



Social Science Research in Action

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About NORC at the University of Chicago

NORC at the University of Chicago is an independent research organization headquartered in downtown Chicago with additional offices on the University of Chicago's campus and in the DC Metro area. NORC also supports a nationwide field staff as well as international research operations. With clients throughout the world, NORC collaborates with government agencies, foundations, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and businesses to provide data and analysis that support informed decision making in key areas including health, education, economics, crime, justice, energy, security, and the environment. NORC's experience in data collection, analysis, and dissemination—coupled with deep subject matter expertise—provides the foundation for effective solutions.



NORC researchers study a broad range of topics, often generating results that transcend the confines of specific disciplines. But within certain important areas, NORC has made a conspicuous and lasting mark. Our experts, many of them senior research fellows, are highly respected in their fields and frequently publish their work in peer-reviewed journals. Joining with our technology and survey operations staff on interdisciplinary teams, NORC experts conduct their work within the following research departments and Academic Research Centers, which are closely affiliated with the University of Chicago.

Research Departments

- Economics, Labor, and Population Studies
- Education and Child Development Studies
- Health Care Research
- International Projects
- Public Health Research
- Security, Energy, and Environment
- Statistics and Methodology
- Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Criminal Justice Studies

Academic Research Centers

- Center for Advancing Research and Communications in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Center on the Demography and Economics of Aging
- Center for the Study of Politics and Society
- Cultural Policy Center
- Joint Center for Education Research
- Population Research Center
- Ogburn-Stouffer Center for the Study of Social Organizations



NORC AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Originally founded as the National Opinion Research Center, NORC and the University of Chicago came together in 1947 when NORC's board and its newly appointed director, Clyde Hart, moved the organization from the University of Denver to Chicago. At the time, the University of Chicago's sociology department was experiencing a surge in worldwide prominence through its work in symbolic interactionism and use of new methods in field research.

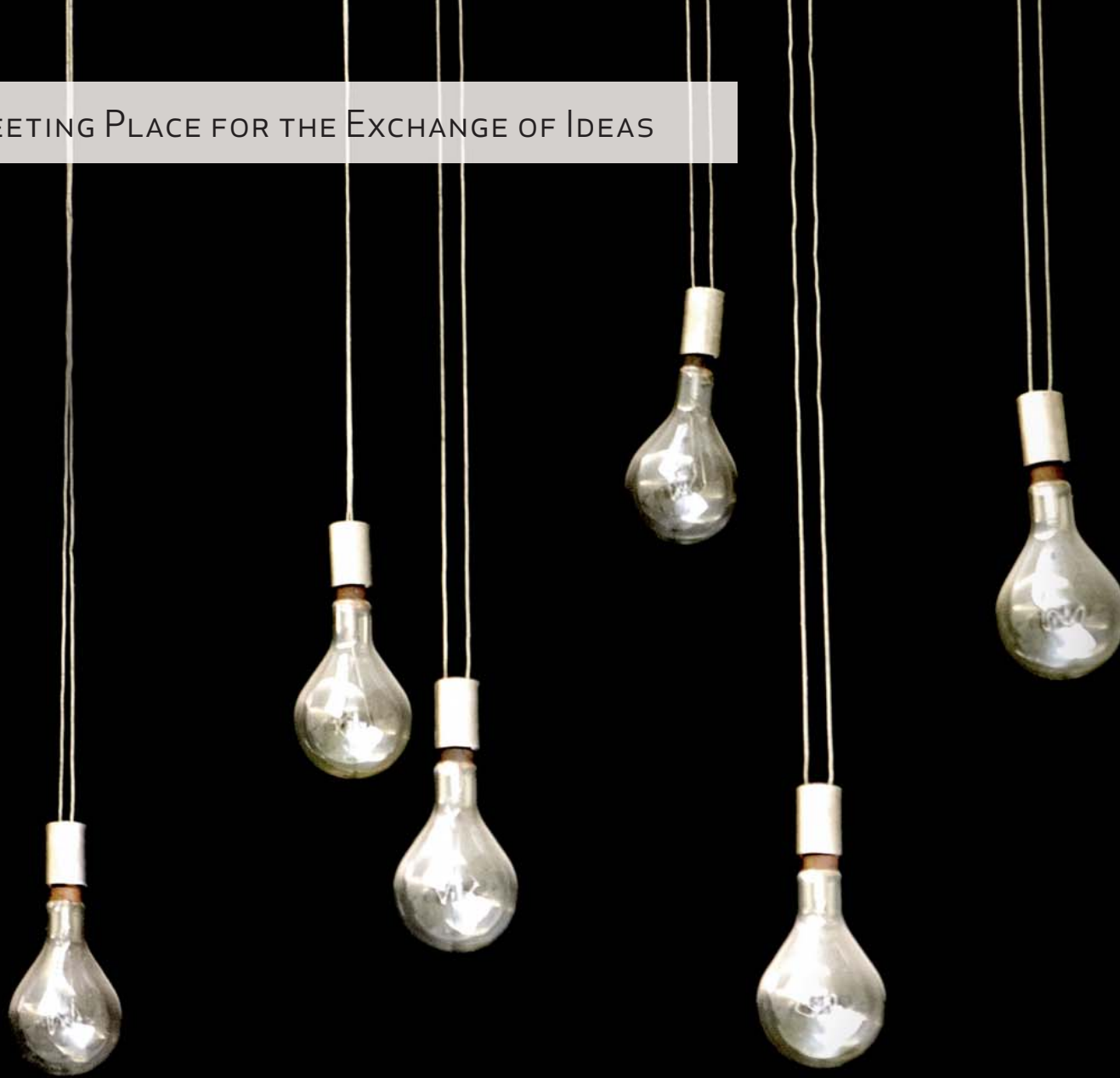
This affiliation marked a new era for survey research in America. Along with the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University and the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, university-based research centers of distinction helped elevate the field's status and produce opportunities for active exploration of new scientific data, methods, and approaches.

Founded in 1941 as the first academic survey institute, NORC gained prominence through its work in wartime public opinion polling. Wartime research helped link survey research with quantification, and NORC was a major beneficiary of projects funded through the Office of War Information.

Through the years, the collaboration has helped generate important methodological and technological advances, as well as new bodies of knowledge for public policy debate. In addition to assisting the University of Chicago on key initiatives in the social science and health studies arenas, NORC has helped faculty understand and apply new survey research techniques and enriched graduate student experiences through hands-on exposure to research projects.



A MEETING PLACE FOR THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS



AAPOR AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NORC

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) is considered to be the pre-eminent organization in the United States for researchers, academicians, government leaders, and policy experts who participate in public opinion surveys, survey research, and market research.

The relationship between NORC and AAPOR began with AAPOR's founding in 1947. NORC founder Harry Field had previously convened a group of 75 industry leaders and practitioners at the First International Conference on Public Opinion Research in Central City, Colorado, to discuss the industry and the formation of an association.

Field envisioned the newly formed organization as a meeting ground for practitioners to develop and discuss the science of the field. Today that vision lives on as members gather to confer about such issues as uniform standards and practices, new technologies and sampling approaches, plus methodological advances.

In addition to providing a forum for members to share common problems and opportunities, AAPOR publishes the highly regarded *Public Opinion Quarterly* and recognizes leadership through its industry awards program. Through the years, NORC professionals have held leadership roles within the association and received many prestigious AAPOR awards—for innovation, scholarship, and lifetime achievement.

Distinguishing Marks

1946 Harry Field convenes the First International Conference on Public Opinion Research in Central City, Colorado • **1947** AAPOR is formed and Clyde Hart, Director of NORC, becomes its President; the first AAPOR conference is held in Williamstown, Massachusetts • **1956** Herbert Hyman receives AAPOR's Julian L. Woodward Award • **1959** Herbert Hyman is named President of AAPOR • **1960** Clyde Hart receives AAPOR's Julian L. Woodward Award • **1965** Harry Field receives AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award • **1967** Paul Sheatsley is named President of AAPOR • **1980** Shirley Star receives AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award • **1982** Paul Sheatsley receives AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award • **1987** Norman Bradburn and Seymour Sudman receive AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award • **1991** Norman Bradburn is named President of AAPOR • **1992** James Davis receives AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award • **2000** Tom W. Smith and William Lefes, along with four other industry peers, receive AAPOR's Innovators Award • **2002** Tom W. Smith receives AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award • **2003** Tom W. Smith, Rob Daves, and Paul Lavrakas receive AAPOR's Innovators Award • **2006** Norman H. Nie receives AAPOR's Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement Award; Kenneth Rasinski, Roger Tourangeau, and Lance J. Rips receive AAPOR's Book Award • **2010** Seymour Sudman, Norman Bradburn, and Norbert Schwartz receive AAPOR's Book Award

HAPPINESS IS A BALANCING ACT

When University of Chicago psychology professor Norman Bradburn and a team of NORC investigators set out in the 1960s to better understand the factors that influence an individual's sense of well-being, they didn't expect the reaction from the mental health community to be quite so, well, negative.

