in Washington, D.C., as well as a nationwide field staff. NORC's clients include government agencies, educational institutions, foundations, other nonprofit organizations, and private corporations. Although NORC's national studies are its best known, NORC projects range across local, regional, and international perspectives as well.

Established in 1941, NORC was unique among survey research organizations. Instead of collecting, analyzing, and reporting commercially motivated opinion polling data—the typical national survey practice at that time—NORC's mission was to pursue objective research that served a broadly conceived public interest. NORC's early survey work provided the first rigorous empirical standard against which to calibrate the beliefs of policy makers claiming to represent and respond to "the people's will" on vital issues of the day. NORC was also a pioneer in improving the speed and accuracy of surveys through electronic technologies. And NORC led in the development of survey methodology as a field of study and progress in its own right.

Continuing to work in the public interest, NORC pursues research to help resolve the issues facing society in the new century—through the design and implementation of complex surveys and other data collection strategies and through the objective, sophisticated interpretation of social science data, using advanced statistical and other analytic techniques. NORC's cadre of specialists in statistics and methodology are joined by distinguished experts in four other major substantive areas: economics and population; education and child development; health; and substance abuse, mental health, and criminal justice. NORC's longstanding affiliation with the University of Chicago provides privileged access to an even wider range of analytic talent and to the resources of the world-class University of Chicago libraries.

NORC's project work is done in an interdisciplinary framework, with strong staff cooperation across substantive areas. NORC is an equal opportunity employer committed to facilitating the personal and professional development of everyone on its staff.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF NORC'S YEAR 2000

2000 was a year of new beginnings at NORC. Our business development efforts were very successful, yielding several important new projects. And we implemented a reorganization plan to more effectively manage our expanding opportunities. We also went through a number of internal transitions.

New Beginnings Among the new projects we began in 2000, the following exemplify the directions in which NORC is moving.

- A major study of new immigrants. NORC has been selected to carry out the New Immigrant Study for the RAND corporation, under funding they receive from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and a number of other federal agencies. This study is an ambitious project to interview a large sample of households in which at least one member has recently received a “green card” from the INS. Follow-up surveys are planned.

- Three new projects for the Department of Education. The first of these is the National Study of Title I Schools, for which (as subcontractor to RAND), we will collect data for an assessment of projects that recipient schools operate with funds from the long-running federal program aimed at students in low-income communities. The second is the Longitudinal Evaluation of the Effectiveness of School Interventions, for which (as subcontractor to the American Institutes for Research) we will collect data for a study of schoolwide instructional reforms supported through Title I and through the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. The third new education project is the Comprehensive School Reform Evaluation. Again focusing on data collection as subcontractor to the American Institutes for Research, we will be doing our third project aimed at a better understanding of the implementing mechanisms and potential consequences of federal aid to local school districts, particularly those in low-income and rural communities.

- An important assessment of efforts to attack long-standing minority/nonminority disparities in health status within communities across the country. The Centers for Disease Control chose NORC to assess demonstration projects in 21 of the localities participating in the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program. REACH supports what are hoped to be effective and sustainable community-level initiatives to reduce and potentially eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, not only in access to and use of health care services but also in health outcomes.

- A new exploration of the dimensions of child mental health using twin study methods to disentangle genetic from environmental factors. The first project ever to encompass the whole gamut of behavioral and emotional symptoms that characterize childhood mental illness, the new twin study has the potential to lead to more effective treatment options.

Our preliminary financial statements show revenue for the year 2000 at about \$46 million. This is a sizable increase over the \$39 million level of 1999, although it is still below the levels reached two and three years earlier. We entered the year with a deficit, but we ended it without one, beginning the new century in sound fiscal condition. The formal audit of our financial operations for 2000 is underway. Our audited financial statements will be available upon request.



Ralph W. Muller, *Chairman*



Craig G. Coelen, *President*

Reorganization NORC's reorganization at the end of 2000 implemented a plan developed a year earlier by a committee of trustees and senior program managers. What had been a single operations department responsible for core oversight of all survey research activities, along with a free-standing cadre of substantive experts, is now organized into five fully integrated substantively defined areas, each with its own director:

Economics and Population—Richard M. Rubin, Director

Education and Child Development—Harrison N. Greene, Director

Health—Daniel S. Gaylin, Director

Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Criminal Justice—Dean R. Gerstein, Director

Statistics and Methodology—Kirk M. Wolter, Director

The new structure creates enhanced leadership opportunities, affords more staff participation in decision-making and business development, declares our commitment to specific areas of research, improves our responsiveness to our clients, and strengthens our links with faculty at the University of Chicago.

Internal Transitions Our internal transitions began in April 2000, when Phil DePoy retired from the presidency of NORC. Phil guided NORC through a period of rapid growth in the 1990s, implemented substantial improvements in financial and human resource operations, and recruited an excellent team of senior staff. We are fortunate that Phil is continuing to serve as an active advisor in his capacity as a member of NORC's Board of Trustees.

Another important transition was Norman Bradburn's decision to retire from the University of Chicago to serve as assistant director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences. We are pleased that NSF will benefit from Norman's experience and wisdom. We are also glad that he is only taking a leave of absence from NORC and we very much look forward to his return.

Craig Coelen was selected as NORC's new president in the spring of 2000. He joined us after serving nine years as senior vice president at the Urban Institute and fifteen years as an economist and ultimately head of all government research at Abt Associates.

Dan Gaylin joined NORC in the fall. He left his position as senior advisor for research and planning, Office of Health Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to become NORC's senior vice president for business development and director of health studies.

Mike Tilkin agreed to join NORC at the end of last year as senior vice president and chief information officer. His responsibility is to oversee the work of more than 50 information technology staff and NORC's ongoing effort to complete development of nearly \$6 million worth of new survey management software. He comes to us from his position as national practice director for e-business intelligence at FutureNext, a national software-development consulting firm.

