

RESPONSE RATES IN THE NATIONAL ELECTION STUDIES, 1948-1992

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Response rates, refusal rates, and Ns provided here result from searches through the following: 1) NES control files on tape (1976-1990), 2) NES study files, 3) NES files of field materials, 4) Field Office Master files, 5) NES codebooks, 6) table of refusal rates 1952-1986 provided by Charlotte Steeh (originally constructed several years ago for her article on refusal rates of NES and Consumer Attitudes surveys³). Note that Charlotte Steeh's table was not complete. For some studies multiple sources have been found with slightly varying information. In all cases, when 2 or more sources were discovered, the most 'reliable' source, if determinable, has been incorporated in tables, preferably a source providing Ns. However, information from any alternate source is accounted for in the notes beginning p.11. Note that the reliability or precision of the numbers here reflects the same qualities in the sources from which they come. Annotation is provided which describes sources for each of the following tables' figures (Tables I-III).

**Table I.
TIME SERIES STUDIES**

<u>Year^A</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>	<u>Refusal Rate</u>	<u># IWs^A</u>	<u>Sample N^A</u>
1992*	74.0	20.8	1126	1522
1990 ^{&}	70.6	20.3	1980	2802
1988	70.5	22.2	2040	2893
1986	67.7	25.6	2176	3215
1984	72.1	20.7	2257	3131
1982	72.3	21.5	1418	1960
1980	71.8	20.8	1614	2249
1978	68.9	22.7	2304	3343
1976+	70.4	-	2248	3191
1974+	(70.0)	16.5	1575	-
1972	75.0	14.5	2705	(3606)
1970*	76.6 [^]	14.1	1507 [^]	1967 [^]
1968*	77.4	13.6	1557	2011
1966	77.1	13.8	1291	1674
1964*	80.6	12.5	1571	1948
1962	-	9.0	1297	-
1960+	-	-	1164 ~	-
1958+	78.1	12.2	1450	(1856)
1956	(85.0)	(7.7)	(1939)	2281
1952	(77.2)	(6.2)	(1799) ~	(2330)
1948	<u>83.9</u>	-	610	<u>735</u>

TIME SERIES POST INTERVIEWS, PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>	<u>Refusal Rate</u>	<u># IWs</u>	<u>Sample N</u>
1992po*	89.3	7.1	1005	1126
1988po	87.0	9.9	1775	2040
1984po/	(88.6)	(6.9)	1989	(2245)
1980po	(87.4)	(8.8)	1408	(1611)
1976po+	84.9	-	1909	2248
1972po	84.4	<u>10.7</u>	2285	2705
1968po*	86.6	8.0	1348	1557
1964po*	(92.7)	(3.5)	1450	(1564)
1960po	(93.9)	-	1109	(1181)
1956po	(90.9)	-	1762	(1939)
1952po	(90.3)	-	1714	(1899)
1948po'	94.6	-	577	610

^A in presidential years, pre-election wave of study

* in presidential years, number of pre interviews

+ using unweighted Ns

& numbers for 1990 recalculated in 1992 when 20 invalid interviews discovered

~ excl. post-only cases (17 in 1960, 100 in 1952, 85 in 1948)

^ excl. 73 cases ineligible voters

* excl. supplements (i.e., cross-section only)

/ total, telephone and personal (see below)

underlined - approximated (see 1972 note)

() see annotation p.11 by year. Numbers in parentheses are either very close to exact or are exact numbers/calculations for which certain circumstances apply

1984 POST INTERVIEWS by assigned method of administration:⁵

telephone	(88.0)	(5.8)	853	(969)
personal	(89.0)	(7.7)	1136	(1276)

Usually, all presidential-year post response rates are reinterview rates, i.e., are obtained here by calculating (number post IWs)/(number of pre IWs), that is, the number of pre interviews is used as the post 'sample N' without accounting for cases where pre respondents became nonsample before post interviewing went into the field. This is because such information is rarely on record; the exceptions are: 1964 (7 cases), 1980 (3 cases), 1984 (12 cases) and 1988 (0 cases). Note that 17 post-only cases in 1960 and 100 post-only cases in 1952 are disregarded in Ns of pre interviews according to page 1. Also, 73 cases of 1970 interviews administered to ineligible voters in the released dataset are not represented in 1970 Ns (sample size or number of interviews). Supplements sampled and interviewed in the 1964, 1968 and 1970 election studies are not represented here. Studies requiring weighting for analysis are represented here using unweighted numbers. See below for notes on sources, p.11.