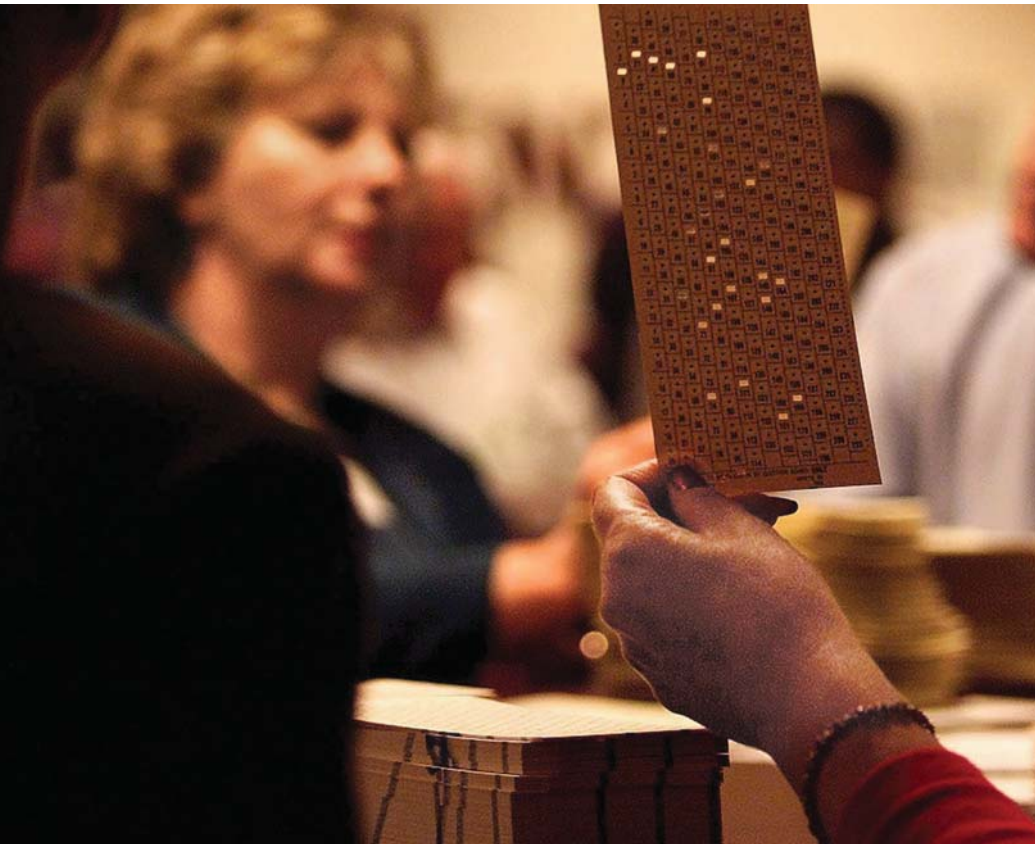
The nation was evolving into a more complex society. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 posed a real threat to American safety. Mental health professionals were concerned that minor illnesses, like generalized anxiety disorders, were on the rise. Psychiatrists, who focused on mitigating negative thinking, didn't see much value in the study of life satisfaction.

What came to be known as the NORC "happiness studies" heralded a new era in public health research—providing a social-psychological framework in which to view the relationship between individuals' life circumstances and their psychological reactions to them. These panel studies tracked five sample populations in three cities—each with different economic circumstances—to learn what occurs during times of social stress and to understand the interplay between environment and mental health.

The data have helped influence enormous changes in approaches to mental health—and inspired today's "positive psychology" movement. Bradburn's Affect Balance Scale remains one of the most widely used psychological measures of well-being.



GETTING TO THE HEART OF VOTER INTENT



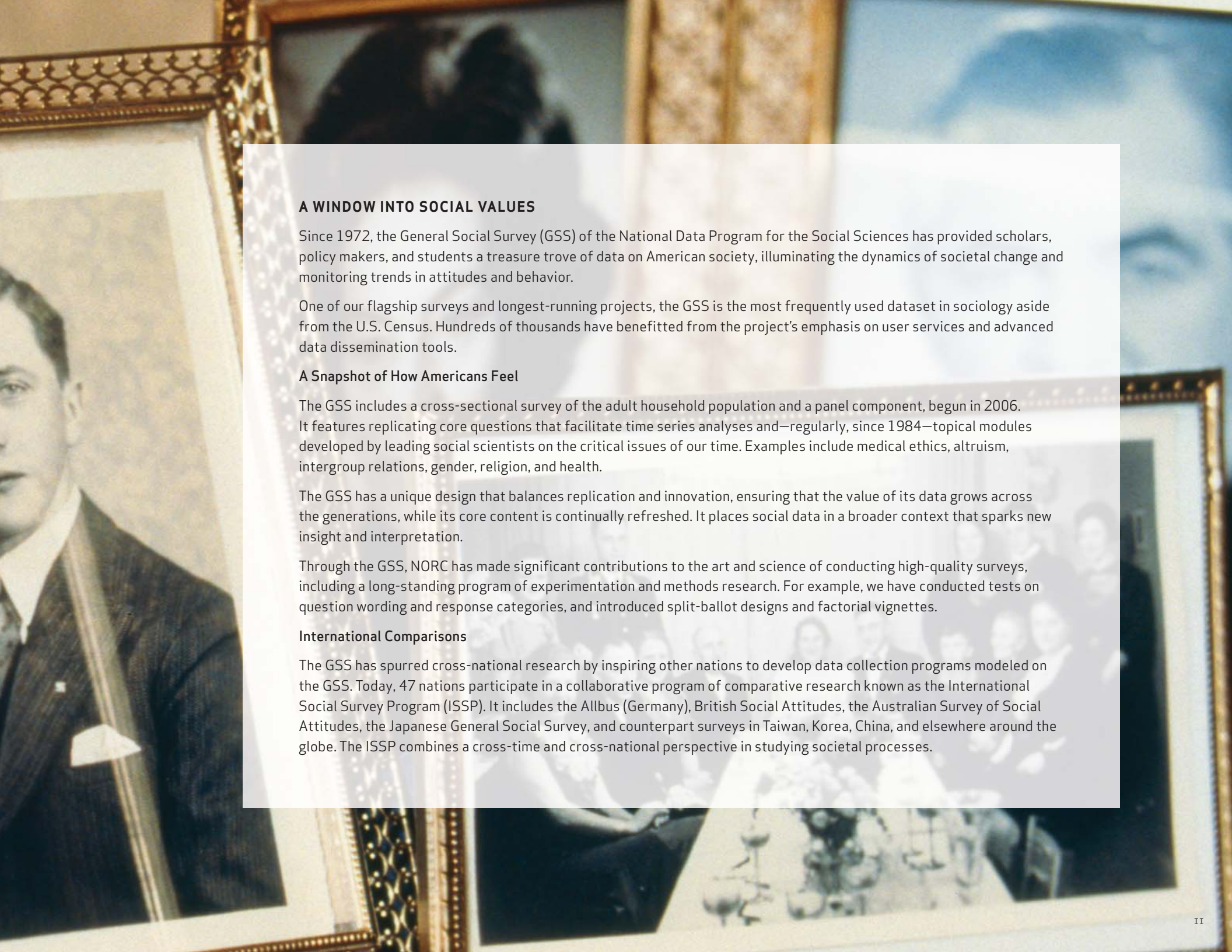
Election Day 2000 was anything but ordinary. As America awaited the news of who its next president would be, a noteworthy number of voters in Florida entered the voting booth at their local precinct. What they didn't know was that their interactions with the balloting system would result in their voices becoming null and void.

By the end of the evening, the race was too close to call. The outcome of the election would come down to the Florida tally—with 180,000 uncounted votes up in the air.

In 2001, eight major news media companies called upon NORC to conduct an in-depth inventory of the uncounted ballots. Our goal was not to identify a winner but rather to study the reliability of various ballot-counting systems in the 67 Florida counties. The news media used the raw data to produce analyses and stories on what the uncounted ballots revealed, while state and local governments around the country used the information to make better decisions on voting systems.

AMERICA ACROSS THE DECADES





A WINDOW INTO SOCIAL VALUES

Since 1972, the General Social Survey (GSS) of the National Data Program for the Social Sciences has provided scholars, policy makers, and students a treasure trove of data on American society, illuminating the dynamics of societal change and monitoring trends in attitudes and behavior.

One of our flagship surveys and longest-running projects, the GSS is the most frequently used dataset in sociology aside from the U.S. Census. Hundreds of thousands have benefitted from the project's emphasis on user services and advanced data dissemination tools.

A Snapshot of How Americans Feel

The GSS includes a cross-sectional survey of the adult household population and a panel component, begun in 2006. It features replicating core questions that facilitate time series analyses and—regularly, since 1984—topical modules developed by leading social scientists on the critical issues of our time. Examples include medical ethics, altruism, intergroup relations, gender, religion, and health.

The GSS has a unique design that balances replication and innovation, ensuring that the value of its data grows across the generations, while its core content is continually refreshed. It places social data in a broader context that sparks new insight and interpretation.

Through the GSS, NORC has made significant contributions to the art and science of conducting high-quality surveys, including a long-standing program of experimentation and methods research. For example, we have conducted tests on question wording and response categories, and introduced split-ballot designs and factorial vignettes.

International Comparisons

The GSS has spurred cross-national research by inspiring other nations to develop data collection programs modeled on the GSS. Today, 47 nations participate in a collaborative program of comparative research known as the International Social Survey Program (ISSP). It includes the Allbus (Germany), British Social Attitudes, the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, the Japanese General Social Survey, and counterpart surveys in Taiwan, Korea, China, and elsewhere around the globe. The ISSP combines a cross-time and cross-national perspective in studying societal processes.

HOW WELL DO OUR SCHOOLS PREPARE TOMORROW'S CONTRIBUTORS?

