

## Coordination of ANES with News Media Surveys and Exit Polls

**Arthur Lupia:** We've decided to combine the last three topics into a more general idea. The last three topics we're thinking about going for maybe an hour here and having a wrap-up session. Two of them have to do with the coordination between ANES and news media surveys. The other is about coordination between the ANES and exit polls.

And at the same time we're thinking about ways of coordinating, there is a question of can the NES collect data that helps you address methodological concerns in your own studies. We've talked about content today, and then a little bit about the means of asking questions.

But I guess the general thing is ways that we can be more useful to you. And I know we've talked about them today, but maybe structural ways or maybe sort of more general ways that we can build a network. Because what we've thought about today is, it's great to have the interchange of ideas. And we are learning and learned a lot today from your perspective and how you state things and maybe how you react to how we state things but there is also a sense that there are untapped network potentials, you know? The professional pollsters has a good network, the academic community has a good network. Is the network between those audiences what it could be?

In places like AAPOR it really shines, and it is, and then in other moments — I know for us when we're trying to plan a survey, sometimes we have questions about what you guys are doing. We have contacts, you know, we can call, but the network isn't as extensive; and moreover, if you get one degree of separation away from us, a lot of the academics, I think, in terms of understanding the relationship between what they do and what you do — are there ways that we can interact with you that might help us to be of service to them, and that might help us sort of just build that network, leverage the rein in different perspectives that come up? So that's the idea.

We can put it back to the individual questions again, we can put it back to topics and continue some of the conversations we had earlier today, but we can think more structurally about—we could make it simple— Starting with ANES, are there ways that this organization can be of greater use to you in some sort of structural relationship or network *[inaudible]*? So, we've just combined those.

*Unidentified Speaker:* Yes. One of the most helpful things when you're creating a survey is to look at what other people have done, and if ANES made it easier to search for questions that you've asked in the past, or make available to us the questions that you're currently asking — that would be helpful. I'm on the ANES site now, you can't look up by question, I don't believe all of the questions are in Roper but I could be mistaken.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well click on the Data Center. Oh, let's do it up here.

*Unidentified Speaker:* Are you guys in the Roper Project?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** No, you don't want to have to go to Roper, because we're free on our own website.

*Unidentified Speaker:* Some of the questions are in Roper. Are they all?

*Unidentified Speaker:* Are you in iPOLL I guess is the question.

*[Portion inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** We'll be able to show everybody. If you go to "Data Center," you can look at all the questionnaires and you can search them. They're combined into these big documents that you can search for like "approved," for example, or "defense spending" or whatever and find questions wordings that way.

*Unidentified Speaker:* There is a one-stop shopping aspect to iPOLL that makes it very useful.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Do we have the numbers of respondents who gave every answer? *[Interjection unintelligible]* Yes, so iPOLL has the wording and the results, and we rely on them to put them in. And we don't know how many of our questions they do or do not put in, but I'm sure they don't put all of them in because it's a lot.

**David Howell:** Okay, so here is the main website here, if you click on "Data Center." It will come up and off to the right there is an ANES questions link. And if you link there, we're going to expand this and make it more dynamic and searchable within the next year. *[Portion unintelligible]* That's either an HTML format, or in a text format.

*Unidentified Speaker: It sounds like you have the project underway, but it would be helpful to be able to search "Bush approve" [inaudible].*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Can you share some of the trends, too? *[inaudible]*

David Howell: So Jon was just saying the ANES got into public opinion this year.

*Unidentified Speaker: [Portion inaudible] And that's broken up. And that's great for trends and to get some baseline questions. The question is how do we sync up. One of the ways we sync up [inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So just more wordings — ?

*Unidentified Speaker: Our own trend, you know, and also other questions [inaudible] and databases that are available. It would be helpful if this one were more easily accessed.*

*Unidentified Speaker: Yes, but I would really encourage you to get with Roper and call Marc Maynard and have him make sure he's got all your stuff, and if not, get it to him. It's just a lot simpler to just go to Roper. If I want your stuff, I can look for it there, but if I want anybody's stuff on subject A — I mean, I can get it all here.*

*Unidentified Speaker: Where is the best SDA version of the American National Election Study? (What is SDA?) It's Berkeley's online interactive software.*

**David Howell:** Berkeley is actually the best place for that at the moment, but we're actually actively installing SDA on the server at ADS's location. And we're going to try to start with the most recent study and load them backwards from there, it's something that Berkeley is interested in doing, too. In the meantime, Berkeley is the best source, and there's a link to it on our Data Center.

*Unidentified Speaker: Right, and the cumulative file would be very useful to have.*

**David Howell:** Yes, I think they have updated through 2004 right now, so that's actually just as current as the real cumulative data file that we distribute. It's the newest version.

*Unidentified Speaker: I mean, I don't know if everybody knows what I'm talking about, but for a decade or more Merrill Shanks's shop at Berkeley has developed this Web-based software, which is actually a pretty powerful survey analysis tool online. And it has gotten pretty widespread adoption.*

*For example, all of the census data virtually and much of the American community surveys now available analyzed through this on the IPUMS website. The Berkeley installation has the General Social Survey as well and the time series and General Social Survey. You're showing me that they have the full faith from the NES.*

*It's very easy to use. It's not necessarily the kind of thing that you could give to your reporters without a little bit of training, but just instantly — you know, it runs very, very fast. You can do any cross-tab —*

*Unidentified Speaker: What's the site?*

*Unidentified Speaker: It's sda.berkeley.edu*

**David Howell:** It actually links off of our website. If you go to electionstudies.org and click on Data Center, we have links to all of the ANES datasets in their website. Although, if you go through their website, I think they have GSS up there also, for instance. Like you see here at the top it describes the variables that I just entered from the codebook, and then down below you have the cross-tabulation, and they have significance indicators by color. It's a nice tool, especially when you're learning a dataset for the first time and you want to explore without downloading an external statistical package. To do advanced analysis, you still have to jump into SPSS, Stata, whatever, but it's a nice tool and we like it. And that's why we're supporting it on our website also. But yes, the questions that we have, *[inaudible]* are all from the Data Center.

**Frank Newport:** One point, the initial question was facilitating networking “slash” interaction between academic-oriented individuals such as would be connected with ANES and media polls. One answer to that is how can that be done very directly and specifically? With that I mean that if you want to facilitate networking, create a network that is online perhaps where things are shared like AAPORnet and some extended *[inaudible]* communications. I happen to like that.

And if I was getting communication or could respond back to what you all were doing at ANES, it would create a network. The other is physical networks, more meetings, conferences and anything where people get together to discuss. But if you really want more networking, then you have to create a network.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So, we have, as Dave alluded to earlier, we have a network in the sense that we have an emailing list that gets regular updates of our news. And so, Dave will, I hope, maybe have somebody from staff email all of you to get your consent to be added to that list, and then you'll get all those updates.

**Frank Newport:** It's a little different than interactive, right, but at least that would help.

*Unidentified Speaker: I have a question about how willing you are to be helpful in this current cycle. I don't exactly know all about it, but your Online Commons where people are suggesting thousands of questions — [inaudible]— is it viewed as fair or unfair for us to go in look at the questions and use those for our own projects? Would you see that as possibly an advantage to you because we will take them out for a test spin, or would you see it as plagiarism?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** No, it's not plagiarism.

**Arthur Lupia:** No, the reason it's all public is for it to be out there. I mean, my hope is that, you know, this will cause people to look at these questions, run them. The Online Commons have two purposes. I mean, the explicit purpose is to help form the ANES, but the second — but I don't think it's any less of an important purpose — is to give people a place to gather to evaluate and to talk about these things. We'd love that.

I've gone to the Annenberg Election Studies and said, “Look, you know, if you want to run everything here, great; go ahead and do it.” So, maybe we ought to be more explicit about that on the site, because we don't really talk about it. We just presume that people will look at these things, and if they want to run them they'll run them. We don't see them as ours, you know?

