



NEWSLETTER

Second Quarter

2005

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Democratization & Survey Research:

New and not-so-new challenges of public opinion research

by Dr. Alejandro Moreno

Mexico National Representative

The Mexican polling community and several WAPOR members from around the world gathered in Mexico City on May 16-17 for the Seventh Regional seminar held in this location since 1990. As the country changed from a one-party regime into a competitive multiparty system with free and fair elections, the last fifteen years have witnessed a significant increase in the use of public opinion polls in Mexico. Polls are at the center of election processes today, providing valuable media coverage and strategic political information.

The development of polls has contributed to giving Mexican citizens and voters a more important role in democratization and governance, as well as a better understanding of our own society. Nonetheless, this proliferation of polls has also brought some problems, such as the rise of legal barriers and unethical practices. Local legislation in several states has hardened the requirements for private firms to conduct election polls, requirements that in many cases are unconstitutional. Also, just as well established and respectable polling firms are more widely known among the public for their usual reports of poll numbers, various phantom "organizations" also release reports with unreliable data and unverifiable procedures. Electronic media have also engaged in the practice of conducting pseudo polls among their audience using biased questions and presenting the results as if they were derived from representative and rigorous samples.

The seminar, "Polling and Democratization: New and Not-So New Challenges of Public Opinion Research," was an oppor-



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Annual Conference
Cannes, France
September 15-17, 2005

Letter from the President

I would like to emphasize four main points in this letter. First, the Council meeting in Lisbon (March 2005); second, the seminar hosted by the Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, also in Lisbon; third, the Council meeting in Miami; and fourth, the Seminar in Mexico City.

We held the 2005 first Council meeting in Lisbon on March 21st. Three members were unable to attend the meeting, but two of them (Connie de Boer and Patricia Moy) joined us by phone. We had the session in the main offices of the Instituto Politecnico de Lisboa, whose president hosted us, and for that reason we are very thankful to him. In the meeting there was a proposal to include in the WAPOR webpage a letter from the president –that is the reason for this small change that you have probably noticed.

Prior to the Council meeting, Nick Moon, Thomas Petersen, Mike Traugott, Kathy Frankovic and Allan McCutcheon, with Antonio da Cruz Belo, were the speakers in the Seminar that took place in the Escola Superior de Comunicação Social. I introduced the seminar and Antonio Belo, dean of the School, and himself a Portuguese member of WAPOR, was also one of the speakers. The seminar was also hosted by the Centro de Investigação Media e Democracia, whose director, Joel Silveira, chaired the sessions. Joel Silveira insisted that his center is open to collaboration with other research institutions that are welcome to contact him if needed. Among those attending the seminar was also José Vidal Oliveira, another Portuguese WAPOR member, who has been working for many years in Euroteste, now linked to Taylor Nelson, which generously hosted our first dinner.

Once the meeting was finished we gathered in a restaurant for dinner and to hear there a selection of very beautiful *fados*, the popular music in Portugal. I have still in my ears the sound of “Canoa de vela erguida”, echoed by some of the assistants who knew the lyrics and music of this well-known *fado*.

In Lisbon we discovered that many members of the Council were planning to attend the AAPOR conference in Miami. Then, we took the decision to meet there. Only Connie was not in Miami. Let me give you some encouraging news related to membership – Connie chairs the committee and financial matters. First, the number of members exceeded by more than 35 the same number on the same date last year. But, in spite of the new three-tier dues system that could have meant a lower income, the financial situation has improved, basically because the economic situation of the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* is very sound. By the way, Thomas Petersen has emphasized the statement made by Edmund Lauf (“National Diversity of Major International Journals in the Field of Communication”, *Journal of Communication*, March 2005, Vol. 55:1, 139-151) that the IJPOR is the “only one classic mass communication journal (that) could be considered as international”.

Some of us moved from Miami to Mexico City, where the Mexican WAPOR members, above all Alejandro Moreno and Miguel Basáñez, a former WAPOR president, organized a very successful seminar entitled “Encuestas y democratización”, which took place on the ITAM campus (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México) on May 16 and 17. You will find in this Newsletter a report on the seminar, in which Kathy, Miguel, Alejandro, and myself, have presented papers. Robert Chung, who is organizing the December Hong Kong seminar, was also among the speakers and he had a very good opportunity to publicize it.

Looking ahead to the immediate future we have our Annual Conference in Cannes. The prospects are very good. Many people – including some in Portugal, Miami and México– have said us they are planning to join us for the event. I hope we shall be able to give you more good news when we meet close to the waters of the beautiful Mediterranean Sea.



WAPOR President
Prof. Esteban
López-Escobar



Allan McCutcheon, Kathy Frankovic, Mike Traugott, Tom Smith, Esteban Lopez-Escobar and Patricia Moy at the most recent Executive Council meeting in Miami Beach, Florida

Italy: Are telephone surveys endangered?

by Sabra Befani

The main aim of a telephone directory is, of course, to allow the “mere search of a subject for interpersonal communication purposes”. The European Parliament has provided that, following large innovations in technology, privacy should be protected in new ways.

According to the EU Directive n° 2002/58/CE, the Italian “Garante per la protezione dei dati personali”, the guarantor for data protection, has revolutionized the Italian system of collecting data to be published in the telephone directory (Legislative Decree 15/7/2004). The different telephone companies – according to the decree – asked their subscribers at the beginning of 2005 to complete a form expressing which personal data, if any, they would like to appear in the telephone book (in both paper and online versions). This includes their name, title, profession, address, phone number, fax number, mobile phone number and email. They also had to specify if they would allow any of this data to be used for commercial purposes via mail, telephone or both.