NORC'S FOOTPRINT IN EDUCATION RESEARCH

- 1941 Denver Adult Education Needs
- 1943 The Public Looks at Education
- 1945 Reading Habits
- 1955 Academic Freedom Among Teachers in Colleges and Universities
- 1958 A Study of School Climates in High Schools
Evaluation of the Great Books Program
Evaluation of Work-Study Programs in Higher Education
- 1961 Economic Factors Affecting Graduate Student Careers
Longitudinal Study of 1961 College Graduates
- 1962 Uses of Education Among Adults and Adolescents
- 1963 The Social Effects of Catholic Education
- 1964 College Career Plans
Plans and Experiences of Women of the 1964
College Graduating Class
- 1965 Head Start Evaluation Study
- 1968 Decision Making Regarding School Desegregation in 95 Cities
Profiles of Catholic Higher Education
- 1974 The Social Effects of Catholic Education, Replication
- 1975 Reaction to Court-Ordered School Desegregation in Boston
- 1976 Study of Compensatory Education Programs
- 1978 High School & Beyond: A National Longitudinal Study
- 1980 Social Networks in Education
Enrollment Trends in Non-Public Schools
- 1984 High School & Beyond and NLS-72 Followup Studies
- 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988
- 1992 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty
- 1994 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, Followups
Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Cohort, Phase I
- 1996 Study of Opportunities for and Barriers to Family
Involvement in Education
- 1997 Doctorate Data Project
- 2000 National Evaluation of Comprehensive School Reform
National Longitudinal Study of No Child Left Behind
American Rhodes Scholars
- 2001 Survey of Earned Doctorates
Survey of Doctoral Recipients
Gates Millennium Scholars' Tracking and Longitudinal Study
Randomized Evaluation of Success for All
After the JD Longitudinal Study
- 2002 Washington State Achievers Study
- 2004 Evaluations of Mathematics and Science Partnerships
- 2007 National Survey of Algebra Teachers
Chicago Public Schools Parent Survey
Evaluation of the Growth Model Pilot Program
- 2009 Development of Accessible Methodologies and Software
in Hierarchical Models with Missing Data

A LOOK AT THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

NORC has played a vital role in helping federal and state policy makers better understand primary, secondary, and postsecondary school experiences and their impact on the educational, vocational, and personal development of America's youth.

In 1978, the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) asked us to conduct research on the factors affecting achievement of high school students. The issue of school effectiveness—a breakthrough idea at the time—was generating a great deal of public interest and fueling heated political debates.

High School & Beyond was the second of three major national longitudinal studies sponsored by NCES. Led by University of Chicago professor and NORC Research Associate James S. Coleman, its design was shaped by extensive input from policy and advocacy groups, as well as political leaders with an interest in secondary education. Unlike its predecessor, the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, High School & Beyond tracked the educational experiences of both seniors and sophomores (to better understand educational growth), and measured other relevant factors like family status and future occupational orientation. Its aim was to provide interested parties with analyses of a number of aspects of high school student development.

From a policy perspective, High School & Beyond delivered critical measures and created momentum for value-added analysis on a school's impact on student achievement. Ultimately, it helped influence the policy reforms of the 1980s.

We continue to expand our research footprint in the area of education and achievement. Distinguished NORC colleagues who have made significant contributions to this field of study, along with the growing list of prestigious organizations we serve, are testament to our commitment.

A TYPICAL DAY AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE



How often do Americans visit a doctor's office? What prompts them to make the trip? What form of medical care are they seeking, and what are their doctors providing?

Before 1973, little was known about the hundreds of millions of office visits Americans were making to physicians each year, and yet office visits represent the majority of encounters a patient has with a physician. From a public policy perspective, this lack of knowledge had implications on the proper planning, delivery, and administration of services at health care facilities—and on the training provided to future physicians as they prepared to enter private practice.

NORC was instrumental in launching the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey—the first-ever national study aimed at collecting systematic data on medical care delivered to patients by office-based physicians. Working with the National Center for Health Statistics and a national panel of medical and public health experts, we devised and tested a methodology for sampling office-based physicians and inducing them to report basic information about the patient visits they received during a randomly selected week of the calendar year. Subsequently, we produced a modified probability sample of physicians practicing in 87 localities across the nation, designed the survey instrument, and collected and processed data from about 3,000 physicians per year on the details of about 40,000 office visits. Senior Study Director Paul B. Sheatsley successfully guided this project at NORC from inception through its first ten annual cycles.

Nearly 25 years later, the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, which has been conducted in recent decades by the U.S. Census Bureau, is an integral part of the ambulatory care component of the National Health Care Survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics.

Public concern over reports of widespread drug use by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam—in particular, heroin abuse—escalated as troops prepared to return home at war's end. Officials grew concerned over social problems that could arise from an influx of returnees suffering from addiction; America was already dealing with a growing drug culture back home.

President Nixon created the Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention in 1971 to seek solutions. Director and former University of Chicago psychiatrist Jerome Jaffe implemented universal urine testing on returning soldiers to understand the scope of the problem, and to plan for appropriate treatment. The military waived its traditional court-martial response toward troubled soldiers. This action represented a radical change in drug policy, with a federal commitment to treatment.

Lee N. Robins of Washington University, with NORC as subcontractor, received federal funding to conduct the Vietnam Veterans Drug Interview Survey in order to research the extent and persistence of drug use among returnees and to provide guidance for planning support services. A random sample of Army-enlisted males who departed Vietnam in September 1971 were interviewed and gave urine samples once stateside, then again three years later.

This classic epidemiological study challenged previously held views on the natural history and irreversibility of addiction. It was notable for its sample design, low refusal rates, and the importance of its findings.



ILLUMINATING COMMUNITY NEEDS





A CONTINUUM OF HOME, NEIGHBORHOOD, AND SOCIETY

Since its earliest days, NORC has focused on helping communities address critical social issues. Though these efforts have taken varied forms, NORC has continued its commitment to the public good and put innovative best practices in social science research at the service of diverse communities struggling to overcome their most daunting and sensitive challenges.

Transforming Poor Urban Neighborhoods

NORC has worked with the Annie E. Casey Foundation since 2001 to conduct research in ten U.S. cities to evaluate their Making Connections initiative. Making Connections seeks to improve neighborhood conditions by engaging residents and local organizations in identifying and designing initiatives for families and children. The survey data are used by local organizations to assess their efforts and to inform new initiatives, and by scholars studying poor urban communities.

Eliminating Health Disparities

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) national Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program helps communities identify and eliminate health disparities among racial and ethnic minority groups. Data provided by the REACH Survey, conducted by NORC from 2000 to 2005 and again since 2008, enable the CDC to gauge the success of its program and better understand community needs.

Life After Internment

During the World War II internment of Japanese-Americans, NORC worked with Navy Lieutenant Alexander H. Leighton and his researchers—including some internees—from the Sociological Research Project. These surveys examined residents at the Poston, Arizona, internment camp. In 1944, NORC-trained evacuees published an article in *Public Opinion Quarterly* exploring internees' views about life after Poston.

The Impact of Relocation

Between 2002 and 2009, NORC interviewed residents relocated from dilapidated public housing as part of the city of Chicago's Plan for Transformation. This research, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, followed residents as they moved to private market housing, new mixed income housing, or rehabilitated public housing to learn about their housing, neighborhood integration, economic hardships, and other issues. A January 2010 special issue of the journal *Housing Policy Debate*, edited by NORC's Catherine Haggerty and Margery Austin Turner of the Urban Institute, considered the survey findings and the CHA's broader efforts to transform public housing.

A LOOK AT THE COST AND USE OF MEDICAL CARE

NORC has participated in a host of influential studies on health care costs, and on access to and use of medical services. Our collaboration with the Health Information Foundation (HIF) represents an early example, starting with the 1953 National Study on Family Medical Costs and Voluntary Health Insurance, led by NORC Study Director Jacob Feldman. That study, and its successors in the 1970s, foreshadowed major federally funded health care studies of later decades.

The HIF-NORC series was not the first attempt to collect health data to support health policy formation. The Committee on the Cost of Medical Care, organized in 1927 with wide foundation support "...to study the economic aspects of care and prevention of illness in the United States..." made landmark contributions. The first National Health Survey funded by the Public Health Service followed in 1935.

By 1950, concern grew among foundations, private industry, and government about the rising cost and burden of medical care. Many lacked access to employer-provided insurance, a relatively new phenomenon. The need for updated and accurate national data on health care expenditures was one factor that motivated the initial HIF-NORC study. Rising costs, accompanied by dynamic change in how medical services were used and structured, prompted its continuation through successive rounds. HIF, which had been based in New York, was reconstituted as the Center for Health Administration Studies (CHAS) at the University of Chicago in 1962. The University became our study partner.

The HIF-CHAS-NORC studies marked our first true, national area probability sample surveys. They signaled a shift away from opinion surveys at NORC toward "factuals" or behavior surveys. The new focus on collecting "true" information, rather than attitudes or opinions, called for radical change in how we trained our interviewers. HIF-CHAS-NORC surveys sought to validate household interviews by gaining access to medical provider records and administrative data. "Record check" surveys are now an integral part of today's health care surveys.



1920s

- 1927** Committee on the Cost of Medical Care is established
- 1928** Sir Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin
- 1929** Precursor of Blue Cross begins at Baylor University

Stock market crash ushers in Great Depression

1970s

- Women enter medical profession in rising numbers*
- 1970** Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is created
 - 1974** Consumer Product Safety Act is enacted
 - 1977** National Center for Health Services Research launches National Medical Care Expenditure Survey

1930s

- 1935** First government health insurance bill is introduced in Congress

Social Security Act is enacted

First National Health Survey is conducted
- 1939** Senator Robert F. Wagner introduces National Health Bill

1980s

- 1981** First vaccine is unveiled for Hepatitis B
- 1983** AIDS retrovirus is identified
- 1984** Legislation is passed to make generic drugs more widely available
- 1985** Emergency Deficit Control Act (Gramm-Rudman) sets limits on federal spending; balanced budget by FY1991

1940s

- 1943** FDR's State of the Union Address calls for "...cradle to the grave" social insurance

IRS exempts employer-purchased group health insurance from taxable gross income
- 1944** Selman Waksman discovers streptomycin
- 1946** Hospital Survey and Construction Act (Hill-Burton Program) is passed

1990s

- Human Genome Project is funded by Department of Energy and National Institutes of Health*
- 1990** In U.S. 139,765 people have HIV/AIDS, with a 60 percent fatality rate
 - 1996** Welfare reform is passed: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant
 - 1999** Americans lacking health insurance rises to 44 million by end of decade

1950s

- 1950** Price of hospital care doubles during decade
- 1951** Truman convenes President's Commission on the Health Needs of the Nation
- 1953** Dr. Jonas Salk successfully tests polio vaccine

First open-heart surgery at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia
- 1956** Congress authorizes U.S. National Health Survey; The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) is established