**John Curtice:** But theirs is there an issue here, I mean, if somebody has submitted you a paper with some question ideas—I grant you there's effectively no copyright on questions—but would you not regard it as a matter of courtesy, that if you wanted to pick them up, they should try and make contact with the originator — ?

**Arthur Lupia:** You know, as it stands now when someone sends something to the Online Commons they know that we're going to post it. Anyone can go online and see the questions.

**John Curtice:** Yes, I mean, I thought you could, but I mean if you're trying to think of courtesy. **(Yes.)** I mean, at least because you might actually find it useful to talk to the originator to say, "Well, you know, we're thinking about doing this, you know, et cetera, et cetera."

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, you might want to talk to the originator if they've decided it's a lousy question from their use of it. But in our circles, no, you know, it's flattery to take somebody's question. *[inaudible]*

**John Curtice:** Yeah, sure. I mean, some people may just be a bit miffed if they all of a sudden discover splashed on national news the following day a question that they devised, which as you know—

**Arthur Lupia:** That's fair. I mean, as it stands, it could be happening now and we don't know.

**John Curtice:** Yes, *[inaudible]* and having questions being picked up by other organizations, you know, that's fine. Particularly if you're picking up something that's not already an existing survey and somebody has put forward an idea, as it were, it's partly a question of diplomacy, of at least having been seen to originate and to acknowledge the *[inaudible]*. But also if you're going to pick up somebody's idea, you might actually find it useful to pick up the phone and talk to them and say, "Hey, what's the idea here?" That may even help when you may want to get involved in *[inaudible]*.

**Arthur Lupia:** Mitigating against the potentially bad incentive effects there, we've run different Online Commons for the different studies, right? So for the pilot studies it's new; we wanted things that were untested. So I think for the panel and the time series one of the requirements that we have is that you can document that this question — you know, we're not going to run any virgin questions, right? That's not our public sense. We only really want to consider questions that have been shown to have nice properties elsewhere, so in this case it's mostly people bringing questions from surveys that they're familiar with or questions that they want.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So we're talking here in a way about us giving you our questions, and then there's also the "you giving us your questions." Because we would love as much replication across the platforms as possible. When Gary does surveys, there is a report out. As soon as the results are out, a matter of days later there is a report out with the question wordings in it.

I don't know whether that's true for everybody, but that would allow us to pick them up afterwards. Probably the fact is you decide what will go into a survey a matter of days before the survey begins, and we're not in the position to change our questionnaire a matter of days later. So if we get it a couple of days after your data are collected, that's about the best that we can do anyway. So I'm not sure you have to do anything special, unless you're going to be collecting data that you're not going to release for a while, or questionnaires that you're not going to fully report.

I just figured I would ask if there are situations like that where you would want to be in communication with us so that we could confidentially see questions and maybe run them on some of our studies, in parallel, knowing that our data won't be out for months, so it's not going to compete in any way.

*Unidentified Speaker: Well, should we tell you when we're having a survey? Are you guys looking and crawling the Web enough to know without us telling you?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, we are crawling and we're happy to take responsibility for crawling, but we would certainly be happy to be on your mailing lists and get reports of things. I mean, like does the *Times* still have a list? No. Okay.

*Unidentified Speaker: No, we want you to go to our website and look for it.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** I subscribe to the paper. *[Comment inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker: It would be really good on your website — just getting back to that for a second — if you would have your data trended so you could search for a question. This is the biggest complaint, or mine at least, with iPOLL is that it doesn't trend the data.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So we do have trends up there.

*Unidentified Speaker: That's not quite what he's asking for, but—*

**John Curtice:** Jon, the question that I have for you is whether or not in the course of devising the panel study, or whatever, you come up a good set of questions, and you say to yourself, "You know what? If the commercial guys have these questions on their polls, I think their polls would be better." So I mean, I guess it's a question about whether or not the commercial community are open to being rung up and saying, "Look, it's up to you. I know you've got to do what your sponsors require, et cetera, et cetera, but by the way, have you thought about this way of doing this *[inaudible]*?" I mean, *[inaudible]* you may then see whether or not this data is as useful as you think it might be, you know?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, yes, if you saw our questionnaires when they're ready. That's months before we're going to field the questions, then you could see if you wanted to do something from them.

*Unidentified Speaker: Well, take that a little bit more further, but if you see something in your data as time goes along that you think, "Hey, this is going to be really neat," then you could tell us, start measuring this; start looking for phenomena X.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right. See, we would love to do that, but there's a small problem with that. Which is, as you heard before, nobody can do any substantive analysis of the data until after the election, including Skip and me, according to the current rules. And so if those rules changed and somebody could start doing substantive analysis, then the question is —

*Unidentified Speaker: You mean you can't even start looking at it?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** We are not allowed to look at it.

*Unidentified Speaker: See, when you said substantive analysis, I just meant something more complex.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Let me just be clear. Are you guys thinking that's ridiculous?

*Unidentified Speaker: Yes. [Majority in Agreement]*

**John Curtice:** Well, it's ridiculous within your own terms. If you're running a panel study, right? You need to be able to look at the earlier wave data to see if as to whether it's worth repeating it in subsequent waves.

**Arthur Lupia:** I mean, we have that done within the organization. We have a panel that are going to look at a lot of statistics. The data is going to be available to this committee that we're putting together, right? But not for their own analysis; for diagnostic purposes for specific things that we're looking for regarding the attrition, the makeup of the panel and how things are going, right? So, we have diagnostic things.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** What we're not geared up to do is correlating variables with other variables and checking validity of items. I mean, we've set up an attrition committee because our board of overseers shares your concern about, as Gary was articulating, losing a biased subset of the respondents and conditioning them into becoming different. This group is going to look at those issues, but that's kind of using Wave 1 data and looking at who's left. It's a very limited little slice. So, what you're saying is why wouldn't we be doing substantive analysis as well.

**John Curtice:** *[Portion inaudible]*— You're deliberately running an aircraft with one of the engines shut down before you even take off.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** With blinders on—

**John Curtice:** It's just not going to be an effective way of running a panel study, if you're not at least spending some time and looking. I mean, if you put some questions in because you think they're going to predict Y, you want to check whether or not they're predicting Y or not. Because if they're not, why the hell are you still carrying these questions? Maybe you need to come at it differently, et cetera, et cetera.

**Harold Clarke:** Another thing, I was going to follow up on that. I'm sure you must do this, but I'll say it anyway. So first off, of course, with ACAPI *[inaudible]*— the electronic questionnaires — if you screw up the routing on that, you'd want to know that really fast.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, the staff are on top of that. That's why they make us finish the questionnaire months in advance to proof all of that stuff.

**Harold Clark:** Yeah that's really absolutely crucial, you've got to be on that.

*Unidentified Speaker: It's just sometimes the answers you get to a question pose other questions? And you don't know that until you look at what you've got. It seems very strange to go like that and not diagnostically, but analytically.*

**John Curtice:** I mean the argument has to be, you guys get an advantage anyway because you know why the questions were there. The idea that everybody stops *[unintelligible]* is nonsense. *And the argument surely is*, not allowing you to look at the data during the course of *[inaudible]* the panel study actually compromises the likelihood that you will produce a dataset that's of the highest quality as it probably could. It's *[inaudible]* not help facilitate the very end that you're supposedly trying to provide.

**Arthur Lupia:** Yes, let me just be honest about the parameters here. Us running this kind of panel study is new for ANES, so we're basically taking our old norm which sort of works with the two-wave panel and putting it on here.

The arguments you're making here are interesting. I mean, they're compelling. I'm just telling you now that I'm actively trying to figure out how these pieces are put together, but the reason we're doing it sort of up to right now is that's our established practice. That's kind of worked for everything else before, but I hear what you're saying.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Just to be really explicit about this, in the old days when we did a face-to-face pre-election interview followed by a face-to-face post-election interview, something like 80 percent of that questionnaire was decided years before we got anywhere near this election, because it's repeating all of the old questions. And there was just a small amount of decision to be made about what new questions were going to be asked, and either there would be a pilot study to evaluate them, or there wouldn't be, and so you could be on automatic pilot. But now with this panel study it's a whole different story.

