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The Current Philippine Political Crisis: A Polling Perspective

Mahar Mangahas
Social Weather Stations

This piece, written on the request of the WAPOR¹ Newsletter, attempts to describe the current Philippine political crisis from a politically non-partisan viewpoint, supplemented by pertinent national opinion polls of *Social Weather Stations* (www.sws.org.ph).

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA for short), now the least popular of the four Presidents in the two decades since opinion polls have been regularly published (Chart 1, page 8), has gotten negative Net Satisfaction² ratings from the public since August 2004.

GMA had been elected as Vice-President in 1998, and assumed power in January 2001 when President Joseph "Erap" Estrada, then undergoing an impeachment trial for corruption, was forced out of the palace by the so-called People Power II uprising, supported initially by mass cabinet resignations and then decisively by military and police announcements of "withdrawal of support" for Erap. Her unusual (but legal, ruled the Supreme Court) route to the Presidency may account for her start as being only moderately popular, without a honeymoon period unlike the three previous presidents. Sixty-one percent accepted her as Erap's replacement in a February 2001 poll. Erap was soon arrested on the non-bailable charge of plunder – in March 2001, 53% agreed with the charge, but 57% wanted him given bail; he is detained and under trial, to this day.

GMA's first negative rating, in early 2003, was due to her decision for Philippine forces to join the United States in the Coalition of the Willing in Iraq, which caused much insecurity among Filipinos, despite traditional goodwill towards the US. She bounced back to positive ratings during the runup to the May 2004 elections, where she won a six-year term by an official score of 40.0% to 36.5% (there were 5 candidates), the narrowest point margin since

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Letter from the President

Just a few days ago, three masked people representing the Basque terrorist organization ETA, announced a permanent ceasefire in my country, Spain. Perhaps due to this fact, and maybe because also spring is newly here in the Northern hemisphere, I am recovering my energy after several tiring months. I am writing to you with a special mood that mixes hope, uncertainty, and some wariness.

The ETA announcement brought to my mind Archibald Crossley's 1953 AAPOR presidential speech, when he said public opinion research should serve to improve the human condition, and specially "to discover the basis upon which conflict can be eased and goodwill advanced among the peoples of the world". Crossley pointed to a somewhat idealistic approach adding meaning and purpose to whatever technical work could be done.

I am convinced WAPOR members have been working with great competence, honesty and enthusiasm for several decades –the association is going to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary next year in the promotion of those values expressed in the first statutes: "a) to establish and promote contacts between persons in the field of survey research on opinions, attitudes and behaviour of people in the various countries of the world, and b) to further the use of objective, scientific survey research in national and international affairs" (cfr. Stuart C. Dodd, "The World Association for Public Opinion Research", *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 21, 1957, p. 179). And we have done that in accordance with the underlying idea of easing conflict and promoting mutual understanding among people in all the countries of the world, as Crossley suggested, in his address to our AAPOR colleagues in 1953.

Whereas surveying and polling have developed enormously in the last decades, public opinion research covers a wider field. In this letter I would like to consider how many writers, whose ideas have contributed decisively to the understanding and appraisal of public opinion, have emphasized the need for information and enlightenment if we wish to be sure that public opinion is not the expression of ignorance or prejudice.

One of the most influential authors in the political role played by public opinion, the Swiss banker and French minister, Jacques Necker (1732-1804), writing about the "tribunal of public opinion", before whom everybody should appear, emphasized "it was necessary to support it, to enlighten it" (*De l'administration des finances en France*).

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), whose enthusiasm for public opinion led him to propose it as a constitutional power in his *Constitutional Code*, a sort of Constitution 'prêt a porter', also paid attention to its possible corruption. "The public compose a tribunal, which is more powerful than all the other tribunals together... everybody feels that though this tribunal may err, it is incorruptible; that it continually tends to become enlightened: that it unites all the wisdom and all the justice of the nation...", he wrote on one side (*Essays on political tactics*). Notwithstanding, he admitted that "public opinion –the opinion which distributes at its own pleasure honour and shame", "the first and the purest of the tribunals", could be contaminated by an irresistible corruption. For that reason he states that "many cases would be found in which public opinion is unjustifiable" (*Principles of penal law*). Enlightenment should not be taken for granted.