If the EU Directive does not explicitly mention telephone surveys, the Italian Decree does. It in fact specifies that the use of personal data for “commercial information or mailing of advertising material or direct marketing, or for the fulfilment of market research or for interactive commercial communica-

tion” is only allowed if the subject explicitly expresses his or her consent. In the new telephone directory, this consent will be indicated with a graphic symbol (an envelope for mail, a telephone receiver for calls); the absence of which indicates that it is a punishable offense to use the published data for purposes except interpersonal communication.

The creation of a single category for commercial information, advertising and research could lead to the detriment of research, as people will be annoyed by heavy “bombardment” from the commercial side. Next year Italians will receive the new directories and it will then be possible to assess the damage: how many people will have expressly given consent to the use of their personal data for commercial purposes and, thus, for interviews? Even if many have, it is easy to see how the chances of getting a random sample by these means will have decreased.

Should other European countries take the Italian example as a starting point, the problem could affect research on a very large scale, leading to the need for a large confrontation at an institutional level or, alternatively, forcing the field of social research to re-evaluate its own methods. This is why Assirm, an Italian association of research institutes, has raised the question and is engaged in the task of convincing the Italian government of

the need to keep social, market and opinion research as free as it is in the rest of EU, and of recognizing its peculiarities in comparison with call centers and direct marketing.

Assirm is at this very moment in dialogue with Italian institutions in order to come to an agreement before the decree comes into force in the next few weeks. The strategy of Assirm is to focus on the following points: while call centres and direct marketing very often contact the same people more than once for the same aim, social research varies the subjects called every time (after all, it’s about polls, not panels!); furthermore, social research is a form of information, which the others aren’t; moreover – besides using telephone directories – there would be other lawful ways of conducting telephone interviews (for argument’s sake, one could dial random numbers without consulting the telephone directory: this would take a huge amount of time but it would still be possible). The main point is, however, as mentioned above, that of creating a boundary line between commercial activities on the one side and research activities on the other. While in the decree these are indiscriminately mixed, it is absolutely necessary to obtain a diversification between the two fields with regard to their different objectives.

Although Assirm sounds cautiously optimistic, it is not yet possible to make conjectures about the outcomes of this very delicate phase. Let’s wait and watch...

A Content Analysis Confirms: Only IJPOR Is Truly International

by Thomas Petersen, Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach

Although many journals in the social sciences call themselves international, very few live up to this claim in practice. Due to the sheer magnitude of research being conducted in the United States—which in itself is a positive development—and the fact that English is now the undisputed language of the sciences worldwide, articles from English-speaking countries now account for the lion's share of publications in the field. Researchers who are not native speakers of English seem to have more difficulty gaining access to international journals. Edmund Lauf, a communication researcher at the University of Amsterdam, completed a quantitative content analysis of 43 leading journals in the field of communication studies that claim to be international. His study confirmed this observation: 66 percent of all articles published in the journals included in the study were written by authors from the United States and a further 13 percent came from Great Britain. Canada and Australia ranked third and fourth on the list, each of which accounting for 3 percent of all articles. The highest-ranking country outside the English-speaking world was the Netherlands in fifth place. Less than 3 percent of all the articles examined in the study came from this country.

In his analysis, published in the Spring issue of the *Journal of Communication*,¹ Lauf notes one exception to this rule, namely the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* published by WAPOR. Lauf writes:

“Only one classic mass communication journal—International Journal of Public Opinion Research—could be classified as international, despite still clearly being U.S. dominated. By contrast, other journals with an explicit international reference in their names were more biased. Of articles found in the Harvard International Journal of Press Politics and International Journal of Conflict Management, three out of four authors originated from the U.S., whereas the International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders was a U.K.-dominated journal. ICA-affiliated journals were only somewhat international: Human Communication Research, in particular, seemed to be a purely North American journal.” (See Table 1.)

Lauf's analysis shows that the efforts by both WAPOR and IJPOR to foster an international dialogue worthy of the journal's title have been successful. Here we see the fruits of our efforts to accept papers that report interesting international research findings even though they may not be written in perfect English and thus require additional editing. IJPOR is also the only journal that expressly encourages authors to submit papers in their native language, which are then translated into English if necessary (although we do, of course, prefer submissions in English for organizational and financial reasons). We are delighted that IJPOR has received recognition from an independent source and will continue our efforts in this vein—after all, empirical social research can only realize its true potential if it incorporates stimuli from researchers all around the world.

Table 1

Indicators for Internationality in Articles Published Between 1998 and 2002 in Communication Journals
(Excerpt from Lauf 2005, 146)

	Authors from U. S. (%)	Authors from English-lang. countries (%)
International Journal of Public Opinion Research	58	67
International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders	9	92
Political Communication	73	80
Harvard International Journal of Press Politics	73	85
International Journal of Conflict Management	77	83
Media Psychology	85	90
Communication Research	83	87
Journal of Communication	87	93
Public Opinion Quarterly	91	96
Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly	95	96
Human Communication Research	94	98
Communication Theory	96	99

(Footnotes)

¹ Edmund Lauf, “National Diversity of Major International Journals in the Field of Communication,” *Journal of Communication* 55 (2005, No 1): 139-151.

National Representative Report-United Kingdom

The Polls and the British General Election of 2005

Nick Moon, United Kingdom National Representative

The 2005 election must be judged a considerable success for the polls, with both the pre-election polls and the exit poll proving remarkably accurate. The exit poll prediction of a 66 seat Labour majority was exactly correct.

All the prediction polls were well within the sampling error of the actual party share for each of the parties, and my own organisation, NOP, got the party share of all three major parties exactly right. This has only happened once before, when MORI did it in 1983. I said at the time that you need skill to get well inside sampling error and luck to get it exactly right, and I still believe that today. It is of course very gratifying to be exactly right but it would

have taken the tiniest change in the sample for us to have been wrong by 1% on each party, and I would have certainly settled for that.