*Unidentified Speaker: But with all of us when we ask a question, we look at it. And next time we go in the field, we ask new questions that were suggested to us by our analysis of the last question. That's how we move the story ahead. [inaudible] It's not a static measurement because it's not a static world, you know? I mean, there was a famous story from my predecessor. He had a question that said, "Do you think Ronald Reagan is running things at the White House, or do you think his staff and advisors are really running it?" And they fielded it and it came back everybody said that his staff and advisors were running it.*

*Jeff looked at that, and he said [inaudible], and so he put it back in the field and he put in a follow-up that said, "Is that a good thing or a bad thing?" Everyone who said that his staff was running things said that it was a good thing. [Group Laughter] And if you had just had the one measure, you would have really misanalyzed that —*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So was that during the period when Reagan couldn't hear anymore — ? *[inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker: Again my question is was that searchable [inaudible]*

**David Howell:** Our whole website is indexed. We don't have archive-specific search engine, but we do have a search engine for the site which would bring up these pages if you typed *[inaudible]* It would bring up this page as one of the options. And then they're arranged topically within the guide itself. **(It takes work.)** Yes, it's a different interface —

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Can you say more about that, Jon?

**Jon Cohen:** *[Inaudible]* I use it when I think about it. But I mean, part of it is because it's not on Roper. Right, well I don't use it as frequently as I think I should, but I use it and I'm familiar with it as a reformed political scientist. *[inaudible]* You have to know to go to those trends. You have to know to go these places. I don't think it's intuitive. I mean, there are amazing data that are there.

The pilot study, for example, the SPSS was uploaded before code but the labels weren't for several months after that, and so everything takes two or three steps that I think requires a good deal of knowledge to use. Sometimes we have that knowledge, sometimes we don't, sometimes we have the time to do this, sometimes we don't. I just think the data are so great and so powerful, and the potential use for them is so great that if you could do things to facilitate that.

**Harold Clarke:** I've got a follow-up suggestion to that. It's one that's come to my attention primarily from my first-year students, ground zero methods class. They recently asked me, when you go and download a dataset, you get a zip file. And you got *[inaudible]* the parts. You got the *[inaudible]*, and here's a whole bunch of segments to build a Stata file, here's a whole bunch of segments to built an SPSS file, and so forth.

There are two problems with that: for casual users or for neophytes like my students, that presents a fairly big hurdle. *[Unintelligible]*

A second thing is, I would think you would want a sort of official version as of — you know, November 30<sup>th</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup> or whatever, of the data. Everybody is working with this. This is the official ANES version.

In this day and age, given the amount of memory we have and so forth — servers — there's no reason at all not to have the datasets there in several popular formats so that people who want to download them can do so immediately.

And I think that sees two advantages: ease of use, and secondly, so that the science is being promoted. You don't find out three or four years later after somebody has produced all this really cool counterintuitive stuff, it's because they screwed up the do file when they were trying to build a dataset. So just a suggestion.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, I've had the same experience. *[inaudible]*

**David Howell:** Yes, I do actually, there's been kind of a shift recently, I'd say, over the past year in the larger archives that are leaning towards providing files in more formats. And we're actually probably going to follow that with like an SPSS Portable file or something like that. But the issue that we face is more one of staffing, because we only have three-and-a-half people on the staff and we have a hundred datasets. And producing multiple versions of each of these has its own issues.

**Harold Clarke:** You could do this with Stat/Transfer, just boom, boom, boom—*[inaudible]*

**David Howell:** Yeah, but Stat/Transfer has it's own problems. No, it does.

**Harold Clarke:** *[inaudible]* But even in the SPSS ones, having something designated as "Hey, this is the ANES dataset prepared. It's our version of what we think it is, then we're all speaking on the same page. Plus, all the casual users, as I said, they're right there.

**David Howell:** No, actually I agree with you. In an optimum world I'd do that, but the user support magnifies with the amount of versions that we provide of things, too. So that's a consideration that we have. Because we have thousands of users of the dataset, and some of them email us on a very frequent basis with questions. It's complicated, but I mean, it is a good suggestion and it's actually one we're going to act on, at least partially, very soon.

**Harold Clarke:** It's not either/or. I mean, you can keep all of the other stuff if you want to. But going this way would be really helpful.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** It's funny, we ran another conference like this with psychologists maybe a year ago or so, and got into a little debate about ideology during this conference. So I decided I was going to run a cross-tab online and just resolve it.

So I did what you said, I went to the Data Center and I downloaded the data file. I got the zip thing and I got all the parts of it, and I couldn't figure out what to do with it. I couldn't figure out how to get at the data, you know? I'm looking for instructions on the webpage, and I couldn't find them so I know exactly what you mean.

**Harold Clarke:** Yes, but I think that would help.

**David Howell:** That's what SDA is for, too, actually. This particular example, right? When we have all the datasets up there in SDA, that would be a really quick way to get at cross-tabs quick, but it doesn't solve your student problem.

*Unidentified Speaker: In your warm-up for this section you had asked about fitting this project and how we could help do the exit polls. Is that all [inaudible] at this point? (Absolutely.) You know, one of the biggest problems that the exit poll has faced over the last several cycles is how to measure the importance of different issues in vote.*

*You probably know that in '92 they had to choose two out of a list of about nine. They had terrible primacy effects, some recency effects. They went to a "choose one" and reduced the length of the list in '96. They still had some primacy and a little bit of recency effects, if I'm remembering correctly.*

*And then finally in 2004 they went to this "extremely important, very important, somewhat important and not too important" format trying to get some variance, but chewed up an enormous amount of real estate on the questionnaire having to do this for, what was it? Five issues or something like that.*

*And now, trying to figure out what to do about this, your time series study, because of the fact that the mode is such that it at least partially simulates the experience of filling out the exit poll questionnaire, it could help in making these choices.*

*And so I would just suggest that you have a conversation with people on the survey committee to see if there is a contribution that you could make to their practice, and by doing so, ensure that something that you do in your post-election surveys provides an opportunity for matching up as well.*

*[Tape 4: 00:30:00]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, we would love to do that. Since I did actually think about this issue, let me just stimulate our discussion of it just for a quick second. Because I know this is the single most controversial question in the exit poll is "what was the most important issue in your vote?"

The way ANES does it is this: we ask closed-ended questions for each issue separately. That's what the 2004 questionnaire included, and so it's extremely important to — ? (*I misspoke, it was 2006.*) Yes, 2006, there we go.

*Unidentified Speaker: 2004 had its own can of worms.*



**Jon A. Krosnick:** 2004 was the *[inaudible]*. So “extremely important” is the group to focus on here. I would just advise you if you want to use this question, do not combine “very important” and “extremely important,” because it actually makes the group way too big and obscures what’s going on. Let me show you an array of questions like this that we got from your *[inaudible]* polls.

So at the top, “In making your decision about who to vote for in next year’s election, will the issue of immigration be...?” It’s okay, except it’s asking people to describe how they make the vote decision. And I told you earlier we believe you can’t ask them to describe how they make the vote decision, because it unfolded over a period of months or years previously.

So the second one, “How important will each of the following issues be to your vote for president?” Same problem. Next one, “When you decide which candidate you support for president, is his or her stand the most important issue; an important issue but not the most important; not too important; or not important at all?” So now all of a sudden with the “most important,” there is now like a ranking going on built into this rating.

The next one, “If the presidential election were held today, which would be the more important to you in deciding” or “which of the following will be the single most important issue in your vote for president,” or “which of the following types of issues are the most important to you in choosing between the presidential candidates?”

So the bottom line is, from our work, these are not the way to go. Asking people how do you make the decision is not the thing to do. So that’s the advice we would give to the exit poll people. And if the 2006 questionnaire asks something like this — like the top one “when deciding how to vote, how important is it” — I understand that that has beautiful news transparency to it, but it’s not the right question.

