

# WAPOR NEWSLETTER

WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Second Quarter 2013

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## **Revolutions in the Measurement of World Public Opinion**

Contributed by Trevor Tompson, Publications Chair

WAPOR members, and many new attendees, gathered in Boston for the 66<sup>th</sup> annual conference, held May 14-16 on the campus of Boston University. Attendees experienced three days of insightful presentations, interesting discussions and terrific weather! The conference was held jointly with AAPOR's annual meeting, which took place just down the road at the Seaport World Trade Center.

The conference was organized by Michael Elasmr and James Shanahan of Boston University. The theme they chose for the conference was "Revolutions in the Measurement of World Public Opinion." In choosing the conference theme, they noted the emergence of alternative approaches for capturing public opinion, such as "sentiment analysis" and "opinion mining," and the exponential growth in the expression of opinion by increasingly larger numbers of people around the world. And they noted Boston's historical role as the center of many revolutions around the world.

The organizers embedded this theme throughout the three-day program, and extended it to a full-day preconference on "Public Diplomacy, International Broadcasting and Public Opinion: New Media, New Tools and New Challenges." This well-attended event was an exciting addition to what was already a robust conference program.

The main conference included 100 papers, and there were 146 attendees from 26 countries. The program was assembled with the assistance of a committee of WAPOR members who reviewed and scored the abstracts, making recommendations to the program chairs, who in turn made the final decisions about accepting or rejecting the submissions. The committee reviewed 196 abstracts, far more than could be accommodated in the program, which was a terrific indication of

(Conference continued on page 5)



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**67th Annual Conference  
September 2014  
Nice, France**

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## Letter from the President



Alejandro Moreno,  
WAPOR President

Dear WAPOR members,

We had a wonderful annual conference at Boston University last May. My own experience included, among other things, exposure to a high-quality program and presentations, plenty of opportunities to meet and greet (I personally thank our conference hosts for thinking of that), a very touching awards dinner, and a beautiful city to enjoy. I also had the privilege to talk with some of you about survey research in your country or region, and to think about how we can best serve WAPOR's mission of promoting and defending the right to conduct and publish public opinion research. I would like to thank Katarzyna M. Staszynska and Krzysztof Zagorski for their valuable input, and to encourage all our members to keep in touch and let the WAPOR community know about your own experiences. Please do consider this newsletter for future reports about your country.

In June, I participated in the Mexican Senate's public hearings for political and election reforms. I spoke at a panel about regulations of public opinion polls. My brief presentation relied heavily on the report and press release that a WAPOR special committee had prepared last November about proposed regulations in Mexico (<http://wapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Mexico-2012.pdf>). The various proposals that the committee reviewed ranged from reducing the ban on publication from three days to one day prior to the election—a proposal that the WAPOR committee considered a positive one—to completely prohibiting the publication of poll results during election campaigns—which WAPOR absolutely opposed.

Click to see the:  
**WAPOR Code of Ethics**

This time, the main focus at the Senate was minimal disclosure, and particularly the disclosure of poll sponsorship and any possible ties between the study and candidates or political parties. The current Mexican federal election law already includes the disclosure of poll sponsorship as an element to include in a study report, but unfortunately it is not clearly enforced, and many published polls lack this information. For WAPOR members, adherence to our code of ethics involves the responsibility to disclose this type of information, in accordance to the Code's section C, "Rules of Practice Regarding Reports and Study Results". In any case, the Senate's panel on polling was a good indicator of the legislators' awareness of the polls' importance during national election campaigns, and the right of citizens to have the necessary information about the polls, including who sponsors them.