What is perhaps more important is that all of the polls proved to have a satisfactory performance. Five of the six main pollsters produced a poll with fieldwork conducted wholly or partly after the Monday before the election, and all cases the poll figure was within 2% of the actual result for Labour and the Liberal Democrats, and all 5 polls came within 1% of the actual figure for the Conservatives. The table below shows just how remarkably consistent these figures were.

	ICM	MORI	NOP	Populus	YouGov	Result
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Labour	38	38	36	38	37	36
Conservatives	32	33	33	32	32	33
Liberal Democrats	22	23	23	21	24	23
Other Parties	8	6	9	9	7	8
Average Error	1%	1%	0.25%	1.5%	1%	

NOTE. Polls conducted wholly or partly since Monday 2nd have been included in the table. The accuracy of each estimate is shown by the use of average error, being the average of the percentage differences between these four estimates and the final result.

It is of course true that, as has also been the case in the last few elections, no poll understated the Labour vote and no poll overstated the Conservative vote. If purely sampling error were in operation we might expect to see two or three with a larger Labour lead than was actually the case, and two or three polls with a smaller lead than was actually the case. Instead all the polls that were “wrong” were wrong in the same direction. With the average error across all the polls across all the parties less than 1%, this might seem like cavilling, but this continued tendency for the polls all to fall on one side of the result rather than to scatter round it must remain a matter of some concern.

As pollsters we can bathe in the glory of the 2005 election for a short while but there is no

reason to become complacent. Having reduced the recent bias in favour of Labour to a much smaller level, we will be striving to eliminate it all together. When I saw all the final polls being produced on election day I knew that history suggested NOP would either be the most right or the most wrong, but I said to colleagues that I would gladly settle for being not the most accurate if it meant that the Labour lead was actually bigger than our estimates.

As ever, variations in the polls during the campaign led to a number of “polls apart” headlines but in fact the changes were really nothing exceptional. They were of course magnified by the tendency of most media commentators to speak in terms of the gap between the parties rather than the individual

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The first AsiaBarometer:

A study of ten countries

by Miguel Basáñez and Takashi Inoguchi

The first AsiaBarometer was just published last March. It presents an analysis of the ten countries included in the 2003 surveys (China, Japan, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam) as well as the tables, graphs and the raw data on a CD, which is included with the book. The survey questions focus on both daily life values and behavior, as well as on consumption patterns and brand recognition. The full reference for the AsiaBarometer is Takashi Inoguchi, Miguel Basáñez et al, *Values and Life Styles in Urban Asia: A Cross-Cultural Analysis and Sourcebook Based on the AsiaBarometer Survey of 2003*, Mexico: Siglo XXI, 2005. You can order the book through Amazon at the link below:

<http://s1.amazon.com/exec/varzea/ts/exchange-glance/Y02Y5524478Y4261841>

The AsiaBarometer represents the largest ever, comparative survey in Asia, covering East, Southeast, South and Central Asia. This is not the only survey done in Asia. The Social Weather Stations in Manila has been conducting social surveys continuously for the last two decades. Then in the wake of third wave democratization in East and Southeast Asia a number of democracy barometers were born. The Korea Democracy Barometers, the East Asia Democracy Barometers, are most well known along with various other democracy barometers. Needless

to say, the Global Democracy Barometers led by Richard Rose have been long in sight since the end of the Cold War. The eldest is of course the Euro-Barometer (1974), which was crafted by the able hands of Jacques Rabier. The European Values Surveys launched in 1981 was modeled after the Euro-Barometer. The World Values Surveys, which are now directed by Ronald Inglehart, grew out of the European Values Surveys.

The AsiaBarometer distinguishes itself from many others in that it focuses on daily lives of ordinary people. It is not primarily about values or democracy. It is primarily about how ordinary people live their life with their worries, angers, desires and dreams. It focuses secondarily on their relationship to family, neighborhood, workplace, social and political institutions and market place. In short, it is a survey based on the principle of bottom up rather than that of top down.

Most importantly, however, the AsiaBarometer is fundamentally different from other Asia barometers such as the Social Weather Stations barometers, the Korea Democracy Barometers and the East Asia Democracy Barometers have all originated from the Third Wave democratization of the last quarter of the last century in such countries as the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan. In a good contrast, the AsiaBarometer originates from the genuinely academic interest

in the daily lives, views and sentiments of ordinary people in Asia as registered in survey data

The AsiaBarometer distinguishes itself from many others in that it makes utmost efforts to be sensitive to cultures and languages. First, focus groups are conducted where deemed necessary. Second, the English language questionnaire and the questionnaires in local languages are thoroughly compared and discussed including those familiar with both. Third, local academics participate in questionnaire formulation and data analysis. In short, the AsiaBarometer tries to be culturally fluent as a whole.

More operationally, the AsiaBarometer is headquartered at the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo. It is funded by a number of sources: business firms, the University of Tokyo, the Ministry of Education and Science, and a few foundations. Its predecessor, the Asia-Europe Survey, an 18 country survey, was conducted in 2000, covering nine Asian countries in East and Southeast Asia with focus on norms and values.

The AsiaBarometer is a direct and extended successor to the Asia-Europe Survey with a shift in focus from norms and values in the Eurasian Continent to daily lives of ordinary people in Asia. The Asia Barometer is to be conducted every year in 20 countries in East, Southeast, South and Central Asia at least for the next 10 years. It is an ambitious project.

“Improving Data Quality”: AAPOR Meets in Miami Beach

By Tom W. Smith
NORC/University of Chicago

The 2005 Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) was held May 12-15 at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. There were over 900 registrants, easily topping last year's record attendance of 846 in Phoenix (which was boosted by being a WAPOR year). There were a total of 318 oral presentations and 75 posters. These papers had a total of about 1450 authors.