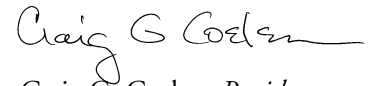
Priorities for the Future We have set three particular priorities for the next several years:

- Recruitment and internal development of survey directors with deep substantive expertise and superior capacity for orderly project management,
- Development and application of new survey research and data management technology, and
- Intensification of our intellectual linkages with our colleagues on the University of Chicago faculty.

We are proud of our new studies, our new organizational structure, and our new as well as our continuing staff. With them we can look forward confidently to a productive future, exemplifying the dedication to excellence in serving the public interest that has always been NORC's hallmark.



Ralph W. Muller, *Chairman*



Craig G. Coelen, *President*

March, 2001



NORMAN BRADBURN has been a crucial part of NORC for 40 years. He earned his B.A. degree at the University of Chicago in 1952 and returned as a young assistant professor in 1960. He discovered NORC in 1961 and has made it his research home ever since. In his own words: 'In 1967, I had a study in the field and the place [NORC] was collapsing kind of, so in desperation they said, "Would you be director?" In order to save my study I said OK—not knowing what I was getting into. But at least I could get the organization going until I got my study finished.' He kept the place going indeed—through three terms as Director and one as Acting Director, two terms as President of the Board of Trustees, and several years as Board-appointed Senior Vice President for Research.

Administrative duties never supplanted his research interest, however. His early work included seminal contributions to the then-developing field of survey research. His more recent work includes contributions in the areas of question-wording effects, order effects, interview method, and the application of cognitive psychology to the study of nonsampling errors.

When he was not working directly for NORC, he took on major administrative responsibilities within the University of Chicago—moving from Master of the Division of the Social Sciences to architect and chairman of the Department of Human Development, and serving President Hanna Gray as Provost from 1984 to 1989. During the 1990s, he was a founding faculty member of the newly created Harris School of Public Policy Studies. Despite these periods of absorption by the University, he never failed to conduct his research through NORC and has always been available to NORC staff at all levels for advice and counsel.

Now Norman has moved on to head the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences at the National Science Foundation. We at NORC heartily thank him for all he has done for and with us. Since he still maintains an office at NORC, we hope and expect to continue to benefit from his wisdom.

MAJOR ISSUE AREAS



Economics and Population

The economics and population studies department is the institutional home of NORC's large-scale flagship surveys covering a wide range of factors that contribute to the nation's economic and social life. These include development of children as future members of the labor force, youth transition to work, job schedules and work injuries, and the finances of consumers and small businesses. NORC's economics and population focus includes the study of immigrants, in particular their labor force characteristics, their health, and the schooling of their children. It also includes NORC's acclaimed General Social Survey.

Richard M. Rubin
Director

William Parish
Director, Population Studies Center

Edward O. Laumann
Director, Ogburn-Stouffer Center
for the Study of Social Organizations

Linda J. Waite
Director, Center on Demography
and Economics of Aging

Illustrative Recent Projects

Survey of Small Business Finances. This recently completed survey, the third in a series funded by the Federal Reserve Board, collects financial data from businesses with 500 or fewer employees. A nationally representative sample of small and minority-owned businesses was selected from the files of Dun & Bradstreet and screened for eligibility. Interviews were then conducted with 3,500 of these firms, including oversamples of African American-, Asian American-, and Hispanic American-owned firms. The data are used to evaluate the impact of public policies on small businesses of different sizes, locations, and ownership characteristics. Every five years, the resulting analysis is incorporated into a report from the Federal Reserve Board to Congress on the availability of credit to small businesses.

National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth. NORC plays an integral role, together with Ohio State University's Center for Human Resource Research, in conducting two allied surveys of America's youth: the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79) and the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97). Both these major longitudinal surveys are funded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Each addresses key questions about the economic, social, and academic experiences of respondents and examines myriad issues surrounding youth entry into the work force and subsequent transitions in and out of it. NLSY79 has just completed its 19th round of data collection; NLSY97, conducted annually, is now in its 4th round. Each project employs sophisticated instrumentation using computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI) augmented by such elements as self-administered questionnaires and child assessment modules. The surveys, which involve large samples with oversamples of African American and Hispanic American youth, have consistently achieved high completion rates and yielded data of exceptional quality.

General Social Survey. The General Social Survey (GSS) assesses social changes in contemporary America through a standard core of demographic and attitudinal variables, plus topics of special interest selected for rotation. One of the oldest of NORC's landmark surveys, the GSS has been administered 23 times since its initial fielding in

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1972, with core funding from the National Science Foundation. Its millennium survey wave illustrates the range of topics and supplemental funders of this celebrated survey: intergroup relations and cultural pluralism (Mellon Foundation, Carnegie Corporation, and American Jewish Committee), users of the Internet and how they use it (National Science Foundation), assessments of external and internal security threats and the balancing of security and civil liberties (Office of Naval Research), how people assess their physical and mental health (National Institutes of Health), sexual behavior and drug use (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), freedom (Smith-Richardson), religious congregations (Lilly Endowment Fund), evaluating the functions of the local church (Andrew Greeley), and religious identification (a consortium of sociologists of religion).

Survey of Consumer Finances. Sponsored by the Federal Reserve Board, this triennial survey collects information concerning household financial characteristics and behavior to provide guidance to policy makers. The data are used to generate the official distribution of wealth presented to Congress. They also support a variety of analyses, such as the effects of potential changes in tax policies. Data in each round are collected from 4,500 respondents, including area probability and list samples. NORC conducted this survey for the third time in 1998 and will conduct it again in 2001.