2000s

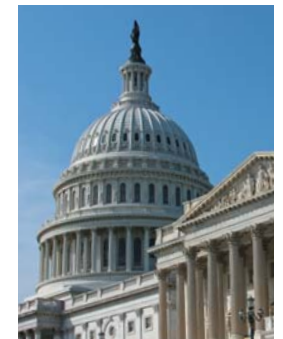
- 2003** SARS virus alert is given at World Health Organization
- 2006** Voluntary Part D outpatient prescription drug benefit becomes available
- 2007** 50th Anniversary of National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)
- 2010** 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act signed into law

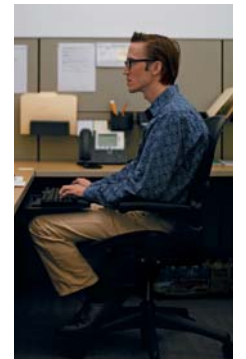
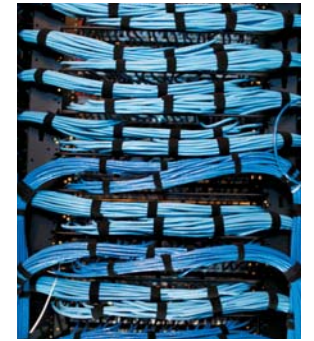
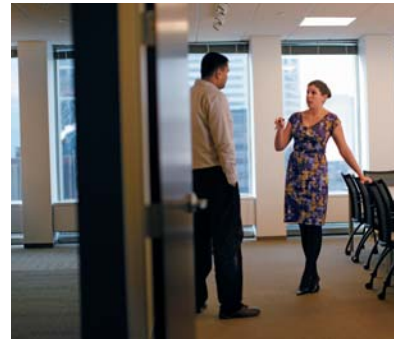
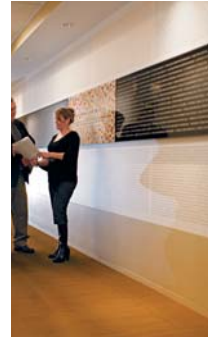
1960s

- 1960** Concern rises over doctor shortages
- 1961** White House Conference on Aging is convened
- 1965** LBJ signs Medicare-Medicaid legislation

Warning labels are required on cigarette packages
- 1967** Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program is created for needy children

NORC's rich history serves as the foundation for our current and future work. Our experts, our locations in Chicago, the DC area, and elsewhere—and of course our data and methods—are part of the larger evolution of social science research. We are proud to be part of the field's distinguished past and exciting future. The following timeline features some of the highlights of modern survey research, beginning in the late nineteenth century.





1880s

1890s

1900s

1910s

1920s

Pivotal Events and Occurrences

1880s: Pre-modern social surveys investigate conditions of the poor in Britain.

1900s: The Settlement House movement in the United States and Britain spurs studies of society's disenfranchised.

1910s: Early emergence of the field of market research.

1915-1935: The Chicago School of Urban Sociology rises to prominence with Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, Louis Wirth, and Ellsworth Faris as leading figures in the early years.

Foundings

1892: The first sociology department in the United States is founded by Albion W. Small at the University of Chicago.
1895: *The American Journal of Sociology* begins publication.

1902: The U.S. Census Bureau establishes its first permanent office.

1911: The Bureau of Business Research is established at Harvard University's Graduate School of Business, creating an influential center for marketing studies, sampling, and analysis.

1911: J. George Frederick forms the nation's first market research firm, the Business Bourse.

1923: Arthur C. Nielsen, Sr. launches the ACNielsen company, specializing in consumer-focused marketing and media research.

1924: The Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina is founded. It focuses on cultural history and social problems of the South. Howard W. Odum, a noted sociologist, is appointed its first director.

Landmark Studies



1889: British sociologist Charles Booth (1840-1916) conducts a landmark study on the social conditions in London; he publishes *Life and Labour of People in London* in 17 volumes. It is widely considered the first great empirical study in the social science tradition.



1896: Danish scientist Johannes A.G. Fibiger (1867-1928) conducts the first clinical trial utilizing random allocation, a milestone in the history of clinical trials. The trial was conducted with diphtheria patients in Copenhagen; Fibiger published his results in 1898.

1895: *Hull House Maps and Papers*, about the working poor on the Near West Side of Chicago, is published by Florence Kelley and Jane Addams.

1899: W.E.B. DuBois studies the economic conditions of Philadelphia's urban poor, doing extensive field data collection and systematic observations. He publishes *The Philadelphia Negro*.

1907-08: The Pittsburgh Survey, a major sociological study of the Progressive Era, is conducted by Paul Kellogg, a journalist and social worker. He produces a six-volume publication.

1918: The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, conducted by W.I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, becomes a pathbreaking sociological study of emigrants.

1929: Classic studies about "small-town" America are conducted by researchers Robert and Helen Lynd, resulting in the first of two books, *Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture*.

1929-1933: *Recent Social Trends in the United States* reports key findings as part of President Hoover's Research Committee on Social Trends. William F. Ogburn (1886-1959) is its Director of Research.

Sampling / Statistics

1895: Anders Nicolai Kiaer (1838-1919), Director of Statistics Norway, presents his influential paper on "representative sampling" at a meeting of the International Statistical Institute in Bern, Switzerland. He argues for the use of sampling in official government statistics.

1906-1915: Arthur Lyon Bowley, English statistician and economist, pioneers the use of sampling methods in his studies of working-class conditions in Reading, England, published in *Livelihood and Poverty*.

1925: *Statistical Methods for Research Workers*, by R.A. Fisher, creates a twentieth-century foundation for statistics.

Methodology

1920s: Attitudinal scales are developed and become a significant methodological tool in social research.

1929: Louis Leon Thurstone and E.J. Chave publish *The Measurement of Attitude*.

Technology



1890: Herman Hollerith invents the "electronic tabulating machine" to help process data more quickly for the 1890 U.S. Census. He is inspired by the hole punch system of a railway ticket.

1930s

1930s: President Roosevelt (FDR), as part of the New Deal, launches national studies on Depression-era conditions in America.

1933: The first statistical laboratory is established at Iowa State University; its early emphasis is on agricultural data analysis.

1933: The Committee on Government Statistics and Information Services (COGSIS) is formed, sponsored jointly by the American Statistical Association and the Social Science Research Council, with initial funding by the Rockefeller Foundation. COGSIS brings major attention to the use of probability sampling on new federal studies.



1935: George Gallup founds the American Institute of Public Opinion, a precursor to The Gallup Organization.

1937: *Public Opinion Quarterly* (POQ) begins publication.

1937: The Rockefeller Foundation funds the Radio Project to study mass communications. Sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld is appointed director.



1939: The Works Progress Administration (WPA) puts into operation the Sample Survey of Unemployment. It is the largest of numerous 1930s-era, probability-based sample surveys pioneered by the WPA. It becomes the forerunner to the Current Employment Statistics Program, which is operated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

1934: Jerzy Neyman (1894-1981), a Polish statistician, publishes *On Two Different Aspects of the Representative Method: The Method of Stratified Sampling and the Method of Purposive Selection*.

1936: *Literary Digest* poll fiasco. Sampling error leads the magazine to predict that Alf Landon will defeat FDR in the presidential election. Pollsters Gallup, Roper, and Crossley all pick FDR, who wins easily.



1932: Rensis Likert (1903-1987) introduces a multi-item summated rating scale to measure psychological attitudes, which becomes known as the Likert Scale.

\$68 million
132.2 million

1940s

1940s: Large numbers of social scientists enter U.S. government service to support the allied war effort. They join the Office of War Information (OWI), which pioneers the use of wartime surveys to gauge civilian morale and attitudes.

1940s: Following the end of World War II, federal support for social science research rises sharply.



1941: NORC is founded at the University of Denver.

1944: The Radio Project moves from Princeton University to Columbia University, leading to the creation of the Bureau for Applied Social Research.



1946: The Central City, Colorado Convention is convened by Harry Field; it lays the groundwork for the founding of AAPOR in 1947.

1946: The Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan debuts, started by Rensis Likert.

1947: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research is established at Williams College by Elmo Roper (1900-1971).

1948: The RAND Corporation, an independent, nonprofit organization, is founded in Santa Monica, California.

1946: *The Survey of Consumer Attitudes* is initiated by economist-psychologist George Katona at the University of Michigan. With a mixture of private and federal funding, it continues for decades and eventually forms part of the U.S. Leading Economic Indicators.



1949: Samuel Stouffer publishes *The American Soldier*, a landmark four-volume study of the attitudes and behaviors of military personnel in World War II. It was conducted under the auspices of the War Department and is considered one of the most influential social science studies of the twentieth century.



1949: Polls incorrectly predict Dewey over Truman in the 1948 Presidential election. The Social Science Research Council commissions its Committee on Polls and Election Forecasts to probe reasons for faulty predictions. C. Frederick Mosteller describes the findings in *The Pre-Election Polls of 1948*.



1945: NORC obtains survey results within 24-48 hours of initiation on its telegraphic surveys, which were conducted over a ten-year period for the U.S. State Department. They represent an early example of quick-turnaround surveys.



1947: NORC's Denver affiliate, ORC, enlists the use of a propeller plane to survey farmers in rural areas.



1944: Clerks conduct manual coding of paper questionnaires in NORC's Denver offices.

1950s

1950s: McCarthyism and the perceived threats to civil liberties spur classic studies by sociologists Samuel Stouffer, Paul Lazarsfeld, and others.

1958: Research Triangle Institute (RTI) is founded in North Carolina, incorporated at Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University.

1956: With passage of the National Health Survey Act, the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is inaugurated the following year. This major cross-sectional household survey, conducted annually, becomes a pillar of the nation's health data system. In 2007, it celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

1953: *Sample Survey Methods and Theory* is published by Morris H. Hansen, William N. Hurwitz, and William G. Madow; it becomes recognized as the standard work on survey sampling.