The Miami Beach conference returned to an AAPOR tradition of having two plenaries. Both reflected the conference theme, “Improving Data Quality.” The first on Thursday evening covered Total Survey Error. As chair and organizer, Tom W. Smith, NORC/University of Chicago and AAPOR Conference Chair, noted that this plenary was in response to remarks in the last two presidential addresses by Mark Schulman and Elizabeth Martin who voiced concern about an overemphasis on response rates. As Smith observed, Schulman and Martin are correct. As important as response rates are, they are but one element that determines survey quality. This is seen in AAPOR's code on minimal disclosure that mentions response rates as one of 20 methodological details that need to be reported for surveys. It is also demonstrated by the total-survey-error perspective that establishes that one must consider error from all elements

of a survey and how the different parts of survey interact with one another. Response rates are no more, nor no less, important than other aspects of surveys.

The main presentation was made by Robert Groves, Institute for Social Research/University of Michigan, who described the concept of total survey error, its historical development going back to Deming in the 1940s, and its utility in guiding survey research today. Responses to Groves' presentation and additional comments were then offered by Paul Biemer, RTI, and Kenneth Rasinski, NORC/University of Chicago.

The second plenary during Saturday lunch was on the 2004 [U.S. presidential] exit polls. Organized by Smith, it was chaired by Rob Daves, Minneapolis Star Tribune and AAPOR President Elect. The featured speaker was Warren Mitofsky, of Mitofsky International, who described their exit polls, the nature and correlates of errors in the polls, and steps that are being taken to reduce errors in the future. The second speaker was Kathy Frankovic, CBS News. CBS News was one of the members of the National Election Pool (NEP) that had commissioned the 2004 exit polls by Edison/Mitofsky. She spoke on NEP's experience (including making every election call correct) and the sources of errors in exit polls. The final presenter was Fritz Schueren of

NORC/University of Chicago and president of the American Statistical Association. His remarks emphasized the importance of using data other than exit polls to assess election returns and reported on a new analysis of Ohio voting that failed to find any evidence of widespread fraud.

As usual the conference led with methodological sessions about the art and science of survey research. 56 of the 84 regular oral presentation sessions and the majority of the poster presentations dealt with methodological issues. Among the many vital topics covered were cell phones, the do-not-call list, non-response, mode effects, Internet surveys, response scales, cognition, sampling, the use of incentives, informed consent, question wordings, translation, and satisficing.

Of course, there were also many substantive sessions dealing with such important topics as intergroup relations, the 2004 [U.S. presidential] elections, cross-national research, religion and politics, social change, the war in Iraq, genes, and terrorism.

Finally, several other important topics were covered. First, there was a special emphasis on career development. As part of the short course program, there was a special free course on early career development organized by Gerri Mooney, Mathematica, and featuring Peter Miller, Northwestern University

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(AAPOR continued from page 7)

and editor of Public Opinion Quarterly, David Moore, Gallup, and Elizabeth Martin, US Bureau of the Census. Also, there was a session organized by Sandy Berry, RAND, on how AAPOR can assist members who are in mid-career. Second, there was a “wake” for the Detroit Area Study (DAS) organized by Elizabeth Martin, former DAS director. The DAS had for five decades been a central part of the University of Michigan training program in survey research. Third, there was a panel on blogs organized by Nancy Belden, Belden, Russonello, & Stewart. Fourth, a session on standards on survey research with presentations from Diane Bowers, CASRO, and Tom W. Smith. Finally, Patricia Moy, University of Washington, organized three, meet-the-authors sessions with 1) the AAPOR Book Award winners mentioned below, 2) George Bishop, *The Illusion of Public Opinion*, and 3) Stanley Presser, Jennifer Rothgeb, Mick Couper, Judith Lesser, Elizabeth Martin, Jean Martin, and Eleanor Singer, *Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires*.

At the Saturday Awards Banquet the Seymour Sudman Student Paper Award was given to both Amy R. Gershkoff, Princeton University, and Jennifer Dykema, University of Wisconsin; the AAPOR Book Award to Howard Schuman, Charlotte Steeh, Lawrence Bobo, and Maria Krysan for *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations*; the AAPOR Innovators Award to Thomas B. Jabine, Miron L. Straf, Judith M. Tanur, and Roger Tourangeau for bringing survey research and cognitive science together; the AAPOR Policy Impact Award to the HIV Cost and Services Utilization Study by RAND and others; and the AAPOR Award for Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement to Andrew Kohut, Director of the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press.

Joint WAPOR/ISSC Conference on International Social Surveys

Ljubljana, Slovenia

November 10-11, 2005

Initial Call for Papers/Expressions of Interest

With generous support from the International Social Science Council, WAPOR is organizing a conference on the conduct of International Social Surveys. The goal of this conference is to bring together practitioners in the field to discuss the issues involved in multi-country surveys. It is intended to be more of a sharing of ideas than a purely didactic session, but those merely wishing to learn will of course be welcome. The initial, though far from inclusive, list of topics includes:

- Relative sample sizes for different countries
- Availability and use of sampling frames
- Problems of translation
- Coping with differences in response rates
- Combining surveys using different modes of interviewing
- Developing multi-country coding frames
- Concepts of social class and occupation coding

Subject to demand, there may be some executive sessions where some planning for collaboration and other coordination can be done.

Ljubljana is a charming old town in Slovenia, with good transportation links across Europe and reasonably-priced accommodation.

Individuals interested in presenting a paper should send a one-page outline to Nick Moon (nmoon@nopworld.com) by July 15. To better gauge hotel demand, we ask that individuals interested in attending, whether presenting or not, could contact Nick as soon as possible. Suggestions for additional themes will also be welcome.