*Unidentified Speaker: What is the right question? [Agreement]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** It’s right here. I just showed you. It’s that.

*Unidentified Speaker: Does it give you a different answer, though?*

**Frank Newport:** Yes, I would think it would be highly correlated.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** They’re correlated. But what you care about is the top group. We can do a split if you want to, but there’s plenty of evidence of success with this item. And the deciding how to vote question has serious —

**Frank Newport:** Well, it has serious theoretical and conceptual issues; however, practically I bet you it would give you exactly the same rank order and the same everything else.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Could be.

*Unidentified Speaker: By that logic you could say, “Which of these issues is most important to you personally?” You could mimic the —*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, exactly, but here’s the problem with that. We know this very clearly. If you give people a list of choices that misses out on the most important issue to them — which is going to be true for most people according to our work. You can’t have six issues and capture all the issue publics, then you’re going to have a bunch of people whose issue is not included there — selecting among a series of issues and giving you an issue that’s way down in importance for them. It mischaracterizes the judgment process

*Unidentified Speaker: Well, I don't agree. You know, but this is the old debate between rating and ranking. But what the exit poll has been very successful with in the past is when its stuck with procedure is to do open-ends before the election, asking people the most important issue in their vote, and then taking the top*

seven items and putting them on the list and saying “Which of these issues is most important” — as long as you stick with actual issues.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, and the problem is when you say “beforehand,” and this is our work and it may not be in your work, but when you ask people the most important issue, they don’t know what counts as issues; whereas, if you say, “How important is abortion to you, or how important is capital punishment to you? And so on.

*Unidentified Speaker: Right, and then the results of the 2006 Congressional election using the ratings rather than the rankings is that corruption in government was the most important issue in the election which is an absurdity, it was about the War in Iraq.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, I guess the question is how do you know that?

*Unidentified Speaker: We know it from all of the other data that is important.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** What other data are we talking about? *[inaudible]* I don’t disagree, it’s just that we would want to look and see. Do we really know from the other data, or is the other data just using a different method and reaching a different conclusion?

*Unidentified Speaker: Approve or disapprove of the war [inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Correlating those two? *(Yes.)* Yes, and so what I showed you earlier is that some of it is rationalization and some of it is derivation; the question is which way does it go and the correlation doesn’t tell you—

*Unidentified Speaker: But the dataset has been out for a long time. [inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker: There gets to be a problem when we have academics monkeying with the content of these surveys in an advisory capacity—we do different things, we want to learn to go at it differently. We need for our editors and producers to ask a clear question about the most important issue, to ask it in reasonable and, hopefully, empirically based categories and to report the response.*

**John Curtice:** You see the difference is, Jon, is that they’re not interested in identifying a question which you don’t demonstrate to get different regression coefficients *[inaudible]*. What they’re, in a sense, interested in is trying to ask a question that very simply mimics the rank order on the b-coefficients, if you would, *[inaudible]*. That’s exactly what they’re trying to do, but it’s a somewhat different purpose from what you’re trying to do there.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** No, this is actually trying to rank order the b-coefficients also.

**John Curtice:** Yes, but you’re defending it on the grounds that this demarcates the size of the *beta* coefficients. *(That’s right.)* For that issue, right? It isn’t quite necessarily the same thing as what you’re talking about. *[inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker: This disagreement doesn’t sound like it’s fundamental; it just sounds like it’s operational. Because let’s assume that you’re right, Jon. Couldn’t you use the format that you’re talking about there a month before the day of the election, on your time series poll, but ask about a very large list of issues? (Exactly.) And then you find hopefully a set of four or five. I would predict that in this election you might find a set of four or five that accounts for the most important issue personally to a significant portion of the electorate.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Let’s do that analysis. But four or five will capture at most 40 to 50 percent of the electorate. So the challenge is if you’re willing to have a long list, this can work. The problem with “which of the following is the most important?” is the list is too short to capture really what happens. That’s the problem.

**John Curtice:** And the problem with an exit poll is knowing how long you can keep people hanging there outside a voting station.

*Unidentified Speaker:* Jon, earlier today I was saying that one of the really powerful things I think you could do is explore issues raised and unanswered or satisfactorily answered by the exit poll [inaudible]. If you decide to do that, I can envision going forward, you cannot go report that says it was X; we have data that says it was Y.

*The discrepancy between the two I cannot explain to my correspondents as will they ask the question differently? That's got to match up in some regard where we could say, "We trust people enough; however, we do it that they said it and now here's more of an explanation for why they said it — as opposed to just differences, you know? I love regression analysis as much as anybody, but it's, I can't [inaudible]—*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** In other words, you don't need a regression. If you have a series of these 2006 questions, you can report.

*Unidentified Speaker:* Look. This is what we got from the 2006 exit poll, this silly rated items: Iraq, extremely important, 35; terrorism 39; economy 39; immigration; 30; values issues 36, and corruption 41. There is essentially no differentiation.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Oh, yes, now that you say that, then corruption is not in first place by any means. They're all tied. (Well, numerically.) Yes, and that's exactly what my graph showed you before — that the sizes of issue publics are almost exactly the same. You pick the most visible issues at the time, and so the idea of trying to identify the winning issue is going to be 41 over 39.

*Unidentified Speaker:* But if you can ask people to choose among them, it's a perfectly legitimate approach. What if these are the most important issues because either through an open-end or through an extremely important list we've got a rating. We take the top rated items, and we ask people to choose among them. There's nothing wrong with that, and it tells a story in a way that these data don't.

**John Curtice:** One of the problems that always comes out of this is when you say, "Well, what's the most important issue in the election, what's the story of the election" there are two different stories. One is what is the issue that was most prominent in the minds of most voters, and what was the issue that persuaded most people to change their minds as compared to the last election? Those are not necessarily the same thing. [inaudible] the Iraq issue, certainly, because it's very interesting in the U.K. in 2005 the opinion polls kept on saying Iraq not very important. But if you actually look at the relationship between vote switching and people's perceptions on Iraq, you discover Iraq is very important.

So in other words, it wasn't necessarily a large number of people for whom it mattered, but for those whom it mattered it was a vote switching issue. It wasn't an issue that kept them constant, and that's why it was crucial. Your question is never going to distinguish between those two things. If a load of Republicans say abortion is crucial, but they all voted Republican last time. In a sense, it's not the story of the election; it's simply the story of American politics.

**Frank Newport:** Well, then he's saying as media pollsters we really need an academic analysis to be able to answer to our viewers and readers what ruled the election. But let me ask, Jon —

**John Curtice:** Well, no, it isn't actually, because one of the things I'm suggesting you could do relatively easily with an exit poll — because presumably you asked people how they voted last time? **(No.)** You don't. If you asked people their recall vote and their current vote, then you could very quickly see what were the most important issues.

**Frank Newport:** That's not very quickly to us. That still requires analysis, you're creating a difference variable and then trying to confusingly explain that we're predicting the people who —

**British Election Studies:** No, I'm just simply saying you look at the frequencies for those who are vote-switchers as opposed to non-switchers. That's a simple cross-tab.

**Frank Newport:** Well, the advantage of like with what Gary is saying is for on-air use, it's straightforward. We ask people what was the most important issue. But let me ask you if you all were hired as consultants and we said or "USA Today" said or "ABC News" said, "Tell our viewers what was the most important issue that drove the election," how would you do it?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** That way. 2006 exit poll. That's it. I don't understand what Gary doesn't like about it.

**Frank Newport:** Wait, what would you do? I mean, we want to really understand what really drove the election, so we're hiring you to tell us. How would you do it? I wasn't thinking you would say, "Well, we'd do a complicated statistical analysis and be back with you in a week."