1950s: Focus groups become a common investigatory approach among market researchers, but their use by social scientists lags. In 1956, sociologist Robert K. Merton (1910-2003)—considered the “father of focus groups”—expounds on this emerging methodology, along with Marjorie Fiske and Patricia L. Kendall, in *The Focused Interview*.



1950: Punched card counter-sorters are an early aid to data tabulation in the pre-computer era in survey research.

\$128 million
179.3 million

1960s

1960s: During the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, large-scale social surveys are increasingly used by government agencies as tools for program planning and evaluation.

1961: Westat, Inc. in Rockville, Maryland, is co-founded by Edward Bryant, Donald King, and James Daley.

1962: The Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) is established at the University of Michigan.

1965: Abt Associates debuts in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1968: Mathematica Policy Research, a New Jersey-based firm, is formed.

1968: The Urban Institute is established, makes its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

1968: The New Jersey Income Maintenance Experiment is launched by the Office of Economic Opportunity; related studies begin later in Gary, Seattle, Denver, and rural America.

1968: The Panel Survey of Income Dynamics (PSID) begins. Initially, the PSID is funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity, but in later decades the National Science Foundation becomes its major supporter.

1969: The U.S. Department of Education funds the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which becomes widely known as "The Nation's Report Card."



1960: W. Edwards Deming writes *Sample Designs in Business Research*.

1965: *Survey Sampling* is published by Leslie Kish.



1954: Herbert Hyman, along with William J. Cobb, Jacob J. Feldman, Clyde Hart, and Charles Herbert Stember, present results of experiments on interviewer effects in *Interviewing in Social Research*.

1960s: Charles Cannell and colleagues at the University of Michigan develop behavior coding, a methodology used to evaluate both interviewers and questionnaire items.

1967: Warren Mitofsky, at CBS News, conducts the nation's first election day exit polls; henceforth, exit polling becomes an integral part of America's elections. Mitofsky also developed probability-based models to estimate the election-day vote.



1960s: The first operational geographic information system (GIS) is set up by Canada's Department of Agriculture in 1962. Two years later, the Laboratory for Computer Graphics and Spatial Analysis at Harvard University is formed, leading to the proliferation of industry applications.

1960s: Large mainframes are used to tabulate and process survey data faster and more efficiently than previous methods.

1960: The U.S. Decennial Census uses optical scanning to replace the manual card punch.

1968: The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is developed by Norman Nie, Dale Bent, and Hadlai Hull.

1970s

1970s: Requests for proposals (RFPs) become a preferred vehicle for government procurements.

1970s: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is created during President Richard Nixon's Administration. Federally sponsored surveys must receive OMB clearance.

1972: The World Fertility Survey (WFS) begins. The WFS becomes the largest cross-national survey in the history of social science. WFS interviewed 341,300 women of childbearing age from 61 countries. Sponsors were the Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities.



1972: The General Social Survey (GSS), sponsored by the National Science Foundation, makes its debut.

1973: The Eurobarometer, a public opinion survey tool used to gauge public sentiment on issues relating to the European Union, is launched by the European Commission.

1975: Congress passes the Privacy Act of 1974, which provides new protections for respondents under federally sponsored surveys. The law affects how firms collect, use, and disseminate survey information. *The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research* is released in 1978.

1977: The National Science Foundation provides funding for a reorganized National Election Studies Program. Its precursor started in the 1950s at the University of Michigan.

1977: The National Medical Care Expenditure Survey (NMCES) begins. Funded by the National Center for Health Services Research (NCHSR), it is the first in a series of federal studies about the use and cost of health care in the United States.

1979: The National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth (NLSY79), Round 1, is launched by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

1978: Warren Mitofsky and Joseph Waksberg develop a pathbreaking approach to designing samples for conducting random digit dial (RDD) telephone surveys.

1974: *Response Effects in Surveys* is published by Seymour Sudman and Norman Bradburn.

1978: Don Dillman publishes *Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method*.

1970s: Pervasiveness of telephones in American households rises to 95 percent, stimulating wider use of telephone data collection in survey research.

1971: Chilton Research Services conducts the first CATI (computer-assisted telephone interview) survey. Commercial market research firms become early adopters of the technology.



1973: Martin Cooper of Motorola, considered to be the father of the cellular phone, places the first cellular call as part of a public demonstration in New York City.

\$1.1 billion
226.5 million

1980s

1980s: Federal spending for social research declines.



1984: The International Social Surveys Program (ISSP) is launched, with early representation from Britain's Social and Community Planning Research (SCPR), Germany's Social Survey Research Center, Australia's Research School of Social Sciences, and NORC.

Co-founders include Roger Jowell, Jonathan Kelly, Tom W. Smith, and James Davis.



1983: The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, along with five other federal agencies, join in launching the 1983 Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF). Antecedents to the SCF were sponsored by the Federal Reserve just after World War II. The SCF

becomes the authoritative source of government data about consumer finance; in subsequent decades, it would be conducted every three years, providing detailed information on the finances of U.S. families.

1985: Kirk M. Wolter publishes *Introduction to Variance Estimation*.

1989: Robert Groves produces *Survey Errors and Survey Costs*.



1980s: Stand-alone and networked computers become prevalent in the American workplace.

1980s: Computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) is introduced.

1987: The Bureau of Labor Statistics utilizes touchtone data entry (TDE) on its Current Employment Statistics Survey.

1989: NORC and CHRR conduct large-scale field experiments to evaluate data quality and cost when using CAPI on the National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth (NLSY79) project.

1990s

1996: The U.S. Congress enacts the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). It includes major provisions on security and privacy of health data and also affects requirements for privacy protection in surveys.

1991: NORC opens its Washington, D.C., office.

1993: The Joint Program in Survey Methodology begins at the University of Maryland at College Park. In conjunction with the University of Michigan and Westat, Inc., the program offers graduate-level training in survey research.

1996: The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press is established, studies attitudes towards the press, politics, and public policy.



1994: The National Immunization Survey (NIS) is launched by the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This major random digit dial (RDD) survey generates official estimates of vaccination coverage rates in the United States.

1994: The European Community Household Panel (ECHP) begins in 12 European member states. This longitudinal study continues annually until 2001 and expands to include additional countries on the continent. ECHP utilizes a representative panel of households and individuals in each country and covers a wide range of topics. It also enables cross-national comparisons.

1990s: Techniques for tracing "hard-to-find" respondents are aided by the rise of comprehensive databases developed by commercial and governmental entities. By decade's end, some of these databases become searchable via the Internet.

1990s: Cognitive psychology is applied to the design of survey questionnaires; federal statistical agencies establish cognitive laboratories.

1995: *Thinking About Answers: The Application of Cognitive Processes to Survey Methodology* is written by Seymour Sudman, Norman Bradburn, and Norbert Schwarz.

1990s: Inventive web-based data dissemination tools are developed. AAPOR recognizes these breakthroughs by bestowing its 2000 Innovators Award on J. Merrill Shanks, Tom Piazza, Charlie Thomas, Richard Rockwell, William Lefes, and Tom W. Smith.

1990s: Use of the Internet grows, and its potential for data collection begins to be recognized; web surveys emerge.



1998: An AAPOR committee chaired by Tom W. Smith produces the first edition of *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*.

\$6.5 billion
281.4 million

2000s

2000s: A new millennium heralds the spread of the hand-held computer device, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology, and geographic information systems (GIS).

2000s: A decade of political (presidential election), economic (recession), health (H1N1), and environmental (Hurricane Katrina, the Gulf oil spill) crises leads to increased need for social science research.

2001: European Union founds the European Social Survey, a biennial survey covering all of the EU nations plus the candidate countries.

2000: Congress enacts the Children's Health Act of 2000, which calls for implementation of the National Children's Study (NCS), a sweeping longitudinal study of environmental influences on children's health and development over their first 20 years of life. Vanguard Centers are funded in 2005, and initial study centers in 2007. The NCS is led by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and a consortium of federal agencies.
2006: The American Community Survey (ACS) is launched in all 50 states by the U.S. Census Bureau, to be conducted annually. ACS replaces the so-called "long form," which had been part of the Census Bureau's Decennial Census.

2000s: Cell phone usage explodes, raising challenges for sampling experts seeking to design representative samples for telephone surveys.

2000s: Technological innovations result in the use of a larger number of media by which data can be collected. Survey methodologists study multi-mode survey designs to improve understanding of how the medium by which data is collected affects an individual's response to survey questions.

2000s: Use of biological and physiological markers in population-based surveys becomes increasingly widespread, extending analytical insights but also raising new training, procedural, safety, and ethical challenges for survey practitioners.



2000: *The Psychology of Survey Response* is written by Roger Tourangeau, Lance J. Rips, and Kenneth Rasinski.
2007: *Envisioning the Survey Interview of the Future* is edited by Frederick G. Conrad and Michael F. Schober.

2000s: Statistical data enclaves are established. This innovation harnesses advances in technology to allow geographically dispersed researchers to access sensitive data and form communities around confidential datasets.

2000s: The federal government promotes health care quality, safety, and efficiency initiatives that focus on providers making better use of information technology (IT), leading to new research evaluating the role of IT in health care delivery.

2007: Hybrid dialing technology greatly improves efficiency in random digit dial (RDD) telephone surveys.

TRACKING THE EXPERIENCE OF THE AMERICAN WORKER



LABOR DISPARITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

Along with the social turmoil of the 1960s came the optimism of our nation's leaders over wide-ranging social policy. The "War on Poverty," the "Great Society" legislation, and the academic excitement about evidence that investments in human capital paid good dividends led to widespread interest in understanding the determinants of earnings and income disparities in the United States. A key tool for the study of labor market success became the new National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS).

Begun in the mid-1960s by the U.S. Department of Labor, these pioneering surveys captured annual longitudinal survey data on the behavior of the American worker. Four distinct cohorts of older men, mature women, young men, and young women were chosen because they faced unique labor market challenges. The U.S. Census Bureau, working with the Center for Human Resource Research at Ohio State University (CHRR), conducted the surveys.

