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WAPOR Regional Seminar

“Transnational Connections-Challenges and Opportunities in Communication and Public Opinion Research”

Contributed by Magdalena Wojcieszak

For the second time, over eighty scholars from more than 15 countries around the world gathered at the IE University in Segovia, Spain in March 2011 to reflect on the state of public opinion and political communication research. The event, titled *Transnational Connections Challenges and Opportunities in Communication and Public Opinion Research*, was organized for the second time, this year as a World Association for Public Opinion Research Regional Seminar. It was organized by Magdalena Wojcieszak of IE School of Communication, with the assistance of Patricia Moy from University of Washington, Begoña González-Cuesta, the School's Dean, and the faculty from IE University.

The event was unique for the advancement of public opinion and political communication research in general and its international and comparative aspects in particular. First, the distinguished keynote speaker (and long-time member of WAPOR), Elihu Katz from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania provided the framework for subsequent discussions. The speech, titled *Some Dilemmas of Deliberative Democracy* emphasized the interconnections between the media, interpersonal talk and public opinion, shed comparative light on these relationships, and also invited audience questions on the role of the Internet, media systems, cultural contexts and individual characteristics.

Second, the Symposium's agenda combined roundtable presentations of cutting edge research papers with 2-hour long thematic workshops during which panelists debated the recent theoretical and empirical advances on such issues as polarization (a workshop led by Shanto Iyengar), political knowledge (led by Robert Luskin), public opinion (mis)perception (led by Albert Gunther and Hernando Rojas), the new media technologies (Matthew Hindmann) and agenda setting (orga-

(Seminar continued on page 4)

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64th Annual Conference "Public Opinion and the Internet" September 21-23, 2011

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Letter from the President

In 1859 in a speech in Columbus, Ohio, Abraham Lincoln observed that "Public opinion in this country is everything." Recently, the omnipresent power of public opinion has manifested itself in North Africa and the Middle East. It is noteworthy that the Gallup World Poll in Egypt found that the percentage classified as "thriving" on the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Ladder Index fell from 29% in 2005 to 12% in 2010 and that in Tunisia it decreased from 24% in 2008 to 14% in 2010. It is also instructive that most nations with the lowest thriving scores in North Africa and the Middle East in 2010 (Morocco (9%), Yemen (12%), Egypt (12%), Iraq (13%), Tunisia (14%), Palestinian Authority (14%), and Libya (14%)) have been experiencing on-going conflicts and/or recent unrest.



Tom W. Smith
President

Developments in the Middle East and North Africa indicate a growth in public opinion research and a related recognition of the importance of scientifically monitoring public opinion and other aspects of society. This is illustrated by the founding in 2010 of the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) in Qatar which held a conference on Survey Research in the Gulf: Challenges and Policy Implications in February, 2011 (<http://www.qu.edu.qa/sesri/>), by the expansion of the Arab Barometer directed by Mark Tessler (University of Michigan) and Amaney Jamal (Princeton University) from eight countries in wave 1 in 2006-09 to an expected 10 to 12 countries in wave 2 in 2010-11 (<http://www.arabbarometer.org/>), and by the formation of the Arab Network for Public Opinion Polls in the aftermath of the 2009 Cairo Conference on Public Opinion Polls in a Changing Society.

But despite these advances, serious impediments still exist. For example, under the Mubarak regime surveys were tightly regulated. Before conducting any surveys in Egypt, one had to apply for a permit from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). This governmental organization was responsible for the Population Census and every other survey in Egypt. It would evaluate the questionnaire and suggest deletion of certain questions that they considered as taboo or too sensitive. In many cases, CAPMAS forwarded the questionnaire to a body within the Egyptian Intelligence Agency known as the Information Security Division. This process often took several months before CAPMAS responded to the researcher's request. As one researcher, noted "If the researchers are lucky, they may receive a green light to proceed, otherwise they have to forget about the survey altogether. These procedures have discouraged many interested researcher from conducting any surveys." The post-Mubarak situation is still evolving, but there are some signs that regulations may be loosened.

A second example of restrictions involves a planned Peace Poll in Sudan. It was to be carried out in Darfur following the model developed by Colin Irwin in Northern Ireland. But while a questionnaire was designed and a pilot study was conducted on 53 cases in El Fasher, Sudan, the full study was blocked by the National Intelligence and Security Service of Sudan and the poll was never fielded (Colin Irwin, "Darfur Peace Poll," January, 2011 at www.peacepolls.org).