**Jon A. Krosnick:** No, if what you want to know is which issue had the most impact — which is what that question is seeking — the question is "which issue has the largest group of people who are using it to form a vote choice." Those questions tap that. Now, if the fact that you get equal numbers between 36 and 41 means there's not an easy story to tell, that's what the American public is telling you — that there is no single winning issue. Sorry, guys. That's the story, you know? If what you don't like is the result, then that's —

*Unidentified Speaker: Yet, in the open ends and in the ranked lists overwhelmingly before this election, this self-same election, Iraq was far and away the most [inaudible].*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes. And what I'm saying is if you give people that short list of five or six and you ask them to choose, for most people those five or six are not extremely important. Therefore, you're forcing people now who had been on the low end of all of those rating scales to pick one of these issues. And they'll pick it, but it was unimportant to them in their vote choice; it's just the most important of these unimportant issues.

*Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible] You get a lot of omits on some questions, and we don't get a lot of omits on this one.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, because the question says, "Of these, which is the most important?" You don't need to omit; you pick one from amongst them, but it's failing to measure what you want.

**Susan Pinkus:** But when you do discrete questions like, "Do you think immigration is the most important to you, do you think the economy is the most important?" I think you get some very skewed or, you know, high-end people saying it's the most important. I'm wondering after if you want to do them discretely, then go to the bottom question and say, "Okay, of the ones that we just discussed, which do you think is the most important?"

And in that way I think it would be more salient to say okay, of the ones we've just discussed, they think immigration is the most important — or among Republicans it's immigration and among Democrats it's education or something like that.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** I don't think you need to do that, because I think that Gary's question will accomplish that in a quicker step. If what you want is "here's five issues, which of these is the most important to you," you just do it in one step. You don't need the ratings first.

I mean, just so that we're clear, the rating we use, the top category isn't "most important." The top category is "extremely important," which allows some people if they wish to, to be in more than one of those issues at the top — which may be true, tied for "extremely important" and allows people to be in none of those at the top and you'd learn that, too.

**Harold Clarke:** One of the things, I think Jon came to a really fundamentally important point, it's important especially for people who want that story out 20 minutes from now, if not sooner, and that is the distinction between explaining individual vote choice and explaining an election outcome.

It's a *[inaudible]* charge the election study people with doing both, and I think primarily for people who report, they're largely on the election outcome rather than individual vote choice, although certainly not uninterested in that. That's a fundamental distinction, I think, we need to keep in mind here that Jon brought up a few minutes ago when we're designing a short list of questions we're going to have in the exit poll or something like this. And we really have to keep that in mind.

**John Curtice:** I think you're going to find it very, very difficult to get at the issue. I mean, to define the election outcome is why the result of this election is different from a previous one — which is very often the prism with which it needs to be looked at. I think it's very, very difficult for you to get at that unless you actually know what are the attitudes of those people who actually switched as opposed to those who don't. If you're not asking and you're asking your exit poll people how they voted last time, you haven't a hope in hell of getting at it.

*Unidentified Speaker: [Portion garbled] to mention the passion that you brought up earlier— I don't think that a rating scale like this is a very good detector of that kind of that kind of passion.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** That's what we use in all of this work.

*Unidentified Speaker: If you put education on the list, it's going to be near the top of the issues.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** It's extremely important for like less than 20 percent of Americans. As long as you've got five points on a scale, its—

*Unidentified Speaker: Well, let me put it this way. I think only a certain segment of the public is going to be voting on the basis of issues. Some of them may say these issues are very important, but they're not really using that issue as the main rationale for who they're going to vote for. (Right.) So we want to say which issues are going to be most important, base that on some subset of the public that you've determined is building on issues. How do you do that? (With these questions.) Just because they say an issue is very important — you said you're not asking it in the context of vote in the election; you're saying how important is this issue to you.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, and what I showed you was regression coefficients. Now this gets back to what John was saying earlier, so you'd say, "Okay, are those high importance people using the issue to vote?" And those big regression coefficients I showed you on the right show that there's a really strong correlation between their position on the issue and their candidate choice. And as you move down the importance scale, there isn't that correlation anymore. So that suggests— *[Interjections garbled]* It can and we've tested that. It turns out — that's one of my favorite topics — it's derivation at the high importance levels, and rationalization at the low importance level.

So to the extent that you see those correlations down there, it's because it's going the opposite way. People say, "Well, I don't really know where I stand on capital punishment, but I like Bush and he doesn't like it." Sorry, he *does* like it, so yes — sorry?

**John Curtice:** *[inaudible]* So what you've demonstrated is that your scale works as a discriminator within issues, okay? What they're interested in is discrimination that works between issues. And what I'm worrying about is the degree to which you can infer from your evidence about the effectiveness of your scales or with an issue discriminator as a between issue discriminator, i.e., it doesn't necessarily give you the rank importance, whatever you decide that importance means, of an issue — as opposed to telling you and making clear for whom this issue actually does matter. But they're not quite the same questions.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, absolutely. Well, that was fun!

*Unidentified Speaker: This is an extremely important issue.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, this just happens to be something my dissertation was on, I've been studying for 20 years, and so I do have a little bit of passion on this issue and a lot of data. I apologize for my passion, but, you know, there is a lot of data there, and I hope it's of some value to you. We're happy to help you think through these issues if that would be useful.

**Susan Pinkus:** What do you think about questions – I know I've asked them a lot, and I think some of the other major polling firms, about, does knowing something about a candidate make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate or it has no effect on that vote? Have you done any measuring on that kind of question?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So how much do you know about the candidate?

**Susan Pinkus:** *Well, it's like let's say, "Does knowing that Giuliani favors legal abortion and supports gay rights, does knowing that make you more or less likely to vote for him, or does that have no effect on the vote?"*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, so we would never ask a question like that, because again, it asks people to describe how they make the decision. So like the last choice was, "or would it have no effect on your vote." People don't know what does and does not influence them, so we wouldn't ask that, but we address your issue indirectly.

Because what we do is we ask people, "Where do you think that Giuliani stands on this issue, and where do you think Clinton stands on this issue, and where do you think the federal government stands right now on this issue?" You can see that some people say, "I don't know," and some people say, "I do know," and so we measure it that way.

Now, if you want to find out if it has impact, that brings us right back to the same thing we were just looking at. If you want to do it quickly, it's the importance question; if you want to do it more slowly, you do regressions.

**John Curtice:** If you want a warning about the danger of these kinds of hypothetical questions, British pollsters regularly—12 months before Gordon Brown actually took over for Tony Blair —kept on asking people *[inaudible]* "And how would you vote if Gordon Brown is leader of the Labour Party over Tony Blair?" Those polls, nearly all of them said that fewer people would vote for the Labour Party. When Gordon Brown actually did replace Tony Blair, the Labour Party's ratings shot right back up again. So these kinds of hypothetical questions, if the world is like this, or if I tell you something, people are very poor at actually predicting what they would do in these situations.

**Frank Newport** Well, I don't know. Campaign pollsters who work for candidates regularly ask those questions and they work. That "If you knew that" type of question. **(Right.)** So even if you're saying theoretically people don't understand why they make their own decisions, campaign pollsters find them effective ways to help them make decisions on what to put in ads. And it moves the numbers and it gets the candidates elected.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** I'm sorry — if you don't mind, you're making a leap there — **(I am.)** You know that they're using them, and you know that they think they're of some value — just like, forgive me, the exit polls have used the ranking question for a long time and think it provides some value.

But the question is "is that value validated?" So, from our social science point of view, the way we would do it is different. We would say, let's do an experiment. Half the respondents are randomly assigned to get a message. "Were you aware that Rudy Giuliani supports legalized abortion?" The other half of the respondents don't get that message.

So the message is disguised as a question, but you expose people to that information. Afterwards, you say, "How likely are you to vote for Rudy Giuliani?" And you would look at whether likelihood of voting for him goes down among certain people and up among other people.

You're not asking anybody if it influences them; you see if it influences them. That's the way to do it. And what amazes me is that that's in psychology for 50 years. I don't have to tell you that, and the campaign pollsters don't believe it.