In Mexico, however, conducting and publishing public opinion polls during national election campaigns is very different due to the various realities of state and local elections that take place in the country, which are ruled by local election laws that pose different restrictions on public opinion polling. On July 7, local elections were held in 14 of Mexico's 31 states, and in each of them opinion polls are required to follow different regulatory dispositions. Bans on publication vary from three to eight days prior to the election. In many of them, researchers must register with the election's administrative body prior to their practice, and in some cases they must pay a "fee" (perhaps some would translate this as "bailout") to be able to conduct and publish a poll. All states' laws require a full report with the characteristics of the study, and in some of them this report is required prior to publication, in some cases with an anticipation of 10 and even 30 days. In some states, the report has to include the poll results before they are actually published, and wait for an "authorization" or official agreement to publication. In one particular state, polling organizations actually must have a local office, or be registered as state residents. Another state requires the actual dataset as part of the study report. Sanctions also vary greatly, from a public reprimand to economic sanctions, to prison, to the suspension of political rights for a certain period!

*(Letter continued on page 3)*

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(Letter continued from page 2)

Despite all this conditioning, local election laws are not entirely clear about what responsibilities the election administrators have for making information accessible to the public or enforcing sanctions. The great variety of legal dispositions in Mexican local elections makes polling activities very uncertain and legally complex. Once, I made the comment that local elections force polling organizations to have a good legal department. But the real problem is that this restrictive environment may discourage independent polling to take place, thereby preventing citizens to have access to reliable public opinion polls.

The Mexican Senate's hearings are positive as they seem to reinforce good practices of polling in national elections that take place every three years (for Congress) and every six years (for President); but what really needs a thorough revision are the local laws, which regulate hundreds of local elections almost every year, including the practice of conducting and publishing opinion polls. This is where opinion polling finds a more uncertain and more restrictive environment, and where citizens are potentially less exposed to reliable polls. As Mexican national elections seem to liberalize their restrictions on opinion polls, local elections are becoming more restrictive.

Let me end this letter by encouraging you again to share your research experiences with our community and to bring to our attention the problems that public opinion research faces in your country or region. I feel that, as we expand our awareness and understanding of how opinion polls are conducted and published, we will also be able to move to another essential question: how they perform and whether we as an Association ought to participate in their evaluation. But that is a different topic that I would like to address on another occasion.

Best wishes,  
Alejandro Moreno  
WAPOR President

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## Defending Survey Research around the Globe

Contributed by Tom W. Smith

The WAPOR constitution states one of the organization's prime missions is to "promote in each country of the world the right to conduct and publish scientific research on what the people and its groups think and how this thinking is influenced by various factors." In May, as part of a general governmental effort to stifle NGOs, the Russian government told the Levada Center, a public opinion research institute based in Moscow, that it must register as a "foreign agent" and that they must stop their research activities if not so registered. Lev. D. Gudkov, the Levada Center Director, has indicated that this seriously endangers their continued operation. He notes that warnings from the state prosecutor's office would force them to "stop the publication of our journal, shut down our website, stop publishing, commenting, and analyzing results of our surveys..." He further indicated that, "This is what we cannot accept." WAPOR issued a press release on May 28, 2013 in support of the Levada Center and noted that the government's attack represented "a serious threat not only to the Levada Center's legitimate scientific activities, but also to the purpose and practice of public opinion research by independent organizations more broadly..." For WAPOR's full statement on this matter see [http://wapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/WAPOR\\_Press\\_Release\\_Levada\\_2013May28.pdf](http://wapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/WAPOR_Press_Release_Levada_2013May28.pdf)

Other organizations such as ESOMAR and Russian Association for Market and Opinion Research have also expressed support for the Levada Center and opposition to the Russian government's efforts to stifle surveys and other independent activities (<http://www.esomar.org/news-and-multimedia/news.php?idnews=114>).