Assessment of Chicago Youth for Job Readiness. This assessment of Chicago area youth (ages 14-21 years), especially disadvantaged youth, focuses on what they need to develop skills and prepare for job openings in the current and future labor



William Parish and Robert Townsend



Richard M. Rubin and Michael R. Pergamit

market. Funded by the City of Chicago Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, this study is based on both primary and secondary data. Interviews of key informants plus a series of 21 focus groups of youth, parents, employers, and service providers are supplemented with secondary analysis using such sources as labor market information by zip code, the Decennial Census, and the Current Population Survey. Findings have already been used in the development of Chicago's five-year service plan, as required under the Workforce Investment Act.

D e v e l o p i n g D i r e c t i o n s

A major focus for the coming period will be building closer relationships between NORC's economics and population studies group and other units of the University of Chicago with closely allied research interests. These include, in particular, the Joint Center for Poverty Research and the Chapin Hall Center for Children. With respect to new projects, a crucial one is the New Immigrant Survey. This project is funded, as part of a grant to the RAND Corporation, by the National Institutes of Health; the National Science Foundation; the Immigration and Naturalization Service; and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A large and complex longitudinal survey project, the New Immigrant Survey will involve interviews with immigrants and their spouses, and assessments of their children. The results will be used to study the integration of immigrants into U.S. labor markets and society.



Education and Child Development

From its earliest studies on the impact of the GI Bill and public views concerning the federal role in education in the 1940s and 1950s, to the pioneering use of cognitive testing tools with preschool children, to recent reports on the production and career trajectories of Ph.D. scientists and engineers in 2000, NORC has been a leading contributor to research in the education and child development fields. Major studies have focused on such diverse populations as Head Start enrollees and their parents; elementary and secondary school students, teachers, and administrators; postsecondary students and faculty in all sectors; and developers of innovative education and training programs.

Projects range from the highly technical development of testing programs to assess student mastery; to completion of decade-long longitudinal studies of education and labor force activity of middle and high school students; to assisting state and local governments in determining what works to promote educational improvement; to helping federal agencies collect and distribute high quality data resources that support continuing analyses by researchers, policy makers, and educators.

Harrison N. Greene, Jr.
Director

**Barbara L. Schneider and
Linda J. Waite**
Codirectors, Alfred P. Sloan Center
on Parents, Children & Work

Illustrative Recent Projects

Career Outcomes of Doctorate Recipients. Supported by the National Science Foundation, NORC is responsible for the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED). The SED gathers information annually from 42,000 respondents about educational histories, funding sources, and post-doctoral plans, from all recipients of a research doctorate earned from any degree-granting institution in the United States. Each year the SED data are added to a larger historical record of doctorate-degree graduates, the Doctorate Records File (DRF). Begun in 1920, the DRF contains annual information used to track the number of graduates in various fields; the educational paths of scientists, engineers, and humanists; movement of graduates into the labor market; and similar information.

National Study of Title I Schools. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is the primary federal program to help educate economically and educationally disadvantaged children. NORC, as subcontractor to the RAND Corporation and with support from the U.S. Department of Education, is responsible for collecting data for an assessment of how low-income Title I elementary, middle, and high schools are using standards-based reforms to improve learning.

Principals, teachers, and teachers' aides will be selected from a nationally representative panel of 1,600 Title I and non-Title I schools. There will be three waves of data collection—in the 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04 school years. All 1,600 school principals and more than 15,400 teachers will participate in each wave. Waves 1 and 3 will also include a teachers' aide from each school. And student assessment data will be collected from each school.

Evaluation of Comprehensive School Reform (CSR). The CSR study is a quasi-experimental, longitudinal project designed to identify school district conditions that facilitate or inhibit successful implementation of a variety of CSR models. Key research questions include: Does CSR work better than school-specific reform initiatives? What

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components of CSR models work best and for whom? What contextual factors can support CSR? NORC joins the University of South Florida as subcontractors to the American Institutes for Research (AIR) for this project. NORC is responsible for sampling districts and schools; conducting interviews with district administrators, principals, and teachers; receiving the data from district-administered student achievement tests; and analyzing the data across three annual waves. NORC will also conduct a meta-analysis of all the evaluation data and prepare analytic and methodological reports.

Working Families' Investments in Time and Resources. A major project of NORC's Sloan Center is examining how working families make investments in time and resources, how these choices are made, the effects of these investments on the quality of relationships in the household, and the resulting socialization of school-age children and adolescents. The original data collection, the Five Hundred Family Study, has been completed. Involving 300 families with teenage children and 200 families with kindergarten-age children, this study involved multiple methodologies including surveys, qualitative interviews, standardized child assessments, and the Experience Sampling Method (ESM). ESM is a contingent data collection method in which participants wear specially programmed wristwatches that signal them to answer brief questionnaires at randomly chosen moments through the day for a seven-day period.



Linda J. Waite



*Harrison N. Greene, Jr. and
Barbara L. Schneider*

Developing Directions

Recognizing that education is lifetime activity, NORC's research agenda will cover basic and applied research issues across the entire span of human learning. These issues include studying multigenerational approaches to preschool education, investigating efforts by the nation's school systems to accommodate expanding and increasingly diverse enrollment, exploring the impact of school safety on student success, developing effective methods for assessing accountability for student and school performance, measuring growth in access to postsecondary education opportunities afforded by new technologies, evaluation of national initiatives to reduce disparities in education outcomes, and examining relationships between investment in educational excellence and U.S. global competitiveness. Starting in 2001, NORC will develop and host an innovative education data center that will acquire, organize, and distribute information resources to enhance the quality and productivity of education research on national goals.