The champion of public opinion, the British Lord Bryce (1838-1922), found perhaps in contradiction to his own basic ideas that the duty "of a patriotic statesman in a country where public opinion rules, would seem to be rather to resist and correct than to encourage the public sentiment. He will not be content with trying to form and mould and lead it, but he will confront it, lecture it, remind it that it is fallible, rouse it out of its self-complacency" (*The American Commonwealth*).

For his part, the American sociologist Edward Ross (1866-1951), who framed public opinion as a means of social control, said that the 'primitive public opinion', "far from being a wise disciplinarian, meddles



WAPOR President
Prof. Esteban
López-Escobar

when it ought to abstain, and blesses when it ought to curse". Nevertheless, he stated immediately, the 'ascendancy of the wise' is possible, and "the remedy for the abuses of public opinion is not to discredit it but to instruct it" (*Social control*).

The need to instruct public opinion is specifically relevant when we come to empirical public opinion research itself. We have to face several obstacles: a) public ignorance about public opinion research, b) the magnified supposed 'failures' of polls, c) the use of pseudo-surveys and pseudo-polls, and d) the fraudulent use of polls. All the efforts we could make to counteract the negative effects of those obstacles will be a great service to our fellow citizens. Any initiatives and suggestions leading to a more pro-active WAPOR attitude in this field will contribute very much to improve the civic life.

I hope to see you soon in Montreal. The programme is extremely attractive.

Conferences of Other Associations

Note: Previously this feature appeared in the IJPOR, however, due to space constraints in the journal, we will run the calendar in the WAPOR newsletter from now on.

May 17-20, 2006:
"Scientific Culture for Global Citizenship"
9th International Conference on Public Communication of Science and Technology (PCST-9), Seoul, South Korea.
Consult: www.pcst2006.org

May 18-21, 2006:
"Confronting Core Values and Cultural Conflict"
61st Annual Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), Montreal, PQ, Canada.
Consult: www.aapor.org

June 4-7, 2006:
World Wide Multi Media Measurement. ESOMAR Research Conference, Shanghai, China. Consult: www.esomar.org

June 19-23, 2006:
"Networking Communication Research"
56th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Dresden, Germany. Consult: www.icahdq.org

July 9-13, 2006:
'Is Democracy Working?'
20th World Congress of the International Political Science

Association (IPSA), Fukuoka, Japan. Consult: www.ipsa.ca/or/www.fukuoka2006.com

July 12-14, 2006:
"Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys"
University of Essex, Colchester, United Kingdom. Contact: Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys, ESRC United Kingdom Longitudinal Studies Centre, University of Essex, Colchester, UK, CO4 3SQ, Fax +44 (0)1026 873151, e-mail: mols2006@isermail.essex.ac.uk. Consult: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/ulsc/mols2006/>

July, 23-28, 2006:
"Knowledge Societies for All: Media and Communication Strategies"
Annual Conference of the International Association for Mass Communication Reserach (IAMCR). Cairo, Egypt. Consult: www.iamcr.net

July 23-29, 2006:
"The Quality of Social Existence in a Globalising World"
16th World Congress of Sociology, International Sociological Association (ISA), Durban, South Africa. Consult: www.ucm.es/info/isa/congress2006/

August 2-5, 2006:
Convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), San Francisco, CA, USA. Consult: www.aejmc.org/convention/

September 17-20, 2006:
ESOMAR Congress, London, UK. Consult: www.esomar.org

May 24-28, 2007:
57th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), San Francisco, CA, USA. Consult: www.icahdq.org

August 9-12, 2007:
Convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Washington, DC, USA. Consult: www.aejmc.org/convention/

May 22-26, 2008:
58th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Consult: www.icahdq.org

August 6-9, 2008:
Convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Chicago, IL, USA. Consult: www.aejmc.org/convention/