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## Conference Snapshots -- 66th Annual Conference, Boston

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Top row, from left: Conference Co-Chairs, Michael Elasmr and James Shanahan; Pippa Norris (Harvard University); Takashi Inoguchi (University of Niigara Prefecture) and Miguel Basáñez (Tufts University)

Middle row, from left: Mark Gill (MORI Caribbean/Woodnewton Associates); Award banquet in the Metcalf Ballroom on Boston University campus; Marcia Cavallari (IBOPE Opiniao Pública Ltda)

Bottom row, from left: Casey Chancellor (Media Tenor), Dan Cassino (Farleigh Dickinson University), Wolfgang Donsbach (Technische Universität Dresden, and Jan Kleinnijenhuis (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam); Wolfgang Donsbach; Rob Santos (Urban Institute and AAPOR President) with Alejandro Moreno (ITAM/ Reforma and WAPOR President)

Photo credits: Alejandro Moreno

## Conference Sponsors



(continued from page 1)

support for the conference by the growing WAPOR membership, but also made for some difficult decisions by the organizers about which papers to accept.

The conference was opened with a cocktail reception and a welcome by WAPOR president Alejandro Moreno. One of the highlights of the event was the awards banquet, held in Boston University's Metcalf Trustee Ballroom. Attendees gathered there to honor the work of several members of the profession. The Helen Dinerman Award, honoring life achievement in public opinion research, was presented to Lars Lyberg of Stockholm University. The Worcester Prize honoring the best paper published in IJPOR in 2012 was presented to Lorenzo Brusattin of Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. And the winner of the new student paper award sponsored jointly by WAPOR and AAPOR and named in honor of the late Janet A. Harkness was Zeina Mneimneh of the University of Michigan.

In an extension of its cooperation with AAPOR, WAPOR also co-sponsored a joint session at AAPOR on multicultural surveys as part of the AAPOR program which kicked off at the end of WAPOR's event. This session was dedicated to the work and life of Janet Harkness and featured a touching discussion and tribute by Peter Mohler.

WAPOR was pleased to welcome various sponsors for the conference. As in the previous three years, NORC was the sponsor of the welcome cocktail. Nielsen Media Research and The Roper Center generously supported the conference technology and Centros de Estudios Sociales y de Opinión Pública and Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México for general sponsorship.

WAPOR thanks the conference organizers, Boston University and the dozens of volunteers who made the conference a success. We look forward to seeing all of you at our next annual conference, to be held September 2014 in Nice!

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## WAPOR Preconference

Contributed by Amelia Arsenault, Co-Organizer

On May 14, 2013, data collection professionals, public diplomacy practitioners, and academics gathered at Boston University to discuss the evolving relationship between public diplomacy and public opinion at the WAPOR pre-conference, "Public Diplomacy, International Broadcasting, and Public Opinion: New Media, New Tools, New Challenges." Themes addressed at the pre-conference included: the ethics of data and methodology disclosure for government-funded polls, the benefits and dangers of new media polling techniques, the roll of foreign and domestic media in reporting on (and often transforming) the meaning of polling results, and the challenges that public diplomacy practitioners face when using polling data to inform programmatic decision-making.

A diverse range of distinguished academics, data collection experts, and public diplomacy practitioners participated in the presentations and discuss-

ions, including: Philip Seib, Director of the University of Southern California, Center on Public Diplomacy; Richard Wike, Associate Director of the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project; John Zogby, founder of the Zogby Poll; Patrick Moynihan, survey methodologist for the Office of Opinion Research at the U.S. Department of State; Gary Langer, President of Langer Associates, Dina Smeltz, Senior Fellow on Public Opinion and Foreign Policy at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Colin Irwin of Peacpolls.org; and Robert T. Coonrod, President and CEO of InterMedia.

The pre-conference was organized by Michael Elasmr (Boston University) and Amelia Arsenault (Georgia State University). Plans are currently underway to develop an edited book related to the pre-conference themes. For more information about the pre-conference or how to submit an abstract for consideration in the edited volume, please visit:

<http://publicdiplomacywapor.wordpress.com>

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## WAPOR Awards Presented

One of the best things that WAPOR members do for each other is recognize the contributions to the profession made by people at various stages of their careers. Each year at the annual conference, WAPOR recognizes a handful of people for various prizes and awards ranging from best conference papers to an entire life's work. The awards are presented at the banquet on the first full day of the conference. This year WAPOR presented the Janet A. Harkness Student Paper Award, the Worcester Prize, and the Helen Dinerman Award.