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(Elections continued from page 5)

party shares, thus almost inevitably doubling the effect of any change in share of voting for Conservative or Labour. In fact across the entire campaign there were 51 polls conducted altogether, and in all but three of them the Conservative share of the vote was 33% plus or minus 3%. In all but two of them the Labour vote was 38% plus or minus 3, and in all of them, the Liberal Democrats vote was 22, plus or minus 3.

Interestingly, although the polls were not conducted using simple random samples, the results were produced for exactly the kind of distribution one would expect, with 95% of them falling within 2 standard deviations of the true quoted figures. There were trends throughout the campaign, with MORI tending to have larger Labour leads and YouGov having lower ones, but these differences were almost eradicated at the end, with all the polls ending up with effectively identical results.

One change in this election was a far greater degree of transparency of what the pollsters were doing. All were members of the newly-formed British Polling Council, which insists that member pollsters make available to interested parties both unweighted and weighted data on their polls, along with a full description of the methodology. Thanks to this transparency those few who were interested were able to see that there were actually significant differences to the way that the pollsters weighted or adjusted their data to compensate for inadequacies in the sample, but that despite these differences the final results were all very close, suggesting a degree of robustness in the method.

One of the most striking features to be revealed by this transparency was the effect that weighting by past voting had on the final result, with most of the pollsters showing considerably larger Labour leads until weighting by past votes had been taken into account. This is clearly a somewhat risky area as it involves a degree of judgement. We know that we shouldn't be weighting back to exactly the election results, because of factors such as poor memory, or a tendency to align past vote with present vote or with the winner, but we are not sure exactly what profile we should be weighting to. Since it plays such a large effect in the final figures the pollsters who use it are all very relived at having chose the figures they did.

As the exit poll, the 2005 election was the first time where the BBC and ITN worked together on a joint effort, the work being carried out jointly by NOP and MORI who had worked individually for the two organisations in previous exit polls. The exit poll was based on a design of measuring change since the last general election, with interviewing taking place, as far as possible, in the same polling districts as the previous election. In this way change could be measured, from 2001 to 2005, and it was this change measure that was used to project the final share of the vote and the final Labour majority. As stated above, the projection for the Labour majority in terms of seats was exactly correct, and the projected share of the vote was exactly correct in the case of Labour and within 1% for the other two parties. The only slightly our note was a projection that the Liberals would only gain two seats during the election, whereas they in fact gained eleven.

Finally, in an election where all three of the main parties could be said to be disappointed in some way, some commentators have said that the only really victors of the 2005 election were the opinion pollsters. Long before the next election we need to be looking closely to see if we can improve our methods, but we might as well enjoy the moment for a little while yet.

Eric da Costa

by Hans Zetterberg
Past WAPOR President

Eric da Costa who died in 2003 was the first president of WAPOR from the third world. His presidency took place 1967-68, a restless time in world opinion, particularly among university students and journalists.

Eric da Costa was a New Delhi intellectual, part of the Anglo-Indian community that set the tune of India after its independence. One of his grandparents was Portuguese, thereof his name and his minority status in his country as a Christian. He belonged to the first generation opinion researchers who organized their own private institutes for opinion polling. Born in 1909 he was almost a contemporary of George H Gallup, born in 1902. In 1952 the two met in Princeton, and Dr. Gallup and his chief statistician, Paul Perry, demonstrated their methods, organization, and financing of opinion research. In 1953 da Costa had extensive consultations with Dr. Henry Durant of Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd. in London. "It was they who showed me that the complex and heterogeneous mixture of peoples and problems that we call India could yield, with relatively small modifications, to the techniques of public opinion research which we now proudly link with the Gallup name," he told the Gallup International Association in June 1988 in Helsinki in a written statement at his farewell and retirement meeting with this group.

The Indian Institute of Public Opinion Private Ltd. (IIPO) had started in 1955. The institute joined Gallup International in 1957, in one stroke doubling the number of people in the world that this Association claimed to represent in its international polling. Some fifteen years after da Costa's retirement, IIPO was dropped from the roster of Gallup International Association on account of inactivity. The institute apparently could not function without the hands-on management of da Costa.

Like many other pollsters in his generation, Eric da Costa published mostly in news media, not in scholarly journals. However, his newsletter *Monthly Public Opinion Surveys* is a kind of journal in its own right, and eventually da Costa also included reports on surveys from other countries in this publication. He personally edited and completed 24 volumes of 12 issues each. (They are at present being catalogued by John Dixon.) It was an appreciated service, particularly to the political and economic elite of India, but also to outside interests; Eric da Costa's name was on the guest list of several embassies in New Delhi.

The Indian caste system had a category of Untouchables, traditionally the ones outside the whole caste system, at best called upon to sweep, do laundry, and to kill animals. At the time of the liberation from colonial rule every fifth or sixth person in India was such a pariah believed to pollute anyone who associated with them. The constitution of 1949 gave them recognition as a caste as well as rights to education, to any occupation, and to hold public office. Mahatma

Gandhi, who had worked for many years to improve their lives, gave them a new name, *Harijans*, children of God.

When public opinion polling comes to a country comes also the requirement to interview in all segments of society. There is something intrinsically non-discriminatory, and in a sense 'democratic', in good sampling. The Harijans were, of course, included in the samples of IIPO and several studies specifically devoted to them. As is in the case of the blacks in South Africa, polling in India aided the inclusion of the largest discriminated group, the Harijans, into society.

IIPO participated in practically all international surveys within Gallup International. The institute became favorite Indian partner in numerous other international surveys, for example, the bi-annual survey "International Images" sponsored by the United States Information Service and in the "Hopes and Fear Study" of the International Institute of Social Research run by the memorable father-son team of Hadley and Albert (Tad) Cantril.