Table II.
NON-TIME-SERIES STUDIES

<u>Year/Study</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>	<u>Refusal Rate</u>	<u># IWS</u>	<u>Sample N</u>
1993 Pilot ^a **	74.6	9.8	750	1005
1992 Senate Study**	56.0	-	2759	4927
1991 Pilot ^a **	(78.1)	(9.7)	1385	(1774)
1990 Senate **	46.0 [#]	48.0 [#]	3349	7308 [#]
1989 Pilot Wave I **	71.8	10.1	614	855
Wave II **	80.5	7.8	494	614
1988 Super Tuesday Wave I **	59.2	30.0	2076	3504
Wave II **	79.7	10.3	1688	2117
1988 Senate **	43.0 [#]	51.0 [#]	3145	7313 [#]
1987 Pilot Wave I **	74.1	8.6	457	617
Wave II **	79.5	8.0	360	453
1985 Pilot Wave I **	81.3	6.6	429	528
Wave II **	80.4	4.2	345	429
1983 Pilot Wave I **	75.5	12.3	314	416
Wave II	87.3	4.8	274	314
1982 CATI [®] **	(63.9)	(26.3)	998	(1562)
1979 Pilot Wave I	-	-	280	-
Wave II	84.3	7.1	236	280

** telephone study

^a the 1991 Pilot Study also comprised wave 2 of the "Consequences of War" Panel Study on the U.S. Persian Gulf War [the 1990 Post constituted wave 1].

[#] 'close approximates' (see source notes, Senate Studies)

[®] the 1982 CATI interviews constituted the "telephone" half of the 1982 Method Comparison Project, which was designed to compare the results of conducting personal interviews (in the 1982 NES post) with the results of conducting interviews administered by telephone (using similar questionnaires, modified sufficiently for telephone administration). CATI interviewing was divided into two independent efforts of approximately equal magnitude using CATI facilities at the University of Michigan and CATI facilities at the University of California, Berkeley (see below).

() see note on parentheses p.2.

1982 CATI INTERVIEWS by location:

Michigan	(64.6)	(23.0)	497	(769)
Berkeley	(63.2)	(29.4)	501	(793)

III.
PANEL STUDIES⁶
[4 panels]

SEE P.7 FOR DESCRIPTIONS OF PANELS

IIIa.
1980 Major Panel

<u>Wave</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>	<u>Survival Rate^x</u>	<u>Refusal Rate</u>	<u># IWS</u>	<u>Sample N</u>
P1	74.4	17.7	1008	1355
P2	83.9	83.6	10.4	843	1005
P3	88.8	76.3	7.7	769	866
P4 **	92.9	75.8	3.5	764	822

^x (IWS)/1008 - (number of interviews)/(number of P1 interviews)

** telephone interviews

IIIb.
1980 Minor Panel

<u>Wave</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>	<u>Reinterview Rate^x</u>	<u>Refusal Rate</u>	<u># IWS</u>	<u>Sample N</u>
C1	73.7	16.4	965	1310
C4 **	87.7	85.2	6.6	822	937

^x (IWS)/965 - (number of C4 interviews)/(number of C1 interviews)

** telephone interviews

IIIc(1). 1972-1974-1976 Panel

1972-1974-1976 Panel Mortality ^{zz}							
	<u>1972 pre</u>	<u>1972 post</u>	<u>1974 post</u>	<u>1976 pre</u>	<u>1976 post</u>	<u>1976 pre OR po</u>	<u>1976 pre AND po</u>
# IWs	2705	2285	1624	1286	1193	1296	1183
%	100%	84.4%	60.0%	47.5%	44.1%	47.9%	43.7%
excluding 1972 mail-questionnaire cases (94): ^{zz++}							
IWs	2611	2191	1624	1286	1193	1286	1183
%	100%	83.9%	62.2%	49.3%	45.7%	49.6%	45.3%

^{zz} excluding 24 exceptional cases NOT interviewed in 1974 (see note Z below)

++ 1972 post IW was a mail questionnaire: no attempt was made to reinterview these Rs in 1974 or 1976

1972 cases both pre-and post interviews = 2191 ⁺⁺

	<u>1974 Disposition based on 2191 ⁺⁺</u>		<u>1976 Disposition based on 2191 ⁺⁺</u>	
Reinterviews	1624	% of 2191 = 74.1	1296	% of 1624 = 79.8
Refusals	{210}	% of 2191 = {9.6}	{150}	% of 1624 = {9.2}
Deceased	{15}	% of 2191 = { .7}		
Other NI	{233}	% of 2191 = {10.6}	{178}	other NI and moved, not located
Moved, not located	<u>{109}</u>	% of 2191 = { 5.0}	24	additional cases ^z
	<u>2191</u>		<u>1648</u>	
<u>1974 SURVIVAL RATE</u> [1624/2191]	<u>74.1</u>		<u>1976 SURVIVAL RATE</u> [1320/2191]	<u>60.2</u>
			pre [1310/2191]	<u>59.8**</u>
			post [1217/2191]	<u>55.6**</u>