WAPOR applauds the growth of open and scientifically-credible survey research in this region and hopes for continued progress along this course. As the WAPOR Constitution notes, "Public opinion is a critical force in shaping and transforming society. Properly conducted and disseminated survey research provides the public with a tool to measure opinions and attitudes in order to allow its voices to be heard."

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom W. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom W. Smith

WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH (WAPOR)
PRESS RELEASE

Public opinion research must guarantee the confidentiality of responses

Lincoln (Nebraska, USA), **February 17, 2011**. The National Election Panel of Peru (Jurado Nacional de Elecciones, JNE) recently announced a requirement that polling organizations disclose all their respondents' personal identity information, forcing them to violate the profession's code of ethics, and restricting their freedom to conduct and publish public opinion polls.

WAPOR observes that this regulation would restrict both the rights of the citizens to express their opinions freely as well as the freedom of polling organizations to conduct and publish public opinion polls in Peru. It violates the fundamental ethical principle of protecting respondents' anonymity. In the Code of Ethics, Part III (On Rules of Practice between Researcher and Respondents), Section D (Responsibility to Informants), Paragraph 22, WAPOR states that:

"No response in a survey shall be linked in any way to an identifiable respondent. The anonymity of respondents shall be respected, except in rare cases, with the respondent's specific permission."

WAPOR is aware that the JNE has now decided to revoke this new regulation and work with Peruvian pollsters. WAPOR commends the JNE for withdrawing this regulation and thereby respecting the confidentiality of respondents.

WAPOR states that:

Protecting respondent anonymity and thus the freedom to express opinions freely is a core principle of professional practice in survey research.

The protection of respondents' identities is the sole responsibility of the research organization that conducts the study, and not of any third party.

A state agency's scrutiny of respondents' identities will not improve the quality of public opinion polls. On the contrary, the requirement to disclose the identity of all respondents will likely distort the accuracy of any poll result. Prospective respondents would probably refrain from participating or would not express their true opinions, for fear of government retaliation.

Requesting citizen identification numbers will bias poll results and violate the citizens' right to keep their political preferences secret.

WAPOR opposes regulations that restrict the freedom to conduct and publish public opinion polls around the world and that limit the rights of citizens in a democracy to both participate in surveys and to be informed by them.

This press release and the principles expressed in it are also endorsed by AAPOR, the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

Media Contact:
Alejandro Moreno, amoreno@itam.mx
Media Relations Chair

(Seminar continued from page 1)

nized by Media Tenor). The questions of how to integrate theory and findings between the US, Europe, and other regions and what can be learned from thinking about media, public opinion and political communication as transnational phenomena received special attention. These workshops also focused on encouraging and/or continuing comparative research in the debated areas, emphasized the practicalities of these undertakings and generated discussions during which participants provided context-specific perspective on the debated topics.

Third, the Symposium was unique in that it brought together senior and junior scholars who – during conference presentations – presented recent work from comparative perspective. The topics raised at the Symposium varied (among others) from selectivity, social movements, new media use and effects around the globe, non-political media and public opinion, public opinion polling as related to methodology and sociopolitical effects, polarization and fragmentation, and deliberation and political discussion, among other topics. All were addressed from international and comparative perspectives, shedding new light on the new media use in Singapore, political talk in China, perceptions of public opinion in Poland and the challenges of conducting public opinion research in such sociopolitical contexts as Iran, Darfur or Eastern Europe.



Keynote Speaker,
Professor Elihu Katz

Further, the Symposium brought together members and representatives from political communication divisions of international associations that co-sponsored the event: International Communication Association (ICA), International Political Science Association (IPSA), International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) and the Center for Global Communication Studies at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania. Finally, the Symposium was held at a unique venue at the IE University, which puts a 21st-century facility in a 13th



century convent situated at the spectacular scenery of the historic city of Segovia.

Naturally, a diversity of views was expressed in the discussions and workshops. Yet the research agendas identified as central in the US, Europe and in other regions seemed relatively similar and there was general consensus regarding the need to foster transnational generalizations through continued collaborations, comparative research designs and international data bases. The organizers hope that these collaborations, many of which were initiated last year, will move the field of public opinion and political communication continually forward and towards ever increasing internationalization.