**Frank Newport:** But on the other hand, campaign pollsters are validated in the school of hard knocks. They don't do things that don't work. And the way they know they work is they move the tracking numbers and the candidates get elected when they run certain ads. So I think they run those questions because they find they are effective. These are smart people, and they do their polling based on what they think is effective.

**John Curtice:** But how do you know that it works? By definition, half of your candidates succeed and half of them don't succeed.

**Frank Newport:** *The campaign pollsters for sophisticated operations are calibrating and tracking very carefully.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** If we did a survey of all campaign pollsters advising all campaigns in this election, and afterwards we said, "How many times did you use survey data to make a decision about what to do in the campaign, and how many times did it work the way you expected and how many times didn't it?" — I'd predict to you that it would be no more than 50 percent, will they say yes, we got the results that we wanted. They'll blame it on other things. "Well, the candidate did something unexpected, or we didn't get the exposure we thought." But the success rate is not 100 percent I would bet.

**Frank Newport:** Well, typically if it's not working they pull the ad back. Because they're tracking and they know whether it's working fairly quickly.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, so if you think about the idea that they go through some sort of funneling to pick out what ads to run — now, I mean, we're talking ads. Ads are a different story; ads are handled more experimentally like I was talking a second ago. But if you put the ads on, the only ads you're going to put on are ads you think are going to work. And then if they don't work and you take them off — fine, you learned in the school of hard knocks whether it worked or not.

So the real question you want to know is what proportion of the ads get taken off, because they didn't work — even though the pretesting suggests that they would work. And I would say no more than 50, but I have no data to support that.

**Frank Newport:** Well, you probably have a lower opinion of the polling work that's done within campaigns than I do.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** It's not that I have a low opinion. I think it's hard to predict from questions like this what will happen in the real marketplace, when ideas are competing with other ideas that you couldn't have anticipated. You know, if you can show an ad — great.

But in a survey question that says, "If you learned that Rudy Giuliani kicked his dog," well, in the real world they don't just learn a sentence that says, "Rudy Giuliani kicked his dog." You would learn a lot of other stuff. And if you didn't represent it right in the survey, there is no reason to think that it will generate itself.

**Arthur Lupia:** Let me put a different spin on this. I mean, I actually would contradict the sort of premises when you talk about, you know, why you're using the questions you use and hear. With some of the constituencies we deal with in psychology and economics as part of sort of the main ways that people understand a wide range of behaviors, the idea that you would ask about hypothetical choices and get reliable readings — from the scientific point of view — reliable readings of what people would think on the way there. In those two disciplines, that hypothesis is just discredited.

In economics, you know, that's my basis, if you want to run an experiment you always have to run it with real choices. If it's sort of, "Well, suppose I gave you ten bucks. What would you do, right?" You can't walk into any economics department and finish that sentence without having things thrown at you.

I mean, I think in the school of hard knocks sometimes that can be a lot better than the other piece of data that you have — or that you could use those questions in a way that facilitate insight. But I think in our context, you know, we walk into a room and say oh, here's the questions that we're going to provide, you know, that's a hard day for us. That's a huge part of our potential constituency saying, "What are you doing?"

**Susan Pinkus** I guess a couple of questions, technical questions. It's an hour pre and an hour post — is there any sort of measuring of respondent fatigue? Do you follow like if someone says approve on Question 57, and they're exhausted and they say approved through the rest?

Do you rotate some of the questions around so they're not always in the same position so you can see any kind of effect on respondents answering it? And face-to-face, do you go into inner city? I mean, I can't imagine the face-to-face you knock on someone's door? I mean, if that were me I wouldn't answer the door. I mean, if you knocked on the door and said, "Oh, I'm with the ANES, would you take this hour survey?" — I mean, how successful are you?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, the response rates have been 70 percent or more for most of the study. We're expecting to be close to 80 [percent] this time. Remember, there are a whole series of things, though, right?

You get a letter in advance from universities telling you, "We're coming to interview you." They're FedEx packages. We offer you money. We're going to pay you for this interview. We're going to pay you more for the post-election interview. The person who shows up is beautifully dressed, has, you know, a laptop and so on.

Now, you go into certain neighborhoods that's a little risky, and those folks are savvy and they know how to handle those things. But for the most part, I mean, they're getting into a huge number of these households — a huge proportion of them. And the refusal rate is not zero, but it's also not huge. So that's how we get these high response rates. *[inaudible]*

On fatigue, you're absolutely right. There is this sort of funny lore. There are federal surveys that are done face-to-face by the Census Bureau with 96 percent response rates that last three hours. And they involve blood samples and weighing you and checking your—. And they say, "Yeah, you know, it goes fine; we get 96 percent of the people." But are you sure by like the second hour they're not like becoming unconscious? And they say, "Well, no, everybody answers all of the questions."

So it doesn't seem plausible to me when you describe it that way. And then you say, "Well, what happens during these interviews?" And the truth is we don't know. And we will know this time around because as I told you we will have tape recordings of every interview. And so as you listen to them, you can get a feel for are they, you know, starting to break down. The interviewers are asked to record if the respondent ever said, "How much longer is this going to be? This is taking a long time," or all those kind of things, and those are not at particularly high levels.

But my guess is you're right, that as you get farther and farther into the interview there is more and more fatigue, and that you have more straight-lining and other signs of compromised quality. And the problem is that this study has been run on automatic pilot for like 50 years in some ways.

And what that means is the order of the questions is the same in every survey. Certain things like demographics are always at the very end, and that's fine — we can justify that. But there is non-demographic stuff in the last half of the interview where you might say, "Are these questions always compromised due to order?" And we cannot tell you the answer to that, because we've never rotated the order of the questions to find out.



And so if what you're saying, which I hear you saying, is gee, you'd think you'd want to look into that, then we should think about that for this time around. I mean, I assume all of you would say that a 15 or 20-minute telephone interview is your limit, because that's as long as you can keep them on the phone and have them really do it. How can we get away with an hour, an hour and 15 minutes? We should check and see.

I mean, the argument we've always made is you can do it because it's face-to-face. It's a whole different story if the respondent wants to get a drink, go to the bathroom, take care of the kid, the interviewer will happily stop and let them interrupt to do that, you know, but we don't know.

*Unidentified Speaker: Do they make an appointment at a certain time to come and do that [inaudible]?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, they don't call in advance, but when they show up at the house — you can only get phone numbers for a certain fraction of addresses, and so they show up at the house initially. Well, once they show up and then if somebody says, "Well, I can't do it now, but I'll do it Thursday at 3:00," the interviewer will come back Thursday at 3:00. The respondent may or may not be there Thursday at 3:00, but, you know, they keep working on it that way.

**Arthur Lupia:** One of the reasons that we're doing a lot of outreach and trying to talk with different groups is that ANES has done sort of a lot of very good things for social science, but the relationship also got really dysfunctional. Part of it was there wasn't good communication between the people who made the study and everybody else. And that led to a couple effects. One is alienation and people not thinking they should be involved, or not wanting to be involved. It also led to really a lack of introspection about people using the data.

I think one of the problems that Jon and I saw is that there's a huge community of just sort of passive receptors. Since no one has ever asked questions about the data and everybody uses the data, the data must be fine. And all of these things about the questionnaires — well, they must have been worked out by someone else already.

And part of what we're hoping by really opening this up, meeting with different groups, putting things on the Online Commons, we want these questions. I mean, we think that Jon has given this talk and I've written papers in a different sense, we think that the legitimacy of scientific election surveys depends on procedural transparency at the end of the day, right?

In science what gets you places is transparency and replicability, right? That's where the credibility comes from. And in the kinds of surveys — it's not just ANES, it's GSS and PSID—if you don't have some community actively asking the kinds of questions about how do you know this data point means that, then the whole thing is a bit of a farce.

We're really trying to push on the transparency point to increase the short-term and long-term legitimacy of this study, and really in others. We are now in the process of organizing a lot of the large studies on the coding of open-ended questions. Turns out that there are some issues there which we're happy to talk about if you like. *[inaudible]* Even in the leading studies, the procedures for how did you decide which words to turn into which categories, the documentation isn't public often, so it's not as if you and I have the data we could replicate the coding.