The first annual Janet A. Harkness Student Paper Award was awarded to Ms. Zeina Mneimneh of the University of Michigan at this year's annual WAPOR conference in Boston. An honorable mention for the Award was also given to Ms. Mara-Cecilia Ostfeld of the University of Pennsylvania. The Award is given in memory of Dr. Janet Harkness, distinguished survey methodologist and colleague, who passed away last year. It is open to any current student, or those who have graduated during the past year calendar year. Paper topics must be related to the study of multi-national, multi-cultural, or multi-lingual (3M) survey research. Topics may include methodological issues, public opinion, or theoretical issues on 3M, and substantive findings about 3M public opinion research.

Zeina Mneimneh's paper, "Cultural and Interviewer Effects on Interview Privacy," investigates the degree to which variability in interview privacy is influenced by culture, other structural conditions, and the interviewer. The differential level of interview privacy, and its impact on survey quality, has interested survey methodologists for decades.

Mara-Cecilia Ostfeld's paper, "Nuestro Idioma' Spanish-Language Media Effects on Latino Political Identity," argues that Latinos in the U.S. have multiple in-groups, and that individual Latinos vary in how they identify with these in-groups. In particular, Spanish language-dominant in-groups differ from English language-dominant in-groups, and this translates into differential effects of political advertisements.

The 2013 Harkness Award committee was composed of Ashley Bowers, Tim Johnson, Allan McCutcheon (Chair), Kristen Olson, Beth-Ellen Pennell, and Evi Scholtz.

The Worcester Prize is given to the author of the best article in the International Journal of Public Opinion Research in the previous year. The winner of the Worcester Prize for 2012 is Lorenzo Brusattin for his article "Candidate Visual Appearance as a Shortcut for Both Sophisticated and Unsophisticated Voters: Evidence from a Spanish Online Study" published in Issue 24-1 of the IJPOR.

The committee members for the Worcester Prize were Robert Worcester, Claes deVreese, Philip Gendall, Dietram Scheufele, Yariv Tsfati, and Trevor Tompson (chair). In its citation, the committee noted the article's application of cutting-edge methods and the interdisciplinary nature of the research.



Zeina Mneimneh and Lars Lyberg, award winners



The Helen Dinerman Award is given annually for lifetime achievement in public opinion research. This year it was presented to Lars Lyberg of Stockholm University (shown above). The citation regarding his work can be found on the following page.

Finally, we are happy to report that WAPOR Past President, Tom W. Smith (at left), is co-recipient of the 2013 AAPOR Book Award, announced during AAPOR's Annual Meeting in Boston, also in May. The book, *Survey Methods in Multinational, Multiregional, and Multicultural Contexts* (Wiley 2010), was edited by Janet A. Harkness, Michael Braun, Brad Edwards, Timothy P. Johnson, Lars Lyberg, Peter Ph. Mohler, and Tom W. Smith.

We congratulate Tom and his colleagues for this award and thank them for such an important contribution to our profession.

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THE WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Presents the

2013 Helen Dinerman Award

to

# Lars Lyberg

WAPOR is pleased to present the 2013 Helen Dinerman Award to Lars Lyberg of Stockholm University. Lyberg is a leading survey statistician and top survey-research methodologist. Perhaps his major contribution has been the rigorous introduction of the concept of quality in the design, operation, and management of surveys.

He advanced efforts to improve data quality and minimize total survey error during his long-career at Statistics Sweden. He started there in 1968, became the Head of the Statistical Research Unit in 1982 and Senior Methodologist to the Director's General Office in 2000. Beyond Statistics Sweden, he has profoundly influenced the international survey-research community. He was the founding editor of the *Journal of Official Statistics (JOS)* in 1985 and served as its editor-in-chief until 2010. Besides being one of the top journals in the field, JOS is freely available to readers.