Young America in the Workplace

By the mid-1970s, as the respondents in the four cohorts aged, the Labor Department wanted evidence about the experience of youths as they entered the job market. CHRR partnered with NORC to conduct the National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth (1979 cohort). The NLSY79 was one of NORC's first and largest longitudinal data collection efforts. It set the standard of success for data quality and high retention of respondents and established NORC as a premier organization for longitudinal data collection.

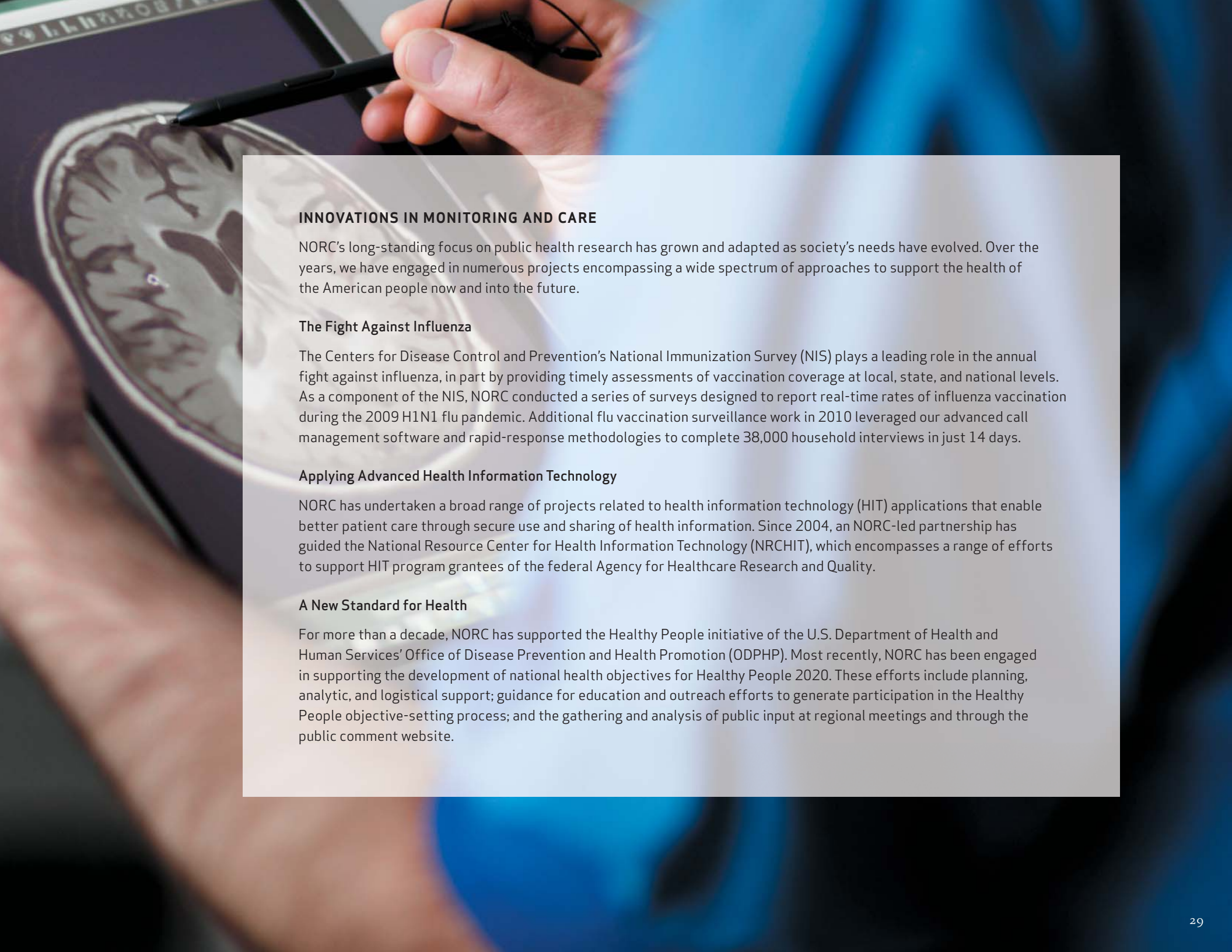
NORC contributed to important innovations on the NLSY79. We coordinated the U.S. Department of Defense's desire to re-norm the national test for aptitude for admission into the military, administering the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) during the study's second year. We led the initiation of the Children of the NLSY79, a supplemental survey of the children of the women in the NLSY79 sample. Funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the Children of the NLSY79 stimulated the discipline of developmental psychology to make broader use of secondary data on healthy child development.

By the mid-1990s there was again need for a new cohort to track the labor market experiences of younger workers, leading to the start of the NLSY97. Again, we worked together with CHRR. The study also included ASVAB testing and a supplemental survey of the youth's parents and became one of the first complex Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) surveys attempted up to that time.

The NLSY projects reflect our continued leadership together with distinguished partners in the design, collection, and analysis of data that serve economics, social demography, and human development.

THE FUTURE OF HEALTH



A hand in a white lab coat points with a black pen at a cross-sectional MRI scan of a human brain. The background is blurred, showing a person in a blue lab coat.

INNOVATIONS IN MONITORING AND CARE

NORC's long-standing focus on public health research has grown and adapted as society's needs have evolved. Over the years, we have engaged in numerous projects encompassing a wide spectrum of approaches to support the health of the American people now and into the future.

The Fight Against Influenza

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Immunization Survey (NIS) plays a leading role in the annual fight against influenza, in part by providing timely assessments of vaccination coverage at local, state, and national levels. As a component of the NIS, NORC conducted a series of surveys designed to report real-time rates of influenza vaccination during the 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic. Additional flu vaccination surveillance work in 2010 leveraged our advanced call management software and rapid-response methodologies to complete 38,000 household interviews in just 14 days.

Applying Advanced Health Information Technology

NORC has undertaken a broad range of projects related to health information technology (HIT) applications that enable better patient care through secure use and sharing of health information. Since 2004, an NORC-led partnership has guided the National Resource Center for Health Information Technology (NRCHIT), which encompasses a range of efforts to support HIT program grantees of the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

A New Standard for Health

For more than a decade, NORC has supported the Healthy People initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP). Most recently, NORC has been engaged in supporting the development of national health objectives for Healthy People 2020. These efforts include planning, analytic, and logistical support; guidance for education and outreach efforts to generate participation in the Healthy People objective-setting process; and the gathering and analysis of public input at regional meetings and through the public comment website.

GAUGING THE IMPACT WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

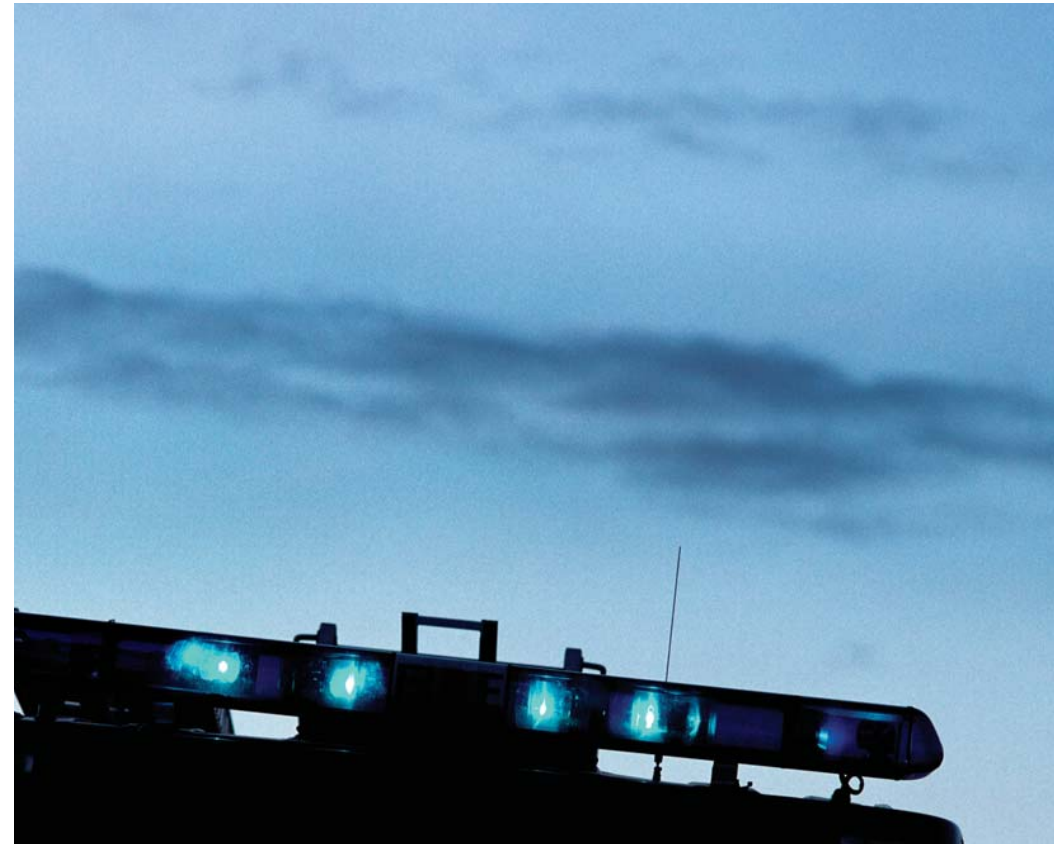
Applying theory and practice, social scientists have long sought to understand the effects of disasters. Classic studies include the post-World War II Bombing Surveys led by Rensis Likert, then with the War Department. NORC's contributions started soon afterwards.

In 1951, the U.S. Military and the National Academy of Sciences wanted to learn how citizens might react to a direct attack on American soil. The Cold War had begun and the threat of a shooting war was omnipresent. The prevailing thought was that disasters were harmful to victims' mental well-being—that humans broke down under such stress. With federal support, Eli Marks, Shirley Star, and Charles Fritz launched NORC's Disaster Program to study the problem.