SAMPLE N [2191-109] - {2082}

MOVERS 580

MOVERS INTERVIEWED 423

% PANEL MOVED 26.5

% MOVERS IW'D 72.9

** 1207 cases in 1976 were pre-and post, 103

were pre-only, 10 were post-only; excluding the 24 cases NOT interviewed in 1974, the 1976 pre survival rate is (1286/2191)=58.7, the post survival rate is (1193/2191)=54.5, and the overall 1976 survival rate is (1296/2191) 59.2.

^z in 24 cases, 1972 pre-and-post Rs who were NOT interviewed in 1974 were reinterviewed in

1976 as part of the 1972-1974-1976 panel

(resulting in 1296+24=1320 total interviews)

++ excluding 94 cases where 1972 post IW was a mail questionnaire: no attempt was made to reinterview these Rs in 1974 or 1976

{ } approximates only

IIIc(2). 1974-1976 Panel

$$\text{REINTERVIEW RATE} = \frac{\text{reinterviewed in 1976}}{\text{interviewed in 1974}} = \frac{1201^a}{1575^a} = 76.3\%$$

^a this excludes respondents too young to vote in 1974 (16-17 years old in 1974).

Numbers including 16-17 year-olds are unavailable.

IIId.

1956-1958-1960 Panel⁷

1956 pre = 1939 interviews

	<u>1958 Disposition</u>		<u>1960 Disposition</u>	
Reinterviews	1354 ^b	% of 1939 = 69.8	1217 ^c	% of 1939 = 62.8
Refusals ***	205	% of 1939 = 10.6	268	% of 1939 = 13.8
Deceased	34 ^d	% of 1939 = 1.8	78 ^{d,e}	% of 1939 = 4.0
Other NI ***	88	% of 1939 = 4.5	80	% of 1939 = 4.1
Moved, not located ***	243	% of 1939 = 12.5	284	% of 1939 = 14.6
Other NS ***	<u>15</u>	% of 1939 = .8	<u>12</u>	% of 1939 = .6
	1939		1939	
sample N ^f	1681		1643	
reinterview rate	69.8 % [1354/1939]		62.8 % [1217/1939]	
response rate	80.5 % [1354/1681]		74.1 % [1217/1643]	
refusal rate	12.2 % [205/1681]		16.3 % [268/1643]	
movers	577		-	
movers followed	334		-	
% movers followed	58 % [334/577]		-	
% orig. sample moved	29.6 % [577/1939]		-	

SURVIVAL RATE 1956-1958-1960

<u>1956 Pre</u>	<u>1956 Post</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1960 Pre</u>	<u>1960 Post</u>
100%	90.9%	69.8%	62.8%	60.3%
[1939]	[1762]	[1354]	[1217]	[1169]

^b not including 2 post-only cases in 1956

^c including 34 telephone interviews

^d includes cases where fact of death was clearly established through report of family or neighbors; it is possible that some unlocated Rs were also deceased

^e this also includes cases of institutionalization

^f this is the number of 1956 pre respondents, less those Rs not located or other nonsample

*** for 1958, these figures are approximates (see notes)

DESCRIPTIONS OF NES PANELS:

1980 Major
1980 Minor
1972-1974-1976
1956-1958-1960

1. 1980 MAJOR PANEL (P1-P4). All respondents interviewed in P1 (1st wave) were included in the datafile, regardless whether or how often they were interviewed again in P2-P4. The dates of interviewing were:

P1-	January 1	- February 25
P2-	June 4	- July 13
P3-	September 1	- October 1
P4-	November 5	- November 25

Unlike panel studies conducted previously, 1980 Major Panel reinterviews were not supplemented through updating the sample of households by replacing moving panel members with new respondents occupying dwelling units vacated by the movers. Attempts were made to follow movers regardless whether they remained within, or relocated themselves outside of, the sample area. The waves during which the 1008 total respondents were interviewed are as follow:

	<u>P1</u>	<u>P2</u>	<u>P3</u>	<u>P4</u>
151	X			
66	X	X		
1	X		X	
4	X			X
26	X	X	X	
18	X	X		X
9	X		X	X
<u>733</u>	X	X	X	X
1008				

2. 1980 MINOR PANEL (C1,C4). The second wave was designated C4. The dates of interviewing were:

C1-	April 1	- May 2
C4-	November 3	- December 23

Unlike panel studies conducted previously, 1980 Minor Panel reinterviews were not supplemented through updating the sample of households by replacing moving panel members with new respondents occupying dwelling units vacated by the movers. Attempts were made to follow movers regardless whether they remained within, or relocated themselves outside of, the sample area.