Health

NORC's health analysts engage in all aspects of social science research in the areas of health services, epidemiology and biostatistics, public health, and health policy. This work is grounded in NORC's long tradition of designing and conducting complex longitudinal studies and studies of hard-to-locate people. In addition to extensive survey and other primary data collection capabilities, NORC expertise covers the spectrum of techniques available to study health and health care issues—analysis of large public data sets, analysis of secondary data such as administrative records, health policy analysis, program evaluation and evaluation design, social experiments, needs assessments, epidemiological case-control and cohort studies, cognitive studies, and use of qualitative methods, such as case studies and focus groups.

Daniel S. Gaylin
Director

Illustrative Recent Projects

Evaluation of Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH)

2010. The Public Health Service has had a historic commitment to equity in health care and disease prevention in the United States. Despite this commitment, huge gaps in health continue between racial and ethnic minorities and predominantly white communities. REACH 2010 is a two-phase project designed to foster community mobilization and the organization of resources in order to develop effective and sustainable programs to eliminate such health disparities. Phase I was a 12-month planning phase for 32 communities to organize and prepare infrastructure for the REACH program. The goal of Phase II is to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative community-level intervention demonstrations that could be effective in eliminating health disparities.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention awarded the contract for evaluating Phase II to NORC. NORC's role is to implement a population-based survey in 21 communities to measure change (relative to an appropriate referent) in risk and protective behaviors or established performance indicators. The survey will be completed once a year for four years. About 1,200 respondents will be interviewed in each of the 21 communities, covering the following minority groups: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders. In addition to all implementation, data collection, and data preparation tasks, NORC is responsible for a methodology report each year and at the end of the project.

Second Longitudinal Study of Aging. Health care policy starts with knowing how many people need medical and other care, and the actions they take to obtain it. This three-wave study, sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics, is the first follow-up of the Longitudinal Study of Aging, conducted a decade ago to address critical questions about the health and health care of older Americans. In addition to replicating information collected in the first study, particularly pertaining to health and functional status, the new study is designed to provide a mechanism for monitoring

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the impact of proposed changes in Medicare and Medicaid, as well as shifts towards managed health care for older Americans. The baseline wave of the new survey was conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau as the Second Supplement on Aging to the 1994 National Health Interview Survey. NORC was chosen to conduct the second and third waves. The latter involved 8,609 respondents interviewed over a nine-month period.

Supporting the Mission of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

For the past eight years, NORC has provided a broad range of services to ATSDR. These include site-based investigations in communities where environmental health concerns have been raised, follow-up and surveillance of at-risk and exposed populations, identification and tracing of persons exposed up to five decades previously, and administering medical tests such as chest radiographs and pulmonary function tests. An illustrative recent task order involved a vermiculite mine and two refining facilities. These facilities, which operated from 1920 to 1990, produced a finished product made from vermiculite ore. The ore mined at the site has been shown to be contaminated with asbestos. Asbestos exposure is associated with several severe diseases, including lung cancer and mesothelioma (a cancer of the chest wall lining). NORC's task was to identify the group of exposed persons from a target list sample provided by ATSDR, so that they could be referred for appropriate health screening in as timely a manner as possible. In addition to screening exposed persons still living in the area, NORC's work included (a) establishing a toll-free hotline so that people who had moved outside the area and might have been exposed could call in, and (b) extending the screening process to include them.



Wendy Levinson



Daniel S. Gaylin, Michele T. Koppelman, and Mary Grace Kovar

Measuring Customer Satisfaction with the Medicare Telephone System.

As part of the National Partnership for Reinventing Government initiative, NORC (together with the Lewin Group) is assisting the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to meet the challenge of building a national baseline measure of telephone customers' satisfaction with the more than 70 nationwide Medicare call centers, which together handle over 80 million Medicare calls annually. The goal is to collect high-quality survey data that will help HCFA achieve its goal of obtaining "Best in Business" status for the telephone service it provides to Medicare beneficiaries, advocates, and providers. In order for HCFA to meet one of the requirements of the Government Performances and Results Act, NORC is developing a customer satisfaction questionnaire—along with sampling methodology, interviewer training materials, and survey administration procedures—that will enable all Medicare call centers to complete standardized quarterly customer satisfaction surveys. The study will collect 30,000 completed questionnaires each quarter.

D e v e l o p i n g D i r e c t i o n s

NORC will continue its tradition of conducting cutting-edge survey research on important health and health care issues. At the same time, it will extend its partnerships with experts from the University of Chicago and the wider health care community to expand its research and analysis activities in epidemiology, public health, health services, and health policy. Issues of particular interest in the coming period include medical errors/patient safety, prescription drugs, public health infrastructure, health system change, and racial/ethnic disparities in health and health care.



Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Criminal Justice

The substance abuse, mental health, and criminal justice group continues NORC's vigorous program of research on alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs, crime, justice, and mental disorders that began in the 1940s and 1950s. Broad topic areas in which NORC has substantial experience include individual substance use histories and networks of relationships among substance users; development and prevalence of mental health disorders in clinical, intergenerational, and socioenvironmental perspectives; sexual, criminal, economic, and other personal and social behavior connected with substance use, abuse, and dependence; public attitudes, stereotypes, and policy views concerning crime, substance abuse, and mental health disorders; and the operation and effectiveness of treatment, prevention, education, law enforcement, and criminal justice programs. NORC is particularly well known for its key role in large-scale studies of a wide range of treatment outcomes.

Dean R. Gerstein
Director

Illustrative Recent Projects

Dimensions of Child and Adolescent Psychopathology. Funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, this study is a major new exploration of the dimensions of child mental health using twin study methods to disentangle genetic from environmental factors. The first project to study the whole gamut of behavioral and emotional symptoms that characterize childhood mental illness, it uses a combination of psychometric and behavioral genetic methods to study the basic dimensions of child and adolescent psychopathology. Confirmatory factor analysis of data from a sample of twins is being used to compare a variety of hypotheses about these dimensions. The hypotheses are tested using a new scale based on a comprehensive item pool that covers the emotions and behavior assessed in the most widely used rating scales (DSM-IV) and other key sources. Interviews with 1,800 twin pairs ages 6 to 17 years, and their mothers, as well as with the teachers of a large subset of the twin pairs, form the basis for the study.