The lion's share of the IIPO surveys was restricted to cities and/or to particular regions. There was great admiration within Gallup International Association on the occasions when IIPO sampled an entire sub-continent, and worked with questions in half a dozen languages. The accounts by Eric da Costa to the meetings of the Association about the difficulties he had in getting samples of individuals and interviewing individuals was an eye-opener for us with a North American or European background. Not only

(*da Costa* continued on page 11)

(da Costa continued from page 10)

did the male head of household answer for the whole family, a common problem encountered, for example, in Muslim areas in urban neighborhoods. In rural India, a chief of a Hindu village as a matter of course could answer for everybody *and* for every household. Was our methodology so Western that it was inapplicable outside our culture? Not necessarily, said da Costa. Among other things, he asked his interviewers to pay attention to the curious crowd that usually accompanied the interviewers when leaving a village and the village boss. Here one could get individual answers! Very ingenious, but I for one, lost the sense of having a universally valid method that also was easily applicable everywhere.

Eric da Costa was to my knowledge the first pollster to take serious the difficulty in asking questions about successful leaders of a colonial revolt and a victorious party of independence. Faced with this, standard opinion questions in the West about voting and confidence in political leaders become virtually meaningless. After the liberation, the Congress party and the Gandhi-Nehru family became just about holy to the Indian public. Decades later when Congress had less impressive majorities in the elections, almost everybody still maintained to interviewers that they had voted for Congress. IIPO interviewers, like any other strangers, were given ritualistic answers to questions about confidence in Gandhi-Nehru governments. Eric da Costa, however, lived long enough to see this condition change in the

wake of the Bofors corruption scandal that brought down Rajiv Gandhi, Inriias son, from power. And the publisher, K.C. Kulish, who took over IIPO after da Costa had a role in revealing this scandal to the public.

At heart, Eric da Costa was as much an economist as a pollster. He published a *Monthly Commentary on Indian Economic Conditions* analyzing facts and forecasts for use by business executives and government administrators. The *Quarterly Economic Report* dealt with the contemporary state of the Indian economy. Soviet-style central planning and state ownership of big industry was an early model for India and Eric accepted it for the time with several important reservations. Among other things, he had serious doubts that the commands of a command economy would ever be effectively obeyed in a heterogeneous country like India.

In Gallup International we could show that the early relatively big flow of foreign aid to India got public opinion support in Europe because so many believed that underdevelopment was a consequence of the creation of Western wealth, and that the West therefore had a moral obligation to repay. A sizable European opinion also assumed that lack of transfers from the Western world cemented the poverty in the developing world. Only later did obstacles of economic development become known to European publics: widespread corruption, no private land rights for the village population, no credit facilities for small farms and small businesses, inadequate legislation about contract, no safeguards against nationalization, import

restrictions, too much rule by rulers and too little rule of law. However, support for foreign aid programs for health and education retained public support.

Eric da Costa realized that the relatively big flow of foreign aid to India would not prevail, and, more importantly, that India, in many respects, would and could help itself. He did not want the crowd of foreign experts in New Delhi to take over the agenda of development. In planning seminars and conferences he irked out issues that he thought only Indians should deal with. He represented Indian self-confidence.

In the 1970s the Indian government, under Nehru daughter Indira Gandhi, promoted not only self-confidence but Indian self-sufficiency. A policy designed to encourage Indian firms and push out multinational corporations was introduced. Foreign firms could not operate in India without majority ownership by Indian citizens or corporations. Certain imports were stopped to encourage domestic production. These rules were instrumental, for example, in driving IBM from India in the 1970s. To keep IIPO operating Eric da Costa had to approach his friends in Gallup International Association about parts for his IBM punching and sorting equipment.

At that time it was not easy to modernize an Indian office. Eric da Costa, however, lived into the 21st century and could see India embrace the rules of global free trade of goods and computer services. India became the office of the world, just as China had become the factory of the world.

WAPOR
58th Annual Conference
**"Search for a New World Order—
the Role of Public Opinion"**
Cannes, France
September 15-17, 2005

The 58th Annual WAPOR Conference Is Drawing Closer

The plans for the WAPOR 58th annual conference are in full swing. Please check the website for updated conference information.

The present edition of the Newsletter includes registration forms for the conference and for accommodations at the conference hotel, the Novotel Cannes Montfleury. Should you choose to stay at the conference hotel, you will find that the prices are relatively favorable in view of the quality of services offered.

Please return the conference registration form (see pages 17 & 18 of this newsletter) to the WAPOR secretariat and the hotel registration form directly to the hotel!



We have tried to keep the conference fees and the price of accommodations as low as possible. Unfortunately, although we had originally planned to keep the fees for this year's conference lower than they were in recent years, the current dollar-euro exchange rate prevented us from doing so. For organizational reasons, WAPOR has to calculate the conference fees in U.S. dollars, which is why they may seem relatively high at first glance. Conference participants from Europe and other currency zones, however, will discover that they actually have to pay less than it would initially seem, thanks to the current weakness of the dollar. We hope that participants from the dollar zone will appreciate our predicament. (Please visit www.oanda.com for current conversion rates.)

The conference is to be held from September 15-17, 2005. Please note that the conference program actually begins on September 15 in the evening, with a get-together reception. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to come to Cannes, enjoy the special charm of the Cote d'Azur and - as always - a stimulating WAPOR annual conference.

WAPOR Regional Seminar in Hong Kong

“Public Opinion: East Meets West”

December 8-10, 2005

Second Call for Papers

Situated in an international city where East meets West, WAPOR’s regional seminar in Hong Kong is dedicated to the discussion of public opinion in a cross-cultural context. It is a logical follow-up to the WAPOR annual conference in Cannes, the theme of which is “Search for a New World Order — the Role of Public Opinion”.