3. 1972-1974-1976 PANEL (also 1972-1974 Panel and 1974-1976 Panel). These panels were conducted jointly with 1972, 1974 and 1976 cross-section (time-series) studies.

- #1. 1972-1974-1976 Panel: Included were those 1972 cross-section respondents who were interviewed both pre and post in 1972 and successfully reinterviewed in 1974 and 1976 (pre and/or post). In addition are included 24 cases of 1972 pre-and-post respondents who were reinterviewed in 1976 (pre and post) even though they were NOT reinterviewed in 1974. In 1974 and 1976, attempts were made to follow movers who still lived within 50 miles of a sample area.
- #2. 1972-1974 Panel: Included were the 1972 cross-section respondents who were interviewed in both waves in 1972 and reinterviewed in 1974, regardless whether they were interviewed again in 1976. Attempts were made to follow movers who still lived within 50 miles of a sample area. All but 24 cases in the 1972-1974-1976 panel file are also in the 1972-1974 panel file.
- #3. 1974-1976 Panel: Included were 1974 cross-section respondents who were reinterviewed in 1976 (pre and/or post). The 1974-1976 panel included respondents not present in either of the other 2 panels because the 1974 cross-section incorporated new respondents as well as some of those who participated in both waves of the 1972 study. Attempts were made to follow movers who still lived within 50 miles of a sample area.

At the end of this section is a summary table describing content of the panels' files. Waves during which interviews were taken are as follow.

# IWS	1972 Pre	1972 Post	1974 _____	1976 Pre	1976 Post	Panel ^{^^}
807	X	X	X	X	X	1,2,3
376	X	X	X	X	X	1,2
70	X	X	X	X		1,2,3
33	X	X	X	X		1,2
3	X	X	X		X	1,2,3
7	X	X	X		X	1,2
24	X	X		X	X	1
328	X	X	X			2
281			X	X	X	3
35				X	X	3
<u>5</u>				X	X	3
1969						

^{^^}#1 - 1972-1974-1976 panel
#2 - 1972-1974 panel
#3 - 1974-1976 panel

[1320 total cases]
[1624 total cases]
[1201 total cases]

The 1974 cross-section with which reinterviews were sought in 1976 (for the 1974-1976 Panel) was obtained from a sample of households that was constructed utilizing the 1972 sample. The 1972 sample of household units (HUs) was subsampled at the rate of 1/3 and then supplemented to represent HUs and citizens added to the study universe since 1972. Note that, for the 1974 cross-section, household members were considered for selection as respondents if they were U.S. citizens 16 years of age and older, although respondents not eligible to vote in 1974 were dropped from the released version of the 1974 cross-section datafile and from the released 1974-1976 panel datafile. The 3 components of the 1974 cross-section sample may be summarized as follow:

- 1) a random 1/3 of panel HUs, or 1/3 of those households in which a respondent granted both pre and post interviews in 1972.
- 2) a random 1/3 of 1972 nonpanel HUs, or 1/3 of households which in 1972 were vacant, or produced nonresponses or only 1 response.
- 3) HUs nonexistent in 1972.

For 1) if the panel member was no longer residing at the panel HU and the HU was occupied, an individual was selected from present household members who were eligible, and an interview was sought with that new person. If, however, the panel member was still residing at the 1972 address, one of two procedures was followed, depending upon whether 'new' members were added to the household since 1972 who were eligible as respondents in 1974.⁸ If no such newly-eligible member was added, then the panel member was interviewed for the cross-section. If, however, 1 or more newly-eligible members were added to the household, the interviewer selected one person from all eligible members, using standard selection procedures. If this selected person was not the panel member, both the panel member and the 'new' selected household member were interviewed, but only the 'new' respondent's interview was included in the cross-section (the panel member's interview would be included in the panel). If the selected person was the panel member, the panel member was interviewed for the cross-section.