Factors Affecting the Developmental Course of Adolescent Vulnerability to Psychoactive Substance Abuse. Funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, this is a multigenerational longitudinal study of how family risk factors contribute to the vulnerability of children to the onset and course of psychoactive substance abuse and other psychiatric and behavioral problems. Findings from this study have special relevance to the development and dissemination of tobacco, alcohol, and drug abuse prevention programs. The goal is to assess factors affecting developmental paths from late childhood through the stages of adolescence into young adulthood that involve parental psychopathology, drug use, deviant behavior, and mental health. The family risk factors under study are parental abuse of psychoactive substances and parental depression. This study integrates epidemiological, family system, and psychosocial theoretical perspectives.

Social Influences Affecting AIDS Risk Behaviors among Drug Users.

A critical issue in the AIDS epidemic is determining the social influences that directly

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promote or inhibit AIDS risk behaviors among networks of drug users. Funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, this study integrates epidemiology and ethnography, under a social network approach to determining HIV risk behaviors among injection drug users and their sexual and drug injection partners. This study provides important clues not only on how to successfully treat AIDS among drug injectors but also on how to inhibit the spread of the AIDS virus. Goals include describing and analyzing individual and network characteristics in terms of risk behaviors and their correlates; studying HIV risk behaviors at multiple levels of individual, network, and neighborhood effects; and testing a theory of network access to resources to determine the validity of the theory as an explanation of injection drug use risk behaviors.

Assessing Support for Changes in U.S. Drug Abuse Policy. NORC's previous work on drug abuse policy has repeatedly found that certain overall attitudinal relationships link particular drug-policy attitudes to both general political orientations and attitudes toward other social issues. This project, funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, moves beyond that foundation to locate common ground for constructive policy movement on issues of long-standing debate. Such common ground would be either subtle convergences of opinion or critical areas where better factual information might make such convergences more likely. One example is the decriminalization of marijuana—now that new medical uses of the drug have been found, on the one hand, and new evidence about its effect on the brain and its potential for addiction, on the other. A second is the issue of individual rights versus the rights of others with respect to toxicological testing and the confidentiality thereof—for example, whether physicians should be required to report to law enforcement officials the names of women who test positive for illicit drugs while pregnant. The ultimate goal is to inform and improve public discussion of major drug abuse policy options in the United States.



Kenneth A. Rasinski



Dean R. Gerstein and Benjamin B. Lahey

National Survey of Indigent Defense Systems. Funded by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the goal of this study is to describe and analyze the operations of a wide variety of programs that furnish public defenders to low-income persons charged with crimes. NORC is identifying and surveying such programs in a representative sample of 734 counties in the United States, including all of the largest metropolitan areas—collecting data on program expenditures, funding sources, staffing, caseloads, types of offenses handled, and policies and practices. Comprehensive reports are being prepared by the Bureau of Justice Statistics on indigent defense services in the 100 most populous counties, on all counties where indigent defense programs are funded entirely by state governments, and on funding for all other counties. Results from this project help us understand the diverse working of criminal justice systems across the country.

Developing Directions

NORC's team of researchers on substance abuse, mental health, and criminal justice will, in the coming period, be working on a range of new projects. Of particular note are a study funded by the National Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholism on gambling among women and studies funded by the National Institute of Mental Health on the impact of managed care, the stigma associated with mental illness, and projects to assess the treatment needs of homeless mothers with severe mental illness and of jail detainees with mental health problems. In addition, NORC is extending its research in the criminal justice area to a census of public prosecutors for the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

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Statistics and Methodology

Statistics and methodology staff are important contributors to virtually all NORC projects. They not only provide statistical services under the direction of the individual project's manager. A senior statistician also monitors the statistical integrity of these projects. NORC statistics and methodology staff also build infrastructure that benefits all projects. These include establishing statistical standards for use throughout the company to ensure consistently high quality. Specific areas of expertise include sampling design and execution, development and testing of questionnaires and other instruments, statistical process control, design and development of estimation systems, statistical computing, disclosure and confidentiality analysis, and record linkage, unduplication, and geocoding. In addition to these support functions, staff develop and execute projects with particular statistical or methodological complexities, as featured here.

Kirk M. Wolter
Director

Illustrative Recent Projects

Illinois Department of Employment Security. This is an ongoing project that began five years ago, when NORC joined a committee to redesign the Current Employment Statistics (CES), a Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) federal/state cooperative survey program. NORC participated as a subcontractor to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), in part to help represent states' interests in the redesign. Subsequently, IDES asked NORC to estimate employment for smaller domains than those for which CES was designed, a need that became more urgent with passage of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. NORC has built a basic system to produce monthly employment estimates at the county industry division level, and is now enhancing the system and documentation to handle alternative geographical and industrial classifications. This system may become the basis for a BLS-approved method available to all states.

U.S. News and World Report's Annual Ranking of America's Best Hospitals.

Using original survey data and secondary analyses of data from the American Hospital Association and the Health Care Financing Administration, NORC creates an Index of Hospital Quality on an annual basis. This index has three components designed to represent three key aspects of care—structure, process, and outcome. These components are combined to give an overall score for each hospital, on which the rankings published by *U.S. News* are based. As part of continuous refinement and expansion of this index, NORC produced a ranking for nephrology for the first time in 2000. Work will begin in 2001-2002 on contrasting in-hospital mortality with mortality 30 days after discharge. The *U.S. News* rankings are highly regarded by the medical profession and are used from time to time to underpin other scholarly investigations.