Sponsors of the Symposium included:



Additional information on the Symposium is available online at <http://www.transnationalconnections.ie.edu> or from Magdalena Wojcieszak at magdalena.wojcieszak@ie.edu



Group shot of symposium attendees.

Announcement and Second Call for Papers

Paul Felix Lazarsfeld – His Methodological Inspirations and Networking Activities in the Field of Social Research

Prague, Czech Republic

September 25–27, 2011

110 years have passed since the birth of Paul Felix Lazarsfeld in Vienna (13.2.1901) and 35 years have passed since his death in New York (30.8.1976). P. F. Lazarsfeld was an 'organizational man'. He founded four research institutes – in Vienna, Newark, Princeton and New York – during the 45 years of his active scientific career. He developed an unprecedented network of social scientists, ranging from the fields of sociology, social and developmental psychology to history, communication science, demography, social anthropology, and philosophy, to mathematics and statistics and the Frankfurt School of criticism, and he established many ties between Europe and America involving Vienna, New York, Paris, Oslo, Palo Alto, Rome, Chicago, Warsaw, Washington, Moscow, Princeton, and even Prague. He and his close fellow-workers inspired two generations of social scientists in the field of Research Methodology. His research, educational, scientific and organizational activities served to unify social research for almost 45 years, from the time of his famous Marienthal study, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, to his UNESCO seminars in the 1970s in Eastern Europe.

This small symposium follows from the successful WAPOR Thematic Seminar "The Early Days of Survey Research and Their Importance Today", which was held in Vienna on July 1-3 2010. It is hard to imagine the historical development of the field of survey research and the methodology of empirical social research, including public opinion research and market research, without invoking the name of Paul Felix Lazarsfeld. We would like to celebrate his mastery of all the scientific fields that he helped advance during his scientific career.

The purpose of this thematic seminar is to help develop an understanding of the many sources of inspiration and ties that helped to develop and unify social science methodology thanks to P. F. Lazarsfeld's research and organizational activities. The event is being organized by the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague in cooperation with the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Vienna and WAPOR and it is taking place in Prague in the heart of Europe right after the 64th Annual WAPOR Conference in Amsterdam, which is just one hour away from Prague by plane.

We welcome any papers dealing with our two main topics: 1) the sources of inspiration of P.F. Lazarsfeld and his school of Social Research Methodology, and 2) the fascinating figure's social or research networking activities anywhere in the world.

Organizing committee:

Hynek Jerabek, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

Thomas Petersen, WAPOR President, Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach, Germany

Hannes Haas, Fakultät für Sozialwissenschaften, Universität Wien, Austria

Proposals describing the content of the proposed paper should be approximately 1-2 pages in length and should be submitted **NO LATER THAN May 15, 2011** to:

Hynek Jerabek

Institute of Sociological Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

U Krize 8

158 00 Prague 5 - Jinonice

Czech Republic

Tel.: +420 – 2510 80 216

Fax: +420 – 2510 80 310

Please see the website for more information:

<https://sites.google.com/site/waporprague2011/>

Preferably by email to: jerabek@fsv.cuni.cz and honza.schubert@gmail.com

Please return to:
 WAPOR Secretariat
 UNL Gallup Research Center
 201 N Thirteenth Street
 Lincoln, NE 68588-0242
 USA

Fax: 001 (402) 472-7727

I hereby register for the WAPOR Annual Conference

Name:

Organization/Institute:

Street Address:City.....Postal Code.....

Country:

Telephone: Fax: E-mail:

(A) Conference Registration Options

Please check the appropriate registration fee for the conference. Conference fee includes all materials for the conference, the welcome cocktail, all lunches, all coffee breaks between sessions, and the award dinner. Registration for non-members includes a one-year membership to WAPOR beginning 1/1/2012. To avoid a late registration fee (see below), attendees should submit their registration forms by September 1. Registration forms can be emailed, posted, or faxed. Parties interested in registering after September 1 should bring their completed paperwork to the conference.

*Note: All registrations must be **paid in full** before letters of invitation for those who need them will be issued.*

	by September 1	After September 1
Member	_____ €220	_____ €255
Non-Member	_____ €310	_____ €345
Student Member	_____ €110	_____ €135
Student Non-Member	_____ €145	_____ €170

21 September 2011 Welcome Cocktail <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I will attend <input type="checkbox"/> No, I will not attend
--

Please indicate your **menu preference** for the annual award dinner below.