After our first call for papers, we now have about 20 international papers covering the development of opinion polling in India, Mexico, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and, of course, Hong Kong. Public opinion and democratic values will also be discussed in the wider context of development in America, China and Latin America. In this second call for papers, we would like to invite more papers on the following themes:

- Public opinion and the democratic process, especially on the freedom to conduct and publish opinion polls
- Opinion polling, media, and civil society, especially on the use and misuse of opinion polls
- The role of academia in public opinion polling, especially on the establishment of professional standards
- International public opinion, especially on issues related to the World Trade Organization

Please send paper and panel session proposals by **August 1, 2005** to seminar organizer Dr Robert Chung at robert.chung@hku.hk. To encourage international exchange, papers and presentations in Chinese will also be accepted. Submissions will be translated into English, and simultaneous interpretation will be available throughout the seminar.

This regional seminar is organized in collaboration with the Public Opinion Programme at the University of Hong Kong, where the seminar will be held. Registration and accommodation details will be publicized at <http://www.unl.edu/WAPOR> and <http://hkupop.hku.hk> in due course.

December 2005 will be an ideal time to visit Hong Kong. With the Hong Kong Disneyland having just opened in September, and the World Trade Organization’s ministerial meeting scheduled for December 13 to 18, Hong Kong will attract a lot of international tourists and activists. Professional pollsters should not miss the show and the intellectual experience. We have arranged a travel agent to take our participants to a half-day tour around Hong Kong on December 10, plus a package tour to Macau and South China from December 11 to 12. Details forthcoming in the two websites mentioned.



Free photograph downloaded from <http://www.pbase.com/maciekda/image/31470889>.
Photographer: Maciej Dakowicz from Poland who once lived in Hong Kong.

Please email: robert.chung@hku.hk if you are interested in attending the conference

(Mexico continued from page 1)

tunity to address some of these issues. It was co-organized with our host institution, the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM), and with the collaboration of the Mexican Association of Research Agencies (AMAI) and the recently created Council of Survey Researchers (CI). There were six panels in a day-

Esteban López-Escobar (WAPOR President) and speaker Diego Valadés (of Mexico's National University)



and-a-half conference, where 36 panelists and discussants covered a variety of topics: methodological issues, the obstacles to the freedom of conducting and publishing polls, reflections on the exit polls in the United States, the development of comparative surveys in various regions of the world, perceptions of democracy, Mexican elections at the state level, and the Mexican Presidential race in 2006. Attendance for each panel varied from 60 to 110 people at ITAM's Auditorium, and the Seminar brought about 20 new members to WAPOR.

Co-sponsored
by WAPOR,
ITAM, AMAI
and CI

Accompanied by WAPOR President Esteban López-Escobar, Dr. Diego Valadés, a well known constitutionalist at Mexico's National University (UNAM) described the development of polls in the last few years and addressed some of the unconstitutional features of local legislation regarding election polls. Mr. Andrés Albo, a member of the

General Council at the Federal Elections Institute (IFE), said that pollsters and election authorities will have to work under current election laws (as no changes are foreseen before 2006) and called for a closer collaboration between the polling community and IFE in tasks of self-regulation and attachment to the existing codes of ethics.



Kathy Frankovic, Esteban López-Escobar, Federico Estévez and Warren Mitofsky

The topic on exit polls in the 2004 U.S. Presidential election reminded us about the social nature of survey research, and not just about statistical estimation. Warren Mitofsky and Kathleen Frankovic agreed on the importance of improving interviewer training. The "accuracy of exit polls depends on a fragile interaction of interviewers and respondents", Dr. Frankovic said. Miguel Basáñez, Esteban López Escobar, and Ulises Beltrán showed findings from the AsiaBarometer, Eurobarometer, and the Comparative Study on Electoral Systems, respectively, whereas Hong Kong national representative Robert Chung depicted the state of polling in the China region.

As the 2006 Mexican presidential election nears, the panel on voting trends attracted some media attention, as six of the main media pollsters and political analyst Denise

Dresser speculated on various scenarios for next year's election. Roy Campos, director of Consulta-Mitofsky and pollster for TV broadcaster Televisa, emphasized that the National Action Party (PAN) is currently running in third position, despite being President Vicente Fox's party. María de las Heras, a pollster for newspaper *Milenio*, suggested that a 2006 race where the PRI and PRD dispute the lead resembles a race between a very powerful machine car (the PRI) and a rather weak car driven by a very strong pilot (the PRD and Mexico City Mayor Andrés Manuel López Obrador). Alejandro Moreno, a pollster for newspaper *Reforma*, showed poll trends in which frontrunner López Obrador keeps an advantage in voting preferences despite corruption scandals of his close collaborators during 2004 and the stripping of

(Mexico continued on page 15)

(Mexico continued from page 14)

his immunity by Congress (*desafuero*) in order to face a finally aborted judiciary trial early in 2005. Nonetheless, the PRD presidential hopeful has lost significant support among the middle classes and the northern states, concentrating his main support in the Mexico City area.



Robert Chung, Hong Kong WAPOR National Representative, during his speech “Polling in Hong Kong and the China Region” in Mexico City

Carlos Ordóñez, pollster at newspaper *El Universal*, pointed out some of the difficulties that polls will face with voting abroad, and Ricardo de la Peña, whose poll numbers are frequently reported on CNI television channel, argued that polls have been blamed for the happening of some political events, such as the *desafuero*. Carlo Varela, a consultant for Marketing Político presented the latest poll numbers obtained from a national sample after the *desafuero*, showing that this event had minor effects on voting intentions.