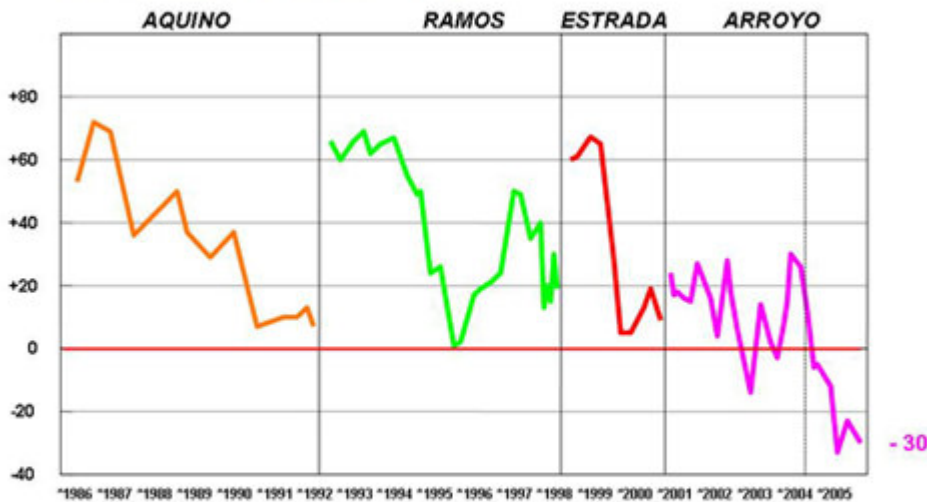
May 21-25, 2009:
59th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Chicago, IL, USA. Consult: www.icahdq.org

independence in 1946. As usual, there were many charges of fraud in the 2004 election; vote-counting took seven weeks to complete. The losing candidate, the immensely popular movie star Fernando Poe Jr. (FPJ), filed a legal protest, but died unexpectedly from a stroke in December 2004. Early in 2005 the Presidential Electoral Tribunal declared his case moot and academic, and in a second decision rejected his widow Susan Roces's plea to at least resolve the issue of who had really won the election. Filipinos were initially (March 2005) somewhat in favor (47-39) of continuing FPJ's protest, but later (May 2005) were divided (39-41) about it, even as 71% believed (May 2005) Susan Roces's accusation of massive cheating in the election.

Furor erupted in early June 2005 when the Press Secretary himself held up two audiotapes in a press

conference (calling one "genuine" and the other "fake") allegedly containing wiretaps of GMA, in June 2004 while the election returns were still being completed, asking Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to make sure that she would win by at least one million votes (equivalent to about 3 percentage points).¹ On June 27, GMA admitted speaking to an (unnamed) election official "to protect her votes." On July 8, eight cabinet members and some other high officials resigned; their call for GMA to step down was joined by other dignitaries,

**NET SATISFACTION RATINGS* OF PRESIDENTS
MAY 1986 TO DECEMBER 2005**



* Net ratings = % Satisfied minus % Dissatisfied.
Survey Data: joint Ateneo and Social Weather Stations surveys (1986-1987); Ateneo Public Opinion Survey (1988); Social Weather Stations surveys.



4th Quarter 2005 Social Weather Report
November 27 - December 4, 2005 National Survey

ies, including former President Corazon Aquino. Former President Fidel V. Ramos (FVR) relieved the pressure on GMA, proposing as a compromise a shift to the parliamentary form of government, with a provision that GMA's term of office be cut short.² Impeachment proceedings against GMA were filed with the strongly GMA-controlled House of Representatives, but failed to muster the required one-third vote to bring the case to trial in the Philippine Senate.³

Public opinion has been unfavorable to GMA throughout 2005. Net Satisfaction with her performance was -12 in March, -33 in May, -23 in August, and -30 in December. SWS telephone polls in Metro Manila found 59% (June 28-30) saying that GMA indeed told the official to cheat, and 62% (July 12-14) saying she should resign, failing which 85% wanted her impeached. The national Social Weather Survey of early September 2005 found 79% in favor of impeachment, 64% in favor of GMA's resignation, and 51% in favor of toppling her by People Power if not impeached. In this national poll, only 24% believed that GMA really won the 2004 election, 57% believed that GMA's phone calls told the Comelec official to cheat, and 40% said they had already personally heard the tapes or read its transcripts. In December 2005 the most popular idea for charter change was FVR's suggestion to cut short GMA's term in office (approved by 54%).