Meal choice: Non-Vegetarian meal Vegetarian meal

Total cost for conference registration: (A) €_____

(B) Additional Ticket(s) for Award Dinner

If you are interested in purchasing extra tickets for the award dinner, note the number of additional tickets being purchased and the menu of your choice.

_____ Award Dinner @ €70 **Meal choice:** Non-vegetarian meal Vegetarian meal

Total cost for additional meals: (B) €_____

Total cost for registration plus additional meals: (A + B) €_____

Method of payment:

() Visa: _____ EXP: _____ Signature _____

() MasterCard: _____ EXP: _____ Signature _____

() Wire transfer (please send an email to renae@wapor.org for instructions)

Hotel Information WAPOR 2011, Amsterdam

Please note: The room rates we have negotiated for are **only for the nights of September 21 and 22, checking out on September 23**. Any room rates before or after those dates are subject to regular hotel rates for those nights. Amsterdam is host to a large conference following ours and the room rates on those dates may be considerably more. Please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible to ensure the best rates available.

We have made the following arrangements:

Rho Hotel Amsterdam

<http://www.rhohotel.com/>

Contact: info@rhohotel.com

Please mention reservation number **120512 and WAPOR**. Also, provide your credit card details for guarantee purposes.

Note: Special WAPOR rates apply until **May 15**

Approx. €129-€149 incl. taxes and breakfast

Eden Hotel Amsterdam, Eden Rembrandt Square Hotel

<http://www.edenrembrandtsquarehotel.com/en/overview.aspx>

Contact: banquets.rembrandtwquare@edenhotelgroup.com

Please mention reservation number **GF-4102 and WAPOR**

Note: Special WAPOR rates apply until about **July 1**

Approx. €140-€200, including breakfast

Other Hotels

You are, of course, free to book another hotel. We can suggest these sites:

www.booking.com

www.trip.com

We strongly advise you to book your hotel as soon as possible – Amsterdam is a popular destination.

Helpful online visitor guides:

<http://www.tripadvisor.com/>

<http://us.holland.com/>

<http://www.amsterdam.info/tips/touristoffice/>



"Journey of Students and Young Researchers in Public Opinion"

The program is set for upcoming Congress, see more <http://www.waporbh.ufmg.br/pt/abstracts.php>

Belo Horizonte, Brazil

The next Latin American Congress...

We are happy to accept the registration of listeners for the event. Listeners are considered undergraduate students and graduate students, teachers and professionals as well as the general public, who did not present papers at this congress. To join the conference as a listener, you must register by filling out the online form. You will receive an email confirming your participation.



Co-sponsored by POP and UFMG.

"WAPOR Congress, Belo Horizonte Brazil will manage the importance and challenges of public opinion and democracy, in its interface with communication policy and new technology and it will involve Latin American, European and American researchers."



Cost for WAPOR Members: \$170
Cost for Student Members: \$35
Cost for Non-Members: \$210
Cost for Student Non-Members: \$50

The program will include:

- AT1-Methodology and investigation in public opinion
- AT2-Public opinion and new technologies
- AT3-Public opinion and media
- AT4-Public opinion, campaign and vote
- AT5-Parties, political representation and public opinion
- AT6-Social capital, citizenship and World Values survey
- AT7-Public opinion and political participation
- AT8-Public opinion, political culture and democracy

Contact:

Helcimara de Souza Telles, Congress Chair

Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais - UFMG

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Nominations for Helen Dinerman Award

The WAPOR Helen Dinerman Award is presented annually in memory of Helen Dinerman's scientific achievements over three decades of public opinion research. The award, given since 1981, honors particularly significant contributions to survey research methodology. This is a career award recognizing a lifetime of service to the profession and the discipline.

Recent winners include: Willem Saris, Marta Lagos, Wolfgang Donsbach, and Don Dillman. Last year in Chicago, the award was presented to Robert Groves for his lifetime contributions and achievements in the field.

Please send suggestions and a few lines of justification by email to WAPOR at renae@wapor.org by **June 1**. The winner will be announced at the WAPOR Annual Conference this September in Amsterdam following the decision by three past Presidents of WAPOR.

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 .