Our goal was to study behaviors that occurred before, during, and after a disaster—to provide information that would help the government develop suitable disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery programs. We chose events similar to wartime attacks—sudden occurrences like tornadoes and airplane crashes.

This was the first time highly trained interviewers went into a disaster zone within 24 hours to conduct on-site surveys, an approach that yielded significant scientific results. We learned that people tend to stay calm during a disaster and look to help others in distress. Findings were presented in 1952 at the Conference on Field Studies of Reactions to Disaster, which NORC convened at the University of Chicago.

Through the years, we have used social science research as a lens to view turbulent events—notable examples include NORC studies about the Cuban Missile Crisis, the New York City Blackout, John F. Kennedy's assassination, and the 9/11 attacks. In our National Tragedy Study following 9/11, we incorporated questions from the Kennedy assassination survey to compare public sentiment during two watershed moments in American history.





Prior to 1950, not much was known about the American public's understanding of mental illness and the mentally ill. For policy makers and community health practitioners, this translated into a lack of social and cultural information on how society might best approach and handle the problem.

With the backing of the National Institute of Mental Health, the Commonwealth Fund, and the National Association for Mental Health, we began work in 1950 on what became the first major study of public conceptions toward mental illness. Led by NORC Study Director Shirley Star, *A Study of Public Understanding of Mental Health Problems* utilized highly qualitative personal interviews conducted on a national cross-section of 3,531 American adults.

While it was never published or compiled into a final report, the research remains influential and significant. Star embedded innovative vignettes of psychiatric cases within the questionnaire to gauge public response to mental illness. In fact, mental health researchers still use Star's data as a baseline for comparison.

In the intervening years since Star's survey, our work in the mental health arena has broadened to encompass not only attitudinal research, but also epidemiologic, treatment, and analytic studies conducted in collaboration with noted scientists like Leo Srole from Columbia University, Bernice Pescosolido from Indiana University, Sheppard Kellam from Johns Hopkins University, and Benjamin Lahey from the University of Chicago.

PROTECTING CHILDREN





UNDERSTANDING WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

Keeping children safe and healthy is in the best interest of society. Our research in this area has rigorously measured not only the extent of harms to children and adolescents, but also how youth and adults assess risks.

Disease Prevention Begins with Information

Since 2004, NORC has conducted the National Immunization Survey (NIS), one of the largest health surveys conducted on behalf of the government and an essential component in the struggle against preventable disease. The NIS samples millions of telephone lines annually, gathering immunization information on preschool children and teenagers from their adult caregivers and their medical providers. In recent years, NORC also has surveyed the relationship between parental attitudes about vaccines and children's vaccination statuses.

Contributors to Nicotine Dependence

NORC's Transition to Nicotine Dependence study, conducted on behalf of Columbia University, describes the history of adolescent smoking and identifies factors contributing to nicotine dependence. The study included a survey of 16,000 Chicago Public School students. More than 1,000 households participated in a follow-up study that included mother-child household interviews, in-person youth interviews, and the collection of biological samples.

Seeing the Danger in Alcohol

The attitudes of young people and adults that shape an understanding of the risks of alcohol were the central elements of the 2001-2005 Alcohol Risk Perceptions Survey. The survey data allowed an investigation of how media coverage influenced adolescents' decisions about alcohol use. Principal Investigator Michael Slater and NORC's Kenneth Rasinski analyzed the survey data in "Media Exposure and Attention as Mediators of Exogenous Influences on Social Risk Judgments," which appeared in the *Journal of Communication* in 2006.

Insight into Human Trafficking

In 2007, on behalf of the Department of Justice, we conducted the project Finding Victims of Human Trafficking to document data on the trafficking of women and children by the criminal commercial sex industry. Study findings included a survey of criminal justice officials that revealed a formidable barrier to addressing this problem—i.e., that states with anti-trafficking statutes were unable to distinguish among a range of trafficking-related activities.

WHAT SOCIETY VALUES



In 1947, NORC embarked upon the first nationwide sample survey of occupational prestige in America. The Scientific Research Board, appointed by President Truman to study the nation's position in the field of science, was primarily concerned with the challenges the government faced in recruiting scientists; it sought data on how the public valued its scientists.

Our broader research goal was to capture the public's attitudes toward a variety of occupations—beginning with 90 professions.

Our work in this arena has been both influential and enduring. The NORC prestige studies of 1963 and 1964, led by Robert W. Hodge, Paul M. Siegel, and Peter H. Rossi, measured changes over time and incorporated new occupations—in all, about 740. They used an innovative “ladder card sort” technique so that respondents could convey the social standing of each occupation. The General Social Survey incorporated a prestige module in 1989, replicating and extending their research.

Historically, this valuable sociological measure has borne the names of researchers who developed it—the North-Hatt Scale and the Hodge-Siegel-Rossi Scale. Now it is widely known as the NORC Occupational Prestige Scale.

PROGRESS REPORT ON SOCIAL POLICY: THE RELEVANCY OF ASSESSMENT

Investment by the U.S. government in social programs designed to solve social ills grew significantly during the 1960s and 1970s, fueled by the ambitious domestic policy of President Lyndon B. Johnson and his vision for a “Great Society.” Policy makers needed to better understand the effects and outcomes of these major public investments, and funds to evaluate program effects were included in the authorizing legislation.

Evaluating social programs was not yet a common practice; new opportunity arose for using social science methodology to determine if, how, and why programs achieved their goals.

NORC was uniquely positioned to participate in this growing field of research. In particular, we offered a large, national interviewer field force—one of only a few organizations at the time that could do so—and we had a track record of achieving high response rates and collecting quality data. Additionally, our researchers could deliver creative solutions in survey and sampling methodologies and our mission of conducting surveys in the public interest boded particularly well for this type of work.

Across the decades, on landmark evaluation studies, NORC has played important roles as prime contractor or as a major subcontractor to organizations like Abt Associates, the RAND Corporation, and the Urban Institute. We have helped evaluate the Manpower Development and Training Act, the Community Action Program, Head Start and Follow Through, the Experimental Housing Allowance Program, the Health Insurance Experiment, the Job Training Partnership Act, and others.

Today, our involvement in program evaluation continues under such government domestic initiatives as No Child Left Behind and the Chafee Foster Youth Programs—and overseas for the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the World Bank, and USAID.



SEXUALITY IN AMERICAN CULTURE

A TIDAL WAVE OF SOCIETAL CHANGE IN AMERICA

1950s

Post-war “baby boom” continues; 1954 marks the largest one-year population increase ever recorded in the nation

Television replaces radio as the dominant mass communication medium

The *Kinsey Reports* on male and female sexuality cause widespread controversy; Americans begin to assess their own sexual behavior

1960s

Sexual mores relax and the “sexual revolution” begins

American women are introduced to “the Pill”

Civil rights and anti-Vietnam movements spread

NORC conducts Survey of College Students for the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research

1970s

The “Me Generation” is marked by rationalization, “me first” attitudes

Divorce rates, single-parent households, and premarital sex increase

The gay rights movement begins

Feminism and the hippie culture grow

1980s

“Yuppies” define the new rising middle class; culture of overt affluence arrives

The AIDS virus is identified and named

Conservatism dominates the decade

Personal computers make their debut

Women compose nearly half the workforce

1990s

The Internet revolutionizes communication in the culture

HIV/AIDS epidemic becomes a pressing social issue

Viagra makes its debut in America

The Social Organization of Sexuality is published in 1994, revealing that Americans tend to be conservative and monogamous in their sexual practices

2000s

Baby boomers—78.2 million in 2005—begin to turn 60 at a rate of 7,918 per day in 2006; by 2031, all baby boomers will be over 65

Life expectancy rates reach an all-time high in 2000: 77 years, up from 68 years in 1950

Citizens over the age of 85 become the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA, BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.

STUDIES ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOR, HIV, AND AIDS

Like other human behaviors, sexual activity has implications for society as a whole—in terms of how we interact and express ourselves, structure our social networks, and in the health risks we may encounter or expose to others. But until recent years, limitations in research methodology, coupled with societal inhibitions and political roadblocks, have constrained the extent and reliability of past studies.

Gauging Behavior Across the Population

The National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSL) of 1992, led by Edward Laumann, Robert Michael, John Gagnon, and Stuart Michaels, was the first nationally representative, population-based study of sexual behavior—a clear departure from the work of Kinsey and others. It remains one of the most widely cited studies of adult sexuality in the United States.

The Chicago Health and Social Life Survey followed in 1995, launched with a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. This community-based study, also guided by social network theory, sought to assess how people meet sexual partners and organize their sexual relationships. Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) interviews were conducted, with more than 2,000 households responding. Key informant interviews with community leaders and neighborhood observational studies added context.

A Biopsychosocial Look at Older Adults

With an aging U.S. population, the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP) examined the health of older, community-residing Americans, starting in 2005. It evaluated the relationship between health and older adult sexuality using a social networks framework, and encompassing socio-cultural context. With household interviews, our team collected biomarkers and social-behavioral responses.

The HIV/AIDS Pandemic

With the rampant spread of HIV and AIDS in the late 20th Century, socio-medical researchers increased their focus on issues of disease transmission and prevention, as well as cost and use of health care services by afflicted persons. In 1994, the RAND Corporation, along with NORC as subcontractor, initiated the HIV Cost and Services Utilization Study (HCSUS), hailed as “the largest, most comprehensive study ever undertaken on health care for persons infected with HIV.”

Sexual Victimization

A number of the studies noted above have provided revelatory information on sexual victimization. Beginning in 2006, NORC began surveying former prison inmates about the experience of sexual victimization while incarcerated. NORC developed a survey instrument that used touch-screen technology, supported by recorded questions audible only to the respondent, to ease respondent concerns on this highly sensitive subject. This survey was one of three sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in response to mandates of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003.

TOLERANCE IN A TIME OF FEAR

The threat of communism to the American way of life became part of the collective consciousness after World War II: the Cold War had begun; Americans saw European nations adopt communist rule; and the fear of a Soviet attack on American soil was intensifying.