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Evaluation of Census 2000 Partnership and Marketing Campaigns.

These two campaigns were designed to increase public awareness of census procedures and uses, to foster positive attitudes toward the census and, through increased awareness, to increase response rates. These goals are particularly important for hard-to-enumerate and historically undercounted populations, including African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and American Indians. NORC was responsible for questionnaire development for all three waves of the evaluation: wave 1 before the campaigns, wave 2 after the campaigns' first phase, and wave 3 after respondent receipt of the census forms. Each wave covered awareness of the census, civic participation, and respondent familiarity with the Census 2000 advertising materials. Wave 3 added questions on how and when the respondent intended to return his or her form. Data analysis will determine (a) Census 2000 awareness before and after the campaigns, and (b) what effect the campaigns had on completion of the census forms.

Technical Services for Two OSHA Initiatives. For the first initiative, NORC (as subcontractor to the Eastern Research Group) is assisting in evaluation studies of audits on the annual Employer Injury and Illness Recordkeeping. These audits are conducted using a sampling design developed by NORC for the Occupational



Rachel M. Harter, Kirk M. Wolter, and Colm A. O'Muircheartaigh

Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Office of Statistics. NORC's contribution is to assist in developing national estimates, standard errors, and significance tests, as well as substantive contributions to reports to OSHA for submission to the Office of Management and Budget. For the second initiative, NORC (as subcontractor to the Lexington Group) provides technical and analytic support to OSHA's Office of Statistics. This work involves developing plans and effectiveness measures for a national study of OSHA initiatives aimed at assessing compliance with OSHA regulations and progress toward performance goals. The goals are expressed as targeted reductions in occupational injuries and illnesses in high-risk establishments over a range of at-risk industries.

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ROGER KRUSE
1946-2001

A Few Words from Craig Coelen

NORC suffered a great loss with the passing of Roger Kruse, vice president for administration and human resources. Roger waged a courageous battle against serious illness over much of the last year while continuing his work at NORC.

Roger joined NORC's staff in November 1996 as director of human resources and immediately made an imprint on that department and NORC in general. Roger was appointed to vice president for administration and human resources in January 1999 and brought his endless energy and enthusiasm to his expanded areas of responsibility for facilities, communications, and purchasing.

His vision of human resources as an integral business partner with the other units within NORC was evident from his first days and never failed. Roger developed and implemented several training programs for staff and managers, always with the goal of improving NORC as a business and as a place to work. Despite the increasing burden of his illness, Roger managed to carry out his responsibilities without flagging, demonstrating a strength of will and determination that was an inspiration to all of us.

Roger's courageous and increasingly painful struggle ended on March 5, 2001. NORC will find it difficult indeed to replace him.

SPECIAL RESOURCES

Kirk M. Wolter
Senior Vice President, Statistics
and Methodology

Barbara A. Bailer
Senior Vice President, Survey
Research

The design and operations of a field survey research study are crucial to reliability, validity, and credibility. Critical aspects of a study include design and selection of the sample; mode of interviewing (mail, telephone, field, internet); hiring, training, and management of interviewers; questionnaire design; sample management; data collection procedures; data coding, editing, and imputation; weighting; and variance estimation. All these aspects feed into the analysis of the data and the reporting of substantive findings. NORC organizes these crucial survey functions into four management categories: questionnaire design and survey methodology, data production, field operations, and sampling and weighting.

Survey Design and Operations

Questionnaire Design and Survey Methodology

Colm A. O'Muircheartaigh
Vice President and Director

NORC has been a leader in methodological innovation in survey research since its founding. Inherent in NORC's approach is the integration of theoretical developments into survey practice. Among current initiatives are comparing different respondent incentive strategies in a controlled randomized experiment and developing a web/internet response option in self-completion surveys.

NORC's inhouse resource group for the design, evaluation, and development of questionnaires uses a variety of approaches—cognitive interviews, expert review, and focus groups—to provide guidance to NORC project directors and associated scientists on the strengths and weaknesses of alternative data collection strategies. This group is developing an archive of questionnaires and questions spanning the range of topics covered in NORC surveys. They are also developing, in collaboration with others at the University of Chicago, a program of courses in survey research methods. This educational initiative, which is a cornerstone of NORC's professional development program, has a twofold purpose—educating and training NORC staff and University of Chicago faculty and students, and consolidating NORC as a center of excellence in all aspects of survey research methodology.

Production Centers

Jody L. Dougherty
Vice President and Director

NORC has two state-of-the-art production facilities devoted to telephone data collection and data preparation activities. One is in Chicago's downtown Loop area. The other is about 30 miles southwest of Chicago. Establishing two centers in separate locations with access to populations with different characteristics (e.g., language and hours of availability) allows for flexibility and diversity in the hiring of interviewers, clerks, and supervisors. The Loop facility has a 120-seat capacity and the Downers Grove facility a 136-seat capacity. Both are equipped to perform computer-assisted survey research functions. Tasks at the facilities include telephone data collection,

respondent locating and screening, survey response coding, hard copy document management, computer-assisted data entry, and survey material and corporate mailings. At peak times in the year 2000, total staffing levels at the two production centers reached 250 interviewers and clerks, 32 supervisors, and 6 survey coordinators.

Production center staff are chosen to represent the diverse backgrounds necessary to serve the needs of NORC's many data production functions. These include bilingual interviewers who speak Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese and other Asian languages. Work experience and educational background at both production centers are also varied. Some staff members come to NORC with previous production center experience in survey research, market research, and customer service. Others have experience in such areas as the medical field, social work, education, law, anthropology, broadcasting, engineering, and military service. Still others are small business owners, homemakers, students, artists, and musicians.