(Philippines continued on page 6)

Helen Dinerman Award Citation:

Roger Jowell

by Brian Gosschalk

While Mark Abrams is generally regarded as the father of social survey research in the UK, the role of Roger Jowell has been vitally important in seeing Abrams' brainchild grow up. It is surely no coincidence that Roger's first job after coming to the UK from South Africa was as a researcher at Research Services Limited, the company founded by Abrams twenty years earlier. Whether the founder and chairman recognised in the new young graduate someone who might be his successor, or whether it was five years' exposure to the chairman's views on research that prompted Roger to want to make a similar mark in the field of social research is unclear, but the outcome was that Roger left RSL in 1969 in order to become co-founder with Gerald Hoinville of Social and Community Planning Research (SCPR), renamed the National Centre for Social Research in 1999.

Under Jowell's and Hoinville's guidance, SCPR recruited and trained its own national fieldwork team and enjoyed a period of considerable growth and increasing influence. Within five years it had become Britain's only non-commercial organisation outside of

government capable of designing, conducting and interpreting major social surveys. While happy to compete with the commercial market research organisations for government survey contracts, SCPR was unique in also seeking grants to initiate its own research. It also acquired a reputation for what would have been called "value added", had the term existed then, combining the high quality field force and survey management skills it had in common with its commercial rivals with a degree of policy expertise and knowledge more normally found among those commissioning research.

Roger has always been intensely interested in the methodology of social research and the early 1980's saw the birth of the Social Methods Centre at SCPR, a specialist team devoted solely to studying and attempting to improve survey methodology, at the time a somewhat unfashionable subject in the UK.

When Gerald Hoinville left SCPR in 1984, Roger became sole director, a position he was to retain until 2001. Two examples of his success in attracting external funding for projects that were dear

to his heart were the establishment of the British Social Attitudes series, core-funded by the Sainsbury charitable trust, and SCPR's lead role for several years – in conjunction with Nuffield College, Oxford - in the British Election Studies.

Roger showed his internationalism by becoming founding chair of the International Social Surveys Programme in 1985, and he remained chair of the ISSP until 1991. Similarly, launching one major international social survey programme, was not enough; Roger then launched another, becoming founding director of the European Social Survey in 2001. Aged 59, he had just stepped down as Director at the National Centre of Social Research, and at an age when many people would be winding down, Roger began a whole new career, attempting to map social change at a time when it was proceeding with extraordinary rapidity across the whole of Europe. And then even more energetically, two years later, Roger also became founding director of the Centre of Comparative Social Surveys.

Throughout his time at SCPR, Roger was closely involved in many of their key surveys. He contributed substantial sections to almost all of the British Social Attitude survey's annual books, and to several books on British politics. Despite spending so much of his time

(Jowell continued on page 6)

(Phillippines continued from page 4)

The beleaguered President has turned to sterner tactics to defend herself. In late September 2005, she stymied congressional investigations by an Executive Order banning cabinet and military officials from answering questions without her permission. Last February 24th, charging that a rightist-leftist conspiracy, including elements of the Philippine Armed Forces, was about to launch a coup, she proclaimed a "state of emergency" under which the police and the National Telecommunications Commission have been threatening to shut down uncooperative mass media companies, and several (leftist) legislators have been threatened with arrest. On February 26th, after the general commanding the Marines was suddenly relieved, a Marine battalion, under a colonel threatening "to withdraw support" from GMA, staged a tense stand-off for several hours at marine headquarters in Metro Manila before returning to barracks. Challenges to the constitutionality of both the executive order and the state of emergency⁴ have been lodged and are awaiting decision of the Supreme Court. To call a political situation "fluid" is hackneyed yet quite apt for the Philippines today.

(Footnotes)

¹ World Association for Public Opinion Research.

² In Filipino as well as in English, 'Satisfaction' is a better grade than 'Approval'. The rating uses a 5-point scale with neutrality in the middle. A positive or negative net value indicates the direction of the plurality, not of the majority.