And sometimes the documentation doesn't even exist, and so we don't actually know the algorithm that led to that. And yet, you know, we'll have people who use the codes in the open-ended questions thinking that they've been vetted already. It's embarrassing to us that we don't know the answers to a lot of these questions, but I think it's indicative of the field in general, sort of *[inaudible]* surveys.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** I mean, just to illustrate the importance of your point, Susan, you know, one of the things about this questionnaire is typically foreign policy attitudes are measured later in the interview than domestic policy attitudes. And it turns out domestic policy attitudes predict vote choice better than foreign policy

attitudes do. Is it possible that people are tired out by the time that they get to the foreign policy questions, and they're not reporting them as precisely? We don't know.

**Harold Clarke:** You can find out some of this stuff. One of the nice things about experimental *[unintelligible]*, you can actually find out about some of these things. One of the things we've done recently with the Canadian Election Study has to do with the traditional political efficacy battery — one of the famous Michigan batteries. And traditional batteries all worked negatively. *[inaudible]* said, "Gee, we wonder about that."

Because we have this portrait of the electorate based on these trends and everything. I said, "Gee, I wonder what would happen if we did an experiment and asked the same questions positively." And it turns out, it makes very little difference either just structure, dynamics or margin, which was a very happy result for us. But it's an indication of what we can do with some of this traditional stuff — question wording. You're right. All of this stuff on foreign policy and attitudes towards groups is *[unintelligible]*. Well, do some experiments and see if it makes a difference.

**Arthur Lupia:** You know, the ANES surveys over the years have included a number of experiments. It's not on the top of our to-do list, but it's in there. We had a student last year sort of accumulate all of the experiments. We're hoping to make that easier for people to look at and search.

The other thing I'll say going back to the TESS project that we talked about this morning, is that all of the experiments that TESS has run for individual investigators are online. Right now there are over a hundred experiments on question wording, format and things of that nature that are on the TESS site. You can go and you can see what's there. I don't know if it's searchable yet. Only 50 were posted. It was just the list, and now it's searchable. There are things there, you can see the reports, or you can run it yourself. There is a lot of opportunity to leverage experiments like this.

*Unidentified Speaker: And what's that site?*

**Arthur Lupia:** It's [experimentcentral.org](http://experimentcentral.org). I'm the PI of that project, so if you have questions about it, you can ask as well. It's funded by NSF. It's interdisciplinary, but it's really all about facilitating the ideas. It's really, you have to have an interest in improving surveys or understanding the concept. And if you have an idea, that's really all you have to bring to TESS.

There's a review process. And if it gets through that, we'll figure out how to implement it. Then the data goes free back to you, nine months of exclusive access, and then we post it on the Web so that other people can see what the experiment was about, what the data's about and so forth.

But it's really NSF's attempt to support people thinking experimentally sort of, not taking things for granted and giving them the opportunity to have an idea, but not necessarily know how to implement it. We'll take care of that.

*Unidentified Speaker: For people who vote absentee, the time they take for post-election surveys will be a lot further away. Obviously, exit polling deals with that to some extent, too. Part of it, have you thought about giving them the post-election after they are — [Portion unintelligible] absentee, and giving them a post after that time?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** That's a really interesting question. There are kind of two issues, right? One is, are we trying to do the measurement post-vote, or are we trying to do it post-election? Do you want to hold the information environment constant, or do you want to hold the time after the vote decision constant? I would say that it would be pretty radical for us to imagine doing a post-vote interview pre-election with people.

Let me say, if we come to interview them in the pre-election wave, we will ask them have you voted already. And if they say they've voted already, we still have an hour interview to do with them at that time. So we're not going to like launch into the next hour interview at the same time.

If they say, "I haven't voted yet, but I expect to vote absentee before Election Day, would we then send an interviewer back to their house to interview them as quickly as possible after they cast the ballot? Well, the only way we could do that is if they notify us when they did the ballot, or we called up and said, "Did you vote today? How about today, you know?"

Procedurally, it might be a challenge, and I suspect our constituency might say they would prefer that the measurements be made after the election so at least everybody has the same information. But you're right. I mean, why wouldn't we do it right after they voted other than the procedural problems?

*Unidentified Speaker: Or at the very least, the way it is, it would be fascinating to see, and from your point of view I'm sure that you'll analyze this, the differences in recall, or "don't knows" or what have you, for the tests.*

*Unidentified Speaker: It would also be interesting to ask people at post-election how they voted optical scanner, key punch, [unintelligible] and maybe ask them if they've had any problems or [unintelligible]. We try to do that in the exit poll. I think that we could fit the question asking them if they had any problem casting their vote, but we couldn't fit the other question, which is how was it cast.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Right, the very cool thing is we don't actually have to ask them that. Because we know where they live, and we know what the precinct did. You could find out what the method was, because each precinct has only one voting method so we can get that information. *[Portion garbled]* Within precincts? They can choose which ones to use? *[Interjections unintelligible]* Oh, really? Well, then I guess we have to ask.

*Unidentified Speaker: Is that common?*

*Unidentified Speaker: In the nation's capital, that's the way it is.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, the key thing is, once our sample is drawn, we know where all of the addresses long before Election Day. And we can then check with the counties and find out whether there are any places that have a choice, and only ask those people and save the time.

*Unidentified Speaker: You guys can do vote validation and vote histories?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, you get vote histories in some states like California automatically for the people who lived at that same address, but if they lived at a different address, then — *[Interjection inaudible]* From commercially available databases. Yes, that's considerably more expensive than we have. *[Interjection inaudible]* Oh, really? Should we talk to you about that? Okay, let's make an appointment for tomorrow at 3:00. Yes, that will be good.

So how else can we coordinate with you? Help on the exit poll? Help on questionnaires? You tell us what to do, we do it. I mean, nobody talked about the cell phone thing since like a long time ago — like this morning.

*Unidentified Speaker: You should ask about cell phones in the household — cell phone only, number of cell phones in the household. Do you make most of your calls on the cell phone, or do you make most of your calls on the landline? [inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** All right. So what else like that are you worried about in the telephone surveys? Nothing? I mean, another way to think about it, so if we have let's say a 75 percent response rate, we could ask something about how often you're at home and answering the phone maybe, or how willing would you be to do a telephone interview?

*Unidentified Speaker: Why don't you ask whether or not they have an answering machine or voicemail on their phone, whether or not they have caller ID, whether or not they use those mechanisms to screen their calls?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, so this is a way of trying to get at people who have a landline, but who are choosing either not to participate due to technology — or they have really busy lives and they're never home between 5:00 and 8:00, you're not going to get them. But we'll get them because we'll come Saturday afternoon at 1:00 if we have to, over a period of months. You don't care about that, or that's helpful?

*Unidentified Speaker: [inaudible] Would you answer a survey. You could pursue that idea. [inaudible]*

**John Curtice:** Certainly, in the U.K. *[inaudible]* there is a whole issue about whether or not opinion polls suffer from availability bias, and whether or not there's a relationship between the availability of people to be interviewed *[unintelligible]* and their vote choice. Certainly, if you could do something that looks at the degree of which it's easy to get a hold of people through RDD phone sampling, and then we could see whether or not there's a relationship between their availability and what they do. Then the industry should give you a very large check in return.

**Frank Newport:** What are the questions about Internet use in the survey?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, I think at the moment it's just how often do you use the Internet to get political news is probably the extent of it.