Field Operations Center

Charlene J. Weiss

Vice President and Director

Suzanne H. Bard

Associate Director

NORC supports a permanent field structure, managed by senior field staff, all of whom started as field interviewers at NORC over the past 25 years. Each of 12 regions is headed by a regional manager. These managers are responsible for recruiting, hiring, staffing, training, and developing/supporting all field interviewers and field managers within their region. The regional managers also manage field data collection projects and serve as liaisons with departments of NORC's central office that serve the field—particularly accounting, human resources, and information services. The 12 regional managers and about 20 of our contract field managers are full-time staff. NORC also has about 50 additional field managers—a group that can be expanded or contracted in response to NORC's field data collection needs.



Charlene J. Weiss, Barbara A. Bailar, Jody L. Dougherty, and Kirk M. Wolter

NORC's 700 currently active interviewers display a broad array of backgrounds, talents, and skills. NORC depends on this diversity to sustain its successful track record of high completion rates with markedly different target populations across widely varying types of communities. People have come to NORC's professional interviewing staff from such backgrounds as college professor, freelance photographer, writer, marathon runner, bilingual interpreter for the court system, adult literacy coordinator, retiree from the Internal Revenue Service and the military, social worker, and sky diver. Some interviewers on staff have grown up and continue to live in tiny rural communities where they are small business owners, ranchers, or community volunteers.

Sampling and Weighting

Rachel M. Harter
Director

Sample design and weighting are crucial to the quality of any survey data collection effort. The sample must be representative of the study's target population, or the survey statistics may be misleading and biased. It must also be as efficient as possible, to maximize reliability of the information within the constraints of the project budget. NORC uses only probability sampling—the only sampling method that ensures the representativeness and lack of bias crucial to high quality scientific studies. Its statisticians and methodologists have great depth of experience in using such techniques as stratification, clustering, and probability-proportional-to-size sampling, to maximize sample efficiency. They also design and execute sophisticated cross-sectional and longitudinal samples that achieve specified over-samples of targeted domains at minimum cost.

Weighting is almost always required to achieve absence of bias. NORC's survey statisticians and methodologists are world leaders in the development and calculation of survey weights and variance estimates. Weighting compensates for unequal probabilities of selection, screener nonresponse, subsampling, and main-interview nonresponse. It also permits calibration of survey statistics to known (or presumed known) population parameters. One current NORC initiative is assessing alternative weighting procedures for combining cases across parallel samples for a single population.

Information Systems

Product Management and Engineering

Joseph J. Taylor
Vice President

Daniel V. Walker
Software Development Manager

This department has three main functions: development of generalized software systems for NORC surveys (NORCSuite), provision of technology vision and leadership in developing and implementing information technology short- and long-range plans, and supporting and maintaining NORC's application software systems infrastructure. The product management and engineering group is responsible for development of application software, subsequent maintenance of such software, and software consulting for all NORC survey projects. The group's responsibilities include evaluation and implementation of NORC's software architecture for product development, database administration, and NORC's standard Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAI) system tools and applications. This group has completed a thorough evaluation of the Blaise CAI tool for implementation at NORC, and has successfully developed and deployed the systems used on NORC's initial web-based surveys.

Within the product management and engineering department, the software development group designs and implements high-quality software systems that support management and operations on all NORC survey projects. This group establishes and enforces NORC software development practices and standards, gives training and support for NORCSuite products, and provides custom development and technical consultation to NORC survey projects. The team is currently engaged in developing a state-of-the-art system to support the management and execution of NORC's Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) surveys, known as CM-Field.

Michael S. Tilkin
Senior Vice President and
Chief Information Officer

Information technology plays a critical role in meeting the demands of today's complex research and evaluation projects. From hardware and software infrastructure to data collection and distribution, NORC's information technology staff provide analysts with an advanced data, communication, and computing infrastructure. Services range from supporting survey operations, facilitating workflow via voice and data communication, supplying and maintaining both front-office and back-office systems, and providing a full range of advanced data processing services. Information services at NORC are organized into four departments: project management and engineering, computer applications development, administrative systems/technology support services, and computer services.

Computer Applications Development Center

Jack T. Covington
Vice President

This center provides application programming and project management services on NORC's survey projects. Working closely with the survey operations team, staff evaluate the technical requirement of each project and provide applications programming services to meet the challenging needs of the most complex survey projects. Staff prepare the sections of proposals related to technology solutions for survey research projects, and they design and support project-specific applications to fulfill project objectives. Control-reporting, survey instrument design, and data delivery are the key programming activities conducted by the center.

Administrative Systems/Technology Support

Allen W. Chereskin
Director

This group provides support for NORC's financial and administrative systems. These systems include accounting; resource management; and human resources, payroll, expense, and timekeeping systems. The group also provides help desk support for our central office and field staff on computer hardware- and software-related issues, and support to field interviewers for all CAPI projects.



Douglas D. Baum and Joseph J. Taylor



Michael Tilkin

Computer Services

Douglas D. Baum
Director

The computer services group is responsible for the overall planning, implementation, maintenance, and support of the NORC technical infrastructure. This includes the underlying hardware and software systems that support computing, data, and telecommunications. Major areas of responsibility include long-range planning for technology infrastructure, maintaining current computer operations, support of network infrastructure including LAN/WAN, tier-2 user support for data and telecommunications issues, and security.

Accomplishments in 2000 include upgrades to major servers, enhanced security measures including new firewalls, implementation of data collaboration, conferencing tools, implementation of a Storage Area Network (SAN) designed to provide greatly enhanced disk capacity, and general desktop upgrades that provide overall productivity enhancements. Continued enhancements coming this year include tools to improve interoffice communications (including an upgrade to the WAN and videoconferencing), enhancements to network security, and upgrades to desktop hardware and software tools.