Mr. Pablo Aveleyra, a class of 1954 economist from ITAM and founder of the public opinion studies series at the National Bank of Mexico in 1980, was awarded the first WAPOR-Mexico Recognition for a significant contribution to the development of survey research in this country. Dr. Enrique Alduncin, who served as WAPOR national representative in Mexico in the late 1990s, spoke of Mr. Aveleyra’s role in

the development of survey research during the last 25 years. Esteban López-Escobar gave the award to Don Pablo, as his friends call him, and referred to this as a “very enchanting moment”. Indeed, that moment was a close encounter of past and future. Don Pablo’s words reminded us of the origins of survey research in our country and its significance, while the presence of many young students interested in survey research invited us to look at the future and to define the best standards and practices, and identify the challenges for newer generations.



“A Very Enchanting Moment:”

Mr. Pablo Aveleyra, the first recipient of the WAPOR-Mexico award for contribution to the development of survey research.

Congratulations Mr. Aveleyra!



Pablo Aveleyra and organizer Alejandro Moreno showing the first WAPOR-Mexico award plate

WAPORnet

As a member of WAPOR, you have access to the listserv, which you can use to keep in touch with other WAPOR members. This is a feature of your membership that we urge you to take advantage of. You may have information on upcoming events or on current happenings in public opinion research that you would like to share with the other members. Send your message to wapor@unl.edu to reach current members of WAPOR. Tip: Replying to a message from wapornet results in everyone receiving your reply.

Blue Book Orders

Please remember to mail or fax your Blue Book order to AAPOR as soon as possible. The deadline for placing your organizational ad is July 1. If you did not receive an order form, or if you've misplaced yours, please go to AAPOR's website at: www.aapor.org to find the Blue Book Order Form. The Blue Book is a handy reference guide for research companies across the United States and around the world. It is mailed to all members of WAPOR and AAPOR, more than 2000 individuals.

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Calendar

September 15-17, 2005

"Search for a New World Order - the Role of Public Opinion"

Cannes, France

WAPOR 58th Annual Conference

September 18-21, 2005

ESOMAR Congress

"Making the Difference. Research with Impact."

Cannes, France

www.esomar.org

November 10-11, 2005

Joint WAPOR/ISSC Conference on
International Social Surveys

Ljubljana, Slovenia

December 8-10, 2005

"Public Opinion: East Meets West"

Hong Kong

WAPOR Regional Seminar

-
- Do you have an idea for an article in the newsletter?
 - Is there an event happening in your part of the world?
 - Are you interested in organizing a conference?
 - Do you have photos you'd like to contribute?
 - Do you have ideas on how to improve the website or newsletter?

If so, please contact the WAPOR office by sending an email to Renae_Reis@gallup.com or to Thomas Petersen (Publications Chair) at tpetersen@ifd-allensbach.de

*Please let us know your upcoming events.
Deadline for 3rd quarter newsletter events or
article submission is September 1, 2005.*

WAPOR 58th Annual Conference
“Search for a New World Order – the Role of Public Opinion”
Cannes, France
September 15-17, 2005

Registration

Please return to the WAPOR secretariat:

Fax: +1 – 402 – 458 2038

E-mail: renae_reis@gallup.com

I hereby register for the WAPOR 58th Annual Conference in Cannes, France

Name:

Organization/Institute:

Address:

Country:

Telephone: Fax: E-mail:

	Price per person	Number of persons	Total
- Seminar fee, including coffee breaks and lunch, along with a get-together reception on the eve of the conference (September 15) for WAPOR members	\$ 240	\$.....
- Seminar fee, including coffee breaks and lunch, along with a get-together reception on the eve of the conference (September 15) for non-members*	\$ 350	\$.....
- Dinner package for the Helen Dinerman Award banquet, including wine	\$ 90	\$.....

* The conference fee includes—if desired—WAPOR membership for the year 2006. To sign up for your membership, please fill out the membership registration form you will receive along with the conference materials in Cannes.

Total \$.....

To book hotel accommodations, please use the reservation form provided by the Novotel Cannes Montfleury!

Method of payment:

() Mastercard: _____ EXP: _____ Signature _____

() VISA: _____ EXP: _____ Signature _____



WAPOR Annual Conference 2005 HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM

Novotel Cannes Montfleury

looks forward to having you as a guest during the 2005 WAPOR meeting. This reservation form should be used to secure a room, and should you require a room outside the dates of the conference, the hotel's reservation department will advise you of availability and rates. The cut-off date is 13TH August 2005. All reservations received after this date will be accepted on a "space available" basis and at the best rate available at this time. Bookings should be made soon to ensure your place at the conference venue.

Room Requirements (please tick)

Breakfast included

Double room for Single Use 150 EUROS per night

Double room for Double Use 170 EUROS per night

Particular requirements: _____

Rates include VAT charges. City tax of 1.20€ per person per day is on supplement.

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Post Code: _____

Country: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Arrival Date and Time _____ Departure Date and Time _____
(check-in time after 3pm) (check-out time before 12pm)

Reservations should only be made using this form. No reservations will be confirmed nor guaranteed unless credit card detail is supplied with the booking. In case of total/partial cancellation after 13/08/2005 or "no-show", all the nights booked will be charged.

Cardholder: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Please circle: American Express / Diners Club / Visa / Master Card

Please send this reservation to the Reservation Department:

Novotel Cannes Montfleury Hotel, 25, Avenue Beauséjour, 06400 Cannes, FRANCE
Tel: +33 (0) 4 93 68 88 88, Fax: +33 (0) 4 93 68 89 91, E-mail: H0806-RE@accor-hotels.com

Please note that any changes made to your reservation have to be notified in writing to the hotel.