**Frank Newport:** I would be interested along these same lines on, we talked about email use in particular, because one of the reasons people don't use Internet surveys is we are excluding X percent, but it would be interesting to have that information so we could do analysis or people could in the future. That's a changing target, obviously, but I think that would be important. That goes along with other suggestions that you increase you inventory of questions about non-traditional news, maybe consumption but use of different information devices. I think *[inaudible]*.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So we could ask them also how many survey research companies' access panels are you a member of? *[Group Laughter]*

**Susan Pinkus:** *[inaudible]* I don't know if this is a problem or will it become a problem, the portability of cell phone numbers. For instance, I know my brother lives in Florida, but he has a 917 area code cell phone. So does that cause any sorts of problems, or figuring out what part of the region you're calling or whatever? So maybe one of the questions could be if it's a cell phone-only user, is the area code in the place where you live, or is it another area code?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Well, aren't landline numbers portable, too?

*Unidentified Speaker: Not across area codes.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Not across area codes. Oh, I thought they were. Okay. *[inaudible]*.

*Unidentified Speaker: They could be with people using VoIP.*

*Unidentified Speaker: Right, you can't port a landline number across area codes, if it's a genuine landline number. [inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** So should we treat VoIP as a landline now? I mean, it's not a cell phone. Do the numbers for VoIP come out of a different pool? They come out of a landline pool. Yes, so to your telephone callers they will seem like landlines.

*Unidentified Speaker: Well, the percentages are microscopic.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, right, but if that becomes more popular and if you can port those numbers — because you just plug your thing into California when you move to California, then Susan's same issue applies there. You'd just want to check by saying — the interviewer can just go in and say, "Is your area

code 516?” And if they say, “No, it’s not,” you know, on your home phone, then we’ve learned that they ported from somewhere. Can I just ask, do you ask respondents what region they’re in, or do you infer the region from the phone number?

*Unidentified Speaker: From the phone number. [Several in Agreement]*

*Unidentified Speaker: We ask for zip codes. [Several in Agreement]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Okay, so this is maybe useful for people who are inferring. So does anybody infer region from the phone number? *[Interjection inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker: But if you’re doing cell phone you need to ask zip code, in case they ported from somewhere else. [Comment inaudible] If you lived in Boston and moved to New York, you’re still going to be in the same region, so that doesn’t really pose a problem. [Portion inaudible] A small portion [inaudible] is classified based on their cell phone exchange, but still it would be accurate through the zip code. [inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, so the people should just do the zip code instead, right? Just skip the area code completely.

*Unidentified Speaker: Yes, ask for people’s zip codes. [inaudible] You would be surprised how many people give you a zip code that doesn’t exist, is wrong, or is [inaudible].*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Wow, that’s a drag.

*Unidentified Speaker: And when you recruit, you’re starting with a letter and then a phone call follow-up?*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** No, a knock on the door.

**Arthur Lupia:** Well, I mean, the list for RTI is mailing. Is that — ?

**Jon A. Krosnick:** No, you want to know about contact. So the first contact is a letter that shows up in the mailbox. The second thing that happens is a knock on the door.

*Unidentified Speaker: I was just thinking about cell phone people [inaudible].*

**Arthur Lupia:** I was thinking about asking the networking question in a different way, and slightly subversive also. We’ve been talking about direct effects, right, the idea that we put certain questions on there, and they may or may not of benefit you.

But the questions we put on surveys fuel the social science literature. They fuel a part of the social science literature. Do you read any of that? Most people probably read the public opinion polls that you get in political science, but do you read that? And are there things you see in the academic literature that are particularly annoying and you’d like to see less of? *[Group Laughter]* — Or do you open up a journal and say, “I wish I had seen an article or content like this,” and you don’t see it?

We have stereotypes of what people who are in academics value. On the other hand, a way to build a network if sometimes we knew, if we asked this kind of question it would lead to this kind of analysis, which would really be beneficial — either to the way that you think about things, or the way that you do what you do, or the way that you interact with us. Is anybody willing to answer that question? If you don’t read it, that’s great, too.

*Unidentified Speaker: I have a different answer, or maybe I’m answering a different question. Even though I left academia about five years ago, I haven’t canceled my subscriptions yet. And this is becoming an issue between my wife and me. “You’re going to have to stop those journals from coming into the house, because we’re going to have to have the foundation redone again if they keep coming.”*

*I'm drowning in these journals, but every time I get the JOP or JAPS, I open it and say, "Wow, that looks interesting." But of course, I never read it. So, I can't ask Jon to come to the house every couple of months and give me the summary that he gave of some interesting findings.*

*But if there were some digest of relevant political behavior and public opinion work out of academia that was digestible by, not just lapsed political scientists like myself, but you know, all of us — there might be better propagation of the ideas and innovations out to this community.*

*I mean, I can't promise that everybody would read it, but I would sure be more likely to read the encapsulated bottom-line findings of things that might then lead me to go dig out that JOP and open it up and read the thing.*

**Frank Newport:** Well, that's an excellent point. Is there an analogy here to the medical field where the practitioner has to in some instances get CMEs, or continuing medical education — through the journals, but also through other mechanisms they are briefed by academics who do academic medical research? And they find it useful because they're busy all day.

So in terms of Scott's point, is there an analogy here where you all in your ANES capacity or others can do a job similar to that where you have sessions, seminars, if not online digests, where other people are able to be brought up on what you found and what would be important — continuing education. Maybe sessions where people would come for half a day and be briefed? And I think NSF would love that if you could say, "Look, we're holding briefing sessions for practitioners."

**Jon A. Krosnick:** I am desperate to do that. I think there is so much literature accumulating in piles and houses that people can't read. And partly because survey method stuff is published everywhere — it's in health; it's in education; it's in marketing. It's all over the place.

One article in this issue of a journal that we don't subscribe to, and another article. When you get to work gathering it up there is great stuff, and I would love to set up a shop that did exactly what you just said — collects it in real time, you know? What's this guy's name, Leo Simonetta who's like on AAPORnet? *(Right.)*

It's like every morning he wakes up and types "survey" in to find out what was published today. That's what we want to do with the academic stuff and have like a little digest, like you said, that comes out every so often.

Like in the last month the important methodological pieces are this, click here if you want to read it. And do summary presentations. I would love to do that. It just takes money, and we're busy enough running this that we haven't been able to raise that money. But with the money, we would hire the staff, we would do it and love it, you know?

**Susan Pinkus:** It would be like the hotline of new *[inaudible]*, but in user-friendly terms. *[inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker:* AAPOR actually initiated an effort called Survey Practice to do something like that. And it did not meet with success, unfortunately, but I do think that the AAPOR council would be open to a suggestion to join in with some kind of similar effort.

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, there just needs to be a staff of people doing that. *[inaudible]*

*Unidentified Speaker:* Yes, and AAPOR would be a good vehicle, actually.

**Susan Pinkus:** There's a new eZine coming out called "Survey Practices from AAPORnet."

*Unidentified Speaker:* Yes, now that's what I was talking about. We could not get it off the ground.

**Susan Pinkus:** I thought I got an email *[inaudible]* saying in a couple of months — no?

*Unidentified Speaker: Well, stay tuned. We've had a very difficult time getting it off the ground.*

**Susan Pinkus:** *[Portion garbled]* — Very short articles that pertained to our industry, and it doesn't have to be peer reviewed or anything and it would just go into this eZine. *[Portion inaudible]*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** I mean, it sounds good and if it works, great. I mean, it's kind of different. If the goal is to gather up and review peer reviewed work, that's different maybe from just write little things on whatever you want to say.

*Unidentified Speaker: Yes, but Jon, what I'm suggesting is that it has not worked as the vehicle we expected it to work — at least not to this point. But I think AAPOR would be open to utilizing some of those resources to capture some of the content that you're describing.*

*Unidentified Speaker: Can you make use of existing resources? The Institute for Social Research publishes on a regular basis essentially a digest of surveys. [Portion inaudible] It seems like ISR has a mechanism — well, they have a publicity office and communications people that put together something like this. If this remains a core function of ISR, it seems like some of those resources could be used or might be.*

**Jon A. Krosnick:** Yes, I think those newsletters promote Michigan research, right? And if what you want is a magazine, a newsletter or journal that summarizes broadly academic stuff, it would be harder for Michigan to justify spending it to do that.