He has also been co-author and co-editor of many of the leading books on survey-research methods over the last 40 years including *Data Quality Assurance* (1976), *Telephone Survey Methodology* (1988), *Measurement Errors in Surveys* (1991), *Survey Measurement and Process Quality* (1997), *Introduction to Survey Quality* (2003), and *Survey Methods in Multicultural, Multinational, and Multiregional Context* (2010). Contributing to any of these volumes would mark Lyberg as a star, collectively they make him a constellation.

Additionally, he has made important contributions to many international organizations in the fields of statistics and survey research including serving as President of the International Association of Survey Statisticians (1993-1995), Chair of the Survey Methods Section of the American Statistical Association (2002), organizer of the International Workshops on Comparative Survey Design and Implementation (2002- ), and European Social Survey Methods Group member (2001-2012). As Donald Dillman, a past Dinerman Award winner, has remarked, "I consider Lars a world treasure for the leadership he has provided worldwide to the development of survey methodology."

The World Association for Public Opinion Research honors Lars Lyberg's outstanding contributions to survey methodology with the 2013 Helen Dinerman Award.

**Call for Manuscripts**

# Public Opinion about Gay Rights/Marriage

Special issue of The International Journal of Public Opinion Research

Guest Editor: Paul Brewer, University of Delaware

Over the past few decades, dramatic shifts in both public policy and public opinion regarding gay rights have occurred in many nations. The most recent, and perhaps most striking, set of changes has revolved around the legal status of gay marriage. Since 2001, a number of nations have extended governmental recognition to same-sex marriages. In other nations, the topic is currently the subject of intense political controversy. In still other nations, legal recognition of gay marriage appears unlikely to occur anytime soon. During all of this, public opinion polls conducted in a wide range of nations have captured large shifts over time in public support for gay rights in general and gay marriage in particular. At the same time, polling also reveals sizable differences in such support across nations as well as across groups within single national populations. Thus far, research has pointed to a variety of explanations for these phenomena, ranging from social and cultural forces to political debate to messages in popular media.

**Deadline for submissions:  
October 15**

This special issue of the International Journal of Public Opinion Research focuses on factors and processes that shape public opinion about gay rights/marriage or related constructs such as attitudes about and tolerance toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, as well as changes over time and differences/similarities across contexts in public opinion in these domains. All papers should be theoretically motivated. Papers may draw on any social-scientific disciplinary approach and use any empirical method (including, but not limited to, survey research, experimentation, and content analysis) to examine public opinion in a single nation or from a comparative perspective. Analyses that draw on interdisciplinary approaches and/or use innovative or multiple methods are welcome.

Submissions for this special issue may be in the form of regular-length manuscripts or research notes as specified at:

[http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our\\_journals/intpor/for\\_authors/index.html](http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/intpor/for_authors/index.html).

Manuscripts to be considered for this special issue must be submitted by **October 15, 2013** through the IJPOR online system. The cover letter should indicate that the contact author wishes to have the manuscript considered for the special issue. All queries should be directed to the guest editor, Paul Brewer (email: [prbrewer@udel.edu](mailto:prbrewer@udel.edu); telephone +1 302 831 7771).



*Surveys, Democracy and Crisis of  
Political Representation*

**Santiago, Chile  
June 18-20, 2014**

The VI Latin American Congress of the World Association for Public Opinion Research 2014 (WAPOR) will be held from June 18th to July 20th in Santiago. The meeting will be hosted by WAPOR Latin America and the Diego Portales University (UDP). The conference titled "Surveys, democracy and crisis of political representation" will cover issues related to the processes that develop public opinion (surveys and experimental studies), the interaction with new media, trust and social capital, inequality and political representation, among others.