Developing Directions

As information technology evolves at an ever faster pace, organizations are challenged to learn quickly and adapt to new ways of doing business. Thus, in addition to meeting today's demands, NORC's information technology group is charged with preparing the organization for the challenges of tomorrow. Leveraging web and wireless technologies, preparing for mixed-mode interviewing, and providing new types of data service are just some of the areas in which the information services group is continually expanding NORC's research capabilities.

Kathleen E. Parks
Administrative Director

The four research centers at NORC provide a collegial, interdisciplinary atmosphere in which University of Chicago faculty can conduct social science research as NORC research associates. This research may be part of the large-scale survey and analytic projects housed in NORC's related research departments, although that is not a requirement for center membership. The centers provide a supportive environment for these faculty members and their students, computing services, training programs, grants administration, services from NORC's special library (see page 36), workshops and conferences, and specialized services to meet the needs of individual projects. Three of the four centers receive general grant funds to support their infrastructure.

NORC's Research Centers

Alfred P. Sloan Center on Parents, Children & Work

Barbara L. Schneider and Linda J. Waite
Codirectors

This center is built on the conviction that studying the issues facing working parents and their children requires understanding the dynamics of working families—not only from the perspective of adults in the household, but also through the voices of the children. University of Chicago faculty from psychology, sociology, economics, child development, human development, and public policy work collaboratively to examine how families invest time and resources, how these choices are made, and the effects they have on the quality of relationships in the household and the resulting socialization of school-age children and adolescents.

Center on Demography and Economics of Aging

Linda J. Waite
Director

This center provides support to research projects in four key areas: demography of aging, economics of aging, health policy, and biodemography. Center associates are drawn from the University of Chicago departments of sociology, economics and business; the medical school; and the Harris School of Public Policy Studies. The center awards small pilot-project grants and seeks to develop an innovative international network to facilitate collaborative research ties and data resource development with the United Kingdom.

Ogburn-Stouffer Center for the Study of Social Organizations

Edward O. Laumann
Director

This center houses and supports social organization research and the sociology of education. It also provides on-the-job training for graduate students in the University of Chicago's sociology department.

Population Research Center

William Parish
Director

This center facilitates interdisciplinary population research by economists, sociologists, and other population scientists. Research in the center concentrates on the determinants of fertility decisions and their dynamics—timing and spacing—rather than on more traditional fertility analysis. Its training program in population and demography coordinates training for postdoctoral fellows and for graduate students in both the University of Chicago’s Division of the Social Sciences and its Harris School of Public Policy Studies.

Developing Directions

NORC research centers will focus their activities on building capacity to support social science research for their faculty associates, pursuing funding initiatives that complement and expand their existing research portfolios and enhancing the collaborative environment within NORC. Two new studies plan to examine the correlates of sexual behavior and sexually transmitted diseases. The first study will involve the analysis of three new data sets collected from China during the Chinese Health and Family Behavior project. The second study involves research on the social underpinnings of risky sexual behavior. Another new project will begin on alternative approaches to the evaluation of public policy interventions designed to foster human capital—analyzing the effects of tuition subsidies, family income supplements, and other subsidy policies on schooling attendance and consequences of schooling for earnings and employment. An interdisciplinary effort is also underway to establish a new Data Research and Development Center with researchers at NORC and the University of Chicago, to improve the research capacity of individuals engaged in interdisciplinary work in the areas of learning, instruction, and achievement.

University of Chicago Affiliation

The formal affiliation of NORC with the University of Chicago provides privileged access to the faculty and library resources of one of the world's premier research institutions.

Faculty Resources

The relationship between the University of Chicago and NORC is mutually beneficial in many ways. NORC provides University of Chicago faculty with stimulating intellectual challenges in important policy areas. The key to this collaboration lies in the interplay between NORC staff and University of Chicago faculty. Joint appointments provide benefits to both university and NORC departments that are more than the sum of their separate parts. So does faculty affiliation with NORC's research centers which, as already discussed, provide a collegial and supportive working environment for faculty and on-the-job training opportunities for graduate students. The University of Chicago's Division of the Social Sciences is particularly prominent in this connection. Additional enormous benefit derives from teaming agreements and more informal collaboration between NORC and other institutions affiliated with the university. The most important of these other units for NORC's work are:

Chapin Hall Center for Children
Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy Studies
Joint Center for Poverty Research
School of Social Service Administration
School of Medicine
University of Chicago Hospitals

Library Resources

Patricia D. Cloud
NORC Library Director

NORC's library is a valuable specialty library in its own right. It maintains a comprehensive collection of monographic and periodical literature in survey research methodology and history, as well as selected literature on statistics, education, health care administration, public health, demography, program evaluation, and U.S. and international census and vital statistics.

The considerable independent value of NORC's library is immeasurably enhanced by its affiliation with the University of Chicago, with respect to both user services and acquisitions. First, the affiliation makes available to NORC's library the wide range of resources of the University of Chicago Libraries. NORC staff may, through both its library and all networked NORC workstations, make full use of a large and growing number of specialized online resources that the University of Chicago Libraries provide to their patrons, as well as interlibrary loan, document delivery, and other special library services. Second, availability of one of the world's preeminent research collections—through the University of Chicago Libraries—allows NORC to concentrate its own library resources on the acquisition of highly specialized materials that directly support current NORC research.

SELECTED RECENT PUBLICATIONS

For information on availability of recent publications by NORC's core analysts and research center associates, please visit our website at <http://www.norc.uchicago.edu>.

You may also contact the NORC library:

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RECENT SELECTED PUBLICATIONS BY NORC STAFF AND RESEARCH CENTER ASSOCIATES

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