³ The Press Secretary, who was obviously trying to pre-empt an exposé by the opposition, was never able to clarify the issue of a "real" versus a "fake" tape. Garcillano vanished, and reappeared only in late November after the impeachment vote lost in the House of Representatives; he said he had been in hiding to protect his life, and stonewalled at investigations of both houses of Congress.

⁴ However, there was no such provision in the December 2005 report of a group commissioned by GMA to recommend Constitutional changes.

⁵ The opposition in the House managed to get the "Garci tapes" aired in public, but not to be accepted as evidence due to the law against such use of wiretaps. It was established that the wiretapping was done by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, but not by whose authority or for what purpose. The tapes implicated several high officers in the Armed Forces as having aided the Comelec official in cheating.

⁶ Police, justice department and military officials have continued to set an anti-free-speech tone even after state of emergency was formally lifted on March 3, with the administration now arguing that the case at the Supreme Court is moot and academic.

.....
(Jowell continued from page 5)

not just running a centre but directing surveys as well, Roger has always found time to be closely involved with other organisations. He is a trustee for the "think tank" the Institute for Public Policy Research, and a council member of the Royal Statistical Society. He has been a member of many editorial boards and of various boards of the Economic and Social Research Council. Reflecting his upbringing, he is a Research Adviser of the Human Science Research Council of South Africa and is a member of the advisory board for the Information Centre for Asylum Seekers and Refugees. He has been an advisor on research and polling to the Labour Party, while at the same time able to appear on television and present a dispassionate view of political research.

Throughout his career Roger has been closely involved with issues concerning the ethics of the survey process. He was the author of the International Statistical Institute's Declaration on Ethics in 1985, and is the author of a chapter on ethics in a forthcoming book on survey research practice.

He is the recipient of many awards, including a CBE in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2001, two honorary degrees, and an honorary fellowship of the Market Research Society. Roger Jowell, WAPOR is delighted to add to these awards by bestowing on you the 2005 Dinerman Award.

59th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Montréal, Québec, Canada

Tuesday, May 16 to Thursday, May 18, 2006



The World Association for Public Opinion Research will hold its annual conference in May 2006 in Montréal, Québec, Canada in connection with the annual meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR).

The final program will be available soon on the WAPOR website at: <http://www.unl.edu/wapor/>

Registration for the conference is **only** available on-site at the conference hotel after Monday, April 17 but you can fill out your registration form at home and bring it with you to the conference. Registration will take place at the Montréal Marriott Château Champlain beginning on Tuesday, May 16 from 3:00-6:00 p.m. The traditional Welcome Cocktail party begins at 6:30 p.m. On the following day (May 17), the conference schedule is a full day of interesting topics covering everything from public opinion about science and technology to issues in surveying Aboriginal people. Later that evening is the annual award banquet. Please remember that a ticket must be purchased to attend this event. Our final day (May 18) is a half-day of papers followed by lunch and the WAPOR business meeting. All WAPOR members new and long-standing are welcome and encouraged to attend. This is the opportunity to hear how WAPOR is doing financially, hear discussions on upcoming conferences and seminars, and to ask questions or offer suggestions on numerous topics.

Montréal, Québec, Canada is an ideal location for an international conference on public opinion research. Montréal has a wide variety of excellent restaurants and other cultural attractions, ranging from historic churches and 18th century Old Montréal to McGill University and l'Université de Montréal to the famous Montréal Biodome. Montréal also is known for its après-work nightlife and world-class rafting on the Saint Lawrence River, within sight of the downtown. Montréal is a city with world class— at Canadian prices.

Montréal has excellent air connections to most world cities and within three hours' drive you can be in Canadian cities such as Québec City and Ottawa or south of the border to U.S. destinations such as Vermont, New Hampshire and Lake Placid, New York.

Travel websites:

<http://www.bonjourquebec.com/anglais>

<http://www.tourisme-montreal.org/>

<http://www.keepexploring.ca/travelcanada/app/index.jsp>



Montréal is a city not to be missed! Above is a photo of the city taken from the Old Port.