The congress, based in the Nicanor Parra Library of the UDP, hopes to bring together professionals and academics who stand out in the areas related to politics, communications, sociology, psychology, economics and opinion surveys.

An academic committee is responsible for the organization of this event, and is headed by the Congress Chair Andrew Scherman, and WAPOR representative in Chile, Marta Lagos. Additionally, the Congress is composed by academics of the Diego Portales University, the Catholic University, Adolfo Ibáñez University, the University el Desarrollo and the University of Chile.

Previous editions of this event took place in Colonia (Uruguay, 2008), Lima (Peru, 2009), Querétaro (Mexico, 2010), Belo Horizonte (Brazil, 2011) and Bogota (Colombia, 2012).

To this academic committee, in the coming weeks, will be added a group of prominent market research firms and public opinion. Please mark your calendars for this upcoming congress. More information, including a call for papers, will be available in the coming weeks.

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**Conferences of Other Associations**

2013

10-13 August 2013  
American Sociological Association  
New York, NY, USA  
<http://www.asanet.org/AM2013/am2013.cfm>

22-23 November 2013  
Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research  
(MAPOR)  
Annual Conference  
Chicago, IL, USA  
<http://mapor.org/>

2014

15-18 May 2014  
AAPOR Annual Conference  
Anaheim, CA, USA  
<http://www.aapor.org/>

*Please let us know about your organization's upcoming event(s). We would be happy to publish them in upcoming issues of the newsletter. Thank you!*

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## News and Notes

The European Social Survey has become an authoritative source of reliable data about Europe's evolving social, political and moral fabric.

On July 23<sup>rd</sup> the second ESS Findings booklet was officially published. The booklet, *Exploring public attitudes, informing public policy: Selected findings from the first five rounds*, is available from the ESS website: [www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)

The booklet draws on published research from leading international scholars, complemented by additional analysis from ESS researchers in the Core Scientific Team.

The European Social Survey is committed to disseminating its data and results as widely as possible. The ESS data are freely available to all, accessible via the ESS website ([www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org)) and to date there are nearly 60,000 registered data users. More than 2,400 publications on ESS data are also available.

## Join the Conversation on Social Media

The 2013 annual conference in Boston marked the launch of WAPOR's official presence in social media. You can now follow WAPOR on Twitter, like us on Facebook and join the WAPOR group on LinkedIn.

WAPOR's social media strategy is being developed by Jennifer Agiesta of The Associated Press. Last year, Agiesta was appointed leader of a new social media subcommittee by Publications Chair Trevor Tompson. Agiesta has also taken on duties as WAPOR's media relations chair. The publications committee looked at strategies being followed by other organizations and implemented these first steps into social media, moving towards an overhaul of all of WAPOR's communications with its membership and the public.

Agiesta and President Alejandro Moreno did some live-tweeting at the Boston conference. Going forward, the WAPOR council and secretariat will be engaging WAPOR members and the public with information about WAPOR news and activities.

All WAPOR members are encouraged to help us expand our online networks by joining in on the

conversation. At this time given the professional nature of LinkedIn, our group there is restricted to WAPOR members, and you can find us by searching for WAPOR under groups. Request to join the group and you'll be added after your membership status is verified. You can find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/WAPORnet](https://facebook.com/WAPORnet) and you can follow @WAPOR on Twitter.

The social media subcommittee is looking for volunteers to help WAPOR develop its social media strategy. If you're interested in volunteering please contact Jennifer Agiesta at [jagiesta@ap.org](mailto:jagiesta@ap.org).

## Calendar

### 2013

#### **October 15, 2013**

Deadline for Submission  
IJPOR Special Issue (see page 8)

- 
- 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@wapor.org](mailto:renae@wapor.org) or to Trevor Tompson (Publications Chair) at [tompson-trevor@norc.org](mailto:tompson-trevor@norc.org).

***Please note, the deadline date for the  
3rd quarter newsletter is  
September 1, 2013***

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