2011

May 12-15, 2011
American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR)
66th Annual Conference
Phoenix, AZ, USA
<http://aapor.org/Home.htm>

May 26-30, 2011
International Communication Association (ICA)
61st Annual Conference
Boston, MA, USA
<http://www.icahdq.org/conferences/2011/>

June 30-July 1, 2011
Understanding Society/BHPS Conference
University of Essex, Colchester, UK
<http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/>

July 18-22, 2011
Fourth Conference of the European Survey Research Association (ESRA)
Lausanne, Switzerland
<http://surveymethodology.eu/conferences/>

July 30-August 2, 2011
Joint Statistical Meetings
Statistics: An All-Encompassing Discipline
Miami Beach, FL, USA
<http://amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2011/>

Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research
36th Annual Conference
Chicago, IL, USA
<http://mapor.org/>

2012

May 17-20, 2012
AAPOR
67th Annual Conference
Orlando, FL, USA
<http://aapor.org/Home.htm>

October 31-November 3, 2012
American Statistical Association
International Conference on Methods for Surveying and Enumerating Hard-to-Reach Populations
H2R/2012
New Orleans, LA, USA
<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/h2r/2012>

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!

ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS FOR THE SPECIAL EDITION 40 YEARS OF THE SPIRAL OF SILENCE

It was in 1972 when Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann first outlined the main features of the theory of the spiral of silence at the 20th International Congress of Psychology in Tokyo. Forty years later, in the year 2012, the International Journal of Public Opinion Research is planning to publish a special edition of the Journal focusing on the theory. Guest editor is Dr Thomas Petersen.

What significance did the spiral of silence theory have for the social sciences in the past and what is its significance today? How did the theory influence the development of the field? Which elements of the theory have been empirically confirmed and which have not? Does the theory continue to be relevant today or are there elements that are either outdated from today's perspective or which need to be developed or investigated further? These are just some of the questions that could be addressed in the planned special edition.

Researchers from around the world who deal with the spiral of silence are thus cordially invited to submit articles, including both theoretical discussions and papers focusing on empirical studies. Please submit your manuscript to the IJPOR website at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ijpor> -- and remember to mark your manuscript as being intended for the "Special Edition Spiral of Silence." The deadline for submissions is September 1, 2011.

Update on the AAPOR Transparency Initiative

By Scott Keeter / April 1, 2011

In his address to the AAPOR annual conference last year, outgoing president Peter Miller presented a vision for a new initiative to encourage survey organizations to be more transparent when reporting their findings. The Transparency Initiative (TI) is intended to provide AAPOR's recognition to organizations that routinely disclose methodological information. More than 60 organizations have signed on as supporters of the TI, and many of these are actively assisting AAPOR in establishing the structure and requirements of the TI.

The TI Steering Committee has recommended that the disclosure standards for participation in the TI should be the same as those required of AAPOR members under the [AAPOR Code of Professional Ethics and Practice](#). Still under development are the membership application process, an archiving mechanism for disclosed information and how compliance will be monitored.

The TI steering committee welcomes ideas and suggestions from WAPOR members. You can send them to transparency@AAPOR.org or to me at skeeter@pewresearch.org.

More details about the TI will be presented in a session at the AAPOR conference (Saturday May 14 at 10 AM). And there will be a session devoted to the TI at the WAPOR annual conference in September featuring Peter Miller, Reg Baker, myself and others. We hope to see you there.



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Calendar

2011

May 4-6, 2011

IV Latin American Congress of Public Opinion
"Journey of Students and Young Researchers in
Public Opinion"

Belo Horizonte, Brazil

See page 8 for more information

July 1, 2011

Deadline for Paper Submissions for the Turner and
Nelson Prizes (Annual Conference)

Deadline for Helen Dinerman nominations
(see page 9)

August 1, 2011

Deadline for full papers (Annual Conference)

September 1, 2011

Deadline for "Spiral of Silence" special issue of the
IJPOR (see page 10 for details)

September 21-23, 2011

WAPOR 64th Annual Conference

"Public Opinion and the Internet"

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

September 25-27, 2011

Paul Lazarsfeld-WAPOR Regional Seminar

Prague, Czech Republic (see page 5)

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- 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 or to Trevor Tompson (Publi-
cations Chair) at ttompson@ap.org.

Let us know your upcoming events.

*Please note, the deadline date for the
2nd quarter newsletter is
June 15, 2011*