Come join WAPOR for the 59th Annual Conference being held May 16-18, 2006.

<http://www.wapor.org> for conference information!

WAPOR Thematical Seminar

“Quality Criteria in Survey Research VI”

Cadenabbia, Lake Como, Italy

June 29 – July 1, 2006

Register Now!



The sixth Cadenabbia conference on “Quality Criteria in Survey Research” is coming up soon. In the meantime, meeting at one of Italy’s most beautiful locations to discuss the intellectual aspects of survey research and exchange ideas about how to distinguish good questionnaires from bad and how to heighten the public’s awareness of the issue of quality in survey research has become a long-standing WAPOR tradition.

As always in Cadenabbia, the seminar will offer a highly diverse and inspirational program. This, along with the unique atmosphere at Villa La Collina—once the favorite vacation site of Germany’s first Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer—will once again ensure that the conference is an unforgettable experience for all participants.



We would advise you to make your reservation early, as space at Villa La Collina is limited. We will be sending out detailed information on how to get to Cadenabbia by late April (or thereafter, for those who register later). For further information about the seminar, please contact:

Michael W. Traugott
University of Michigan
Communication Studies
2020 Frieze Building
105 South State Street
Ann Arbor MI 48109
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Tel.: +1 – (734) 764 - 0420
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Email: mtrau@umich.edu

Quality Criteria in Survey Research VI
A WAPOR Thematic Seminar
June 29 - July 1, 2006
Villa La Collina, Cadenabbia
Lake Como, Italy

Name: _____

Organization/Institute: _____

Address: _____

_____ Country: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

	Price per person	Number of persons	Total
Participation in the seminar, including accommodations and meals, for WAPOR members	\$480	_____	\$_____
Participatin in the seminar, including accommodations and meals, for nonmembers	\$580	_____	\$_____
Accompanying persons: accommodations and meals only	\$330	_____	\$_____
Extra day: departure on July 2, 2006	\$180	_____	\$_____
TOTALAMOUNT			\$_____

When you register, your hotel accommodations will be arranged at either the Villa La Collina or another 3-star lakeside hotel. The price is the same for both hotels and includes all meals, with breakfast at participant's place of accommodations and lunch and dinner in the conference building, as well as the get-together on June 29. Participants will receive detailed information about the accommodations and ground transportation needs after registering.

Method of payment:

Mastercard or VISA number: _____

Expiration date: _____ Signature _____

Payment also possible by check (please, No Eurocheques)

Please return to:
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200 North 11th Street
Lincoln, NE 68588-0242, USA
Fax: 1-402-458-2038
Renae_Reis@gallup.com

For more information on Lake Como, Cadenabbia, Italy

The following are a few websites that will help you get familiar with Lake Como and Cadenabbia, Italy.

Information on how to get there, what to do when you arrive, and information on other towns around the lake:

<http://www.italyheaven.co.uk/lakecomo.html>

Good travel tips for those able to travel from different parts of Europe:

http://www.gonomad.com/destinations/0504/lake_como_italy.html

Beautiful photos and statements from travelers who have visited:

<http://alpseurope.igougo.com/planning/destinationHome.asp?LocationID=4879>

Fodor's travel information on Lake Como:

http://www.fodors.com/miniguides/gresults.cfm?destination=milan@103&cur_section=fea&feature=30003

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.

WAPOR Notes

If you have photos of a past WAPOR conference or seminar and would like to contribute them to the WAPOR archive materials, please send them to Renaе_Reis@gallup.com or by regular mail to WAPOR.

The WAPOR Newsletter is published by the
World Association for Public Opinion Research

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Calendar

May 16-18, 2006

"Confronting Core Values and Cultural Conflict"

Jointly with AAPOR

Montréal, Québec, Canada

WAPOR 59th Annual Conference

June 29 to July 1, 2006

"Quality Criteria in Survey Research VI"

Lake Como, Cadenabbia, Italy

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 Renaе_Reis@gallup.com or to Thomas Petersen (Publications Chair) at tpetersen@ifd-allensbach.de

***Please let us know your upcoming events.
Deadline for 1st quarter newsletter events or
article submission is March 1, 2006***