The “Second Red Scare” ushered in a period of rampant suspicion and government-led investigation into institutions suspected of peddling communist influence—in particular, individuals within the entertainment industry, federal government, and academia.

Leading sociologists Samuel Stouffer of Harvard University and Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia University became concerned that rising anti-communist sentiment might be undermining the public’s support for civil liberties. In the 1950s, each undertook research sponsored by the Fund for the Republic to gauge the national climate.

Stouffer’s study, widely considered the most comprehensive survey of American attitudes toward communism and civil liberties, combined the research capabilities of NORC and the American Institute of Public Opinion with each surveying equivalent national samples of adults. The questionnaire featured a mix of open- and close-ended questions and incorporated a methodological experiment to detect potential “house” effects. Paul Sheatsley led NORC’s fieldwork, which also included interviews with community leaders.

Lazarsfeld followed with a study of social science professors’ reactions to the anti-communist atmosphere; in all, 2,451 faculty were interviewed at 165 colleges. Data collection duties were equally divided between NORC and Roper. Sociologist David Reisman analyzed the data for “house” effects.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE ENVIRONMENT IS COMPROMISED?



Between 1992 and 2004, NORC provided the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with a wide range of investigatory support in the evaluation of human exposure and disease around the nation's worst hazardous waste sites.

With funding from its Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), we conducted more than 60 studies at designated Superfund sites to better understand what occurs when toxic waste invades a surrounding community's air, soil, or groundwater—from in utero to multi-generational impact.

NORC investigators collected extensive data for the National Exposure Registry; performed health examinations, like chest x-rays and psychological and neurobehavioral assessments on at-risk individuals; and identified and located residents as far back as the previous five decades.

THE FACE AND FUTURE OF AMERICA'S HOMELESS

1950s – 1960s

Post-war urban renewal begins in major cities

Demographic shifts include movement to suburbs and worker migration to the industrial North

Federal government provides subsidized mortgages for private development to build/rehab low-income housing, incentives for maintaining low-income units

Psychiatric patients are released from state mental hospitals during the 1960s, as movement toward community-based facilities begins

Unemployment rate fluctuates between 3.5% and 6.8%

1970s – 1980s

Demolition of dilapidated, federal low-income housing begins

Federal government moves toward tenant-based rental assistance

HUD encourages development of privately owned, affordable housing

Low-income housing tax credit passes in 1986 to encourage investment in low-income housing; block grants are provided to state and local governments

Low-cost, addictive crack cocaine becomes popular in the mid-1980s

The nation experiences economic stagflation and high unemployment during the 1970s



WHEN SKID ROW VANISHES

Social scientists have long been interested in the status and welfare of the nation's most vulnerable citizens. As the post-World War II economy boomed and urban development began to reshape the landscapes of the nation's cities, concern turned toward urban skid rows and their inhabitants.

University of Chicago sociology professor Donald Bogue and NORC began research in 1958 on the lives and experiences of 613 men residing in Chicago's skid row—which included field interviews at flophouses, missions, jails, and hospitals. The objective was to better understand who skid row residents were and what could be done for them as their living areas disappeared.

The research showed that Chicago's skid row was home to different types of people—mostly white and middle aged, but all very poor with various life circumstances that required different solutions.

The New, More Visible Homeless

In 1985, sociologist and former NORC Director Peter H. Rossi and a team of NORC investigators took to the streets of Chicago—in the dead of night—to count and interview the city's homeless. The goal: obtain a useful estimate and profile of the homeless population for policy makers and the organizations that seek to assist them.

What made the Chicago Homeless Study different from other attempts at quantifying homelessness was the sampling strategy. We designed a modified area probability study that allowed us to produce an unbiased sample of the truly “street homeless,” as well as those with some form of shelter. We conducted our interviews—under bridges, in alleys, and in doorways—between 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., when those without permanent shelter could be most readily identified. We also canvassed hospitals where the homeless sought treatment.

The research suggested that Chicago's homeless population had grown since earlier studies and reflected a more diverse group; that is, homelessness was now affecting younger males, minorities, women, and children. Rossi argued that a lack of low-income housing forced people into the streets, along with the disappearance of low-wage jobs.

PUBLIC MORALE DURING WARTIME



In the first few years of NORC's existence, much of our efforts were focused on serving the public opinion research needs of the Office of Facts and Figures, which became the Office of War Information (OWI). President Roosevelt established OWI in 1942 after the United States entered World War II; its Surveys Division collected information on public morale and on attitudes toward myriad wartime issues.

Without an operations staff to carry out its surveys, OWI contracted with us to prepare questionnaires and field materials, conduct the interviews, and compile the data. While NORC's main office was in Denver, we had a small office in New York City—led by Paul Sheatsley—that was located down the hall from OWI. NORC completed approximately 100 projects for OWI before the wartime agency disbanded in 1945.

Ironically, our first national survey—gauging public sentiment toward America's role and possible entry into the war—occurred one week prior to the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941.

While many of our activities for OWI were fact-finding in nature, we completed some pioneering work as well, including the first national measurement of racial attitudes, research on the role of women in the workforce, and a study on the problems of absenteeism in factories.

In a personal interview, how much weight does the interviewer bring to bear on the way a respondent answers a question? Can two interviewers, under similar circumstances, elicit different results from the same individual?

NORC has a long history of studying interviewer effects as a methodological bias in survey research. Beginning with our work for the Office of War Information in the 1940s, we have assessed a wide variety of error-producing factors that operate within the interview—to get at their source, determine the magnitude of their impact, and develop methods to mitigate or control them.

A prominent scientist in this arena was social psychologist and NORC researcher Herbert Hyman (1918-1985). Honored for his outstanding contributions to the psychology of opinion formation and for his leadership in the emerging science of survey research, Hyman was a pioneer in the study of interviewer behavior. In 1954, he co-authored the classic work, *Interviewing in Social Research*, considered by AAPOR to have significantly shaped public opinion research.



How COMMON IS CHRONIC ILLNESS?



THE ROOTS OF SOCIO-MEDICAL INQUIRY

Our early involvement with epidemiologic studies—a field study on the prevalence of chronic illness in the community—had enduring impact, both substantively and methodologically.

The National Commission on Chronic Illness (1949-1956), under the sponsorship of the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the American Public Health Association, and the American Public Welfare Association, asked the Hunterdon Medical Center in rural Hunterdon County, New Jersey, to conduct a major field study for a public health project seeking to illuminate the level of chronic health conditions in the general population. NORC conducted the fieldwork and provided an analysis of the findings.

The research included county-wide, self-administered questionnaires, face-to-face interviews with an area probability sample, and follow-up physical exams and health screenings.

The Hunterdon Study, along with its urban counterpart study conducted in Baltimore by Johns Hopkins University and the U.S. Census Bureau, provided the earliest systematic comparisons of health conditions and symptoms reported by the public with clinical findings of physicians from an examination of the same respondents. Their innovative methodologies influenced the design of the National Health Survey, which began soon afterward.

This work elevated the standing of social science research within the medical and epidemiological communities. It shaped the thinking of Jack Elinson, NORC's project director for the Hunterdon Study, who later pioneered the development of the field of socio-medical studies while at Columbia University's School of Public Health.

WHEN CRIME HITS HOME



During the 1964 presidential campaign, “crime in the streets” was a heated issue between Barry Goldwater and Lyndon Johnson.

In 1965, President Johnson appointed a commission to study the problem of crime—a growing concern of many Americans. This led to new legislation and the establishment of the Office of Law Enforcement Assistance (OLEA) in the Department of Justice. This agency was responsible for funding projects to create new crime control and law enforcement methods. In 1966, NORC received a grant to study crime victimization.

Our goal was to understand how much crime—and what kind—was occurring around the nation, and at what cost to its victims. We also sought attitudes toward the police and personal security. Led by NORC Study Director Philip Ennis, *Criminal Victimization in the United States* pioneered a new method of measuring crime—surveying the victims themselves to generate national estimates.

RACE IN AMERICA: LIFE IN THE URBAN GHETTO

In 1942, NORC conducted one of this country's first attitudinal studies of race and intergroup relations. We followed with a series of such surveys through the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s before they were incorporated into the General Social Survey in 1972. Three lead articles in *Scientific American* published in 1956, 1964, and 1978 presented our analyses of trends in Americans' thoughts on race. Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsley wrote the first two, and the third was written by D. Garth Taylor, Sheatsley, and Andrew Greeley.

When distinguished sociologist William Julius Wilson and colleagues at the University of Chicago mounted the Urban Poverty and Family Life Survey of Chicago (UPFLS) in 1985-1986 to study the problems of social dislocation in the inner-city ghetto, NORC became a major partner.

Wilson's research team was interested in the circumstances of the very disadvantaged poor, or "ghetto underclass." UPFLS focused on four ethnic groups—African Americans, Caucasians, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans—to learn how each group's cultural characteristics interacted with economic factors to affect family stability and economic outcomes. Its multi-layered research design included a sample survey of 2,490 inner city residents, which NORC conducted, as well as ethnographic field work, an employer survey, and historical analyses that were handled by other team members.



For 70 years, NORC has been a leader in social science research. Our long history is the foundation that informs and enriches our work and supports an unwavering commitment to serving the public interest. This history also inspires and challenges us to greater innovations. As we collaborate with organizations around the world to answer the challenging questions of the future, we remain committed to our defining principles of excellence, innovation, and collegiality. We will continue to build upon our past, helping our partners make informed decisions that lead to greater understanding and progress within their own organizations, communities, and society as a whole.

The historical exhibits that inspired *Social Science Research in Action* are now on display in NORC's offices. They were conceived as part of the NORC Exhibits Project, begun in 2006 by President Craig Coelen and continued by President John Thompson. Many members of our staff contributed creative suggestions for these exhibits. Linda Sharp, Director of Facilities and Purchasing, provided ongoing support as office services liaison during the period of physical construction; Dick Rubin served as overall director for the project.

CREDITS

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