1972-1974-1976 PANEL INCLUDES

RS FROM THE 1972 CROSS-SECTION^{**} WHO WERE REINTERVIEWED IN 1974 AND REINTERVIEWED AT LEAST ONCE IN 1976 [also, 24 cases not reinterviewed in 1974 but reinterviewed twice in 1976]

1972-1974 PANEL INCLUDES

RS FROM THE 1972 CROSS-SECTION^{**} WHO WERE REINTERVIEWED IN 1974 BUT NOT NECESSARILY REINTERVIEWED IN 1976.

1974-1976 PANEL INCLUDES

RS FROM THE 1974 CROSS-SECTION WHO WERE REINTERVIEWED AT LEAST ONCE IN 1976: THESE RS MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED IN 1972, DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE 1974 CROSS-SECTION WAS CONSTRUCTED FROM 2 SOURCES: NON-PANEL RESPONDENTS AND A PORTION OF PANEL RESPONDENTS

^{**} interviewed pre and post, excluding cases of mail questionnaires in the post

4. 1956-1958-1960 PANEL. This panel study was conducted jointly with the 1956, 1958, and 1960 cross-section (time series) studies. Included in 1956-1958-1960 panel data are respondents interviewed at least once in 1960 and at least once previously (in 1956 OR 1958). Some new respondents entered the panel in 1958 but not in 1960.

In 1958, reinterviews were sought with all pre respondents from the 1956 study,⁹ including those who had moved since 1956 but who were located at their new address (this locating effort was limited somewhat by budgetary constraints). Note that these cases reinterviewed at new addresses were not part of the 1958 cross-section study. In the 1958 cross-section, compensation for 1956 study 'movers' was attempted by selecting new Rs from among the current dwellers in the households vacated by 1956 respondents.¹⁰

In 1960, reinterviews for the panel were (again) sought with all pre respondents from the 1956 study, and movers were followed in a similar fashion as attempted in 1958. In addition, interviews were sought with all 1958 cross-section respondents. Of course, many 1958 cross-section respondents (but not all) were also 1956 pre respondents. At the end of this section is a summary table describing content of the Panel file by study year.

Interviews taken during each study year which were eventually included in the panel datafile are as follow.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL # IWs</u>		<u>PRE ONLY</u>	<u>POST ONLY</u>	<u>PRE AND POST</u>
1956	1239	=	44	2	1193
1958	1407	=	--	1407	--
1960	1514	=	87	33	1394

Waves during which respondents who were included in the panel file were interviewed are as follow. The numbers in parentheses at bottom indicate how many panel respondents gave an interview during the indicated wave.

	<u>1956 Pre</u>	<u>1956 Post</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1960 Pre</u>	<u>1960 Post</u>
15			X	X	
5	X			X	
3	X		X	X	
2		X	X	X	
10	X	X		X	
52	X	X	X	X	
10			X		X
2	X		X		X
18	X	X	X		X
3	X	X			X
250			X	X	X
5	X			X	X
29	X		X	X	X
84	X	X		X	X
<u>1026</u>	X	X	X	X	X
1514	(1237)	(1195)	(1407)	(1481)	(1427)

1956-1958-1960 PANEL STUDY COMPONENTS

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1956 RS - | RS FROM THE 1956 CROSS-SECTION PRE WHO WERE REINTERVIEWED AT LEAST ONCE IN 1960-- BUT WHO WERE NOT NECESSARILY REINTERVIEWED IN 1958. |
| 1958 RS - | RS FROM THE 1958 CROSS-SECTION WHO WERE REINTERVIEWED AT LEAST ONCE IN 1960: THESE RS MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED IN 1956, DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE 1958 CROSS-SECTION WAS CONSTRUCTED FROM 2 SOURCES: 1956 PRE RESPONDENTS (REINTERVIEWED NONMOVERS ONLY) <u>AND</u> NEW RESPONDENTS (RESIDENTS OF DWELLINGS VACATED BY 1956 RESPONDENTS). |
| 1960 RS - | ALL RS INTERVIEWED IN 1960 WHO HAD ALSO BEEN INTERVIEWED IN THE 1956 AND/OR 1958 CROSS-SECTION STUDIES. ¹¹ |

Notes on sources for response rates-- time-series studies (Table I.):

- 1978-1990: *From NES control data files on tape. The 1980 and 1984 post numbers in parentheses are computed utilizing the fact that 12 (of 2257) 1984 pre respondents and 3 (of 1614) 1980 pre respondents were nonsample in the post waves. Charlotte Steeh's refusal rates for 1978-1986 were very nearly identical. [N.B. for 1978 and 1984: the codebooks give slightly incorrect sample sizes.]*
- 1976: *From Field Office Master files. Table Ns do not incorporate several 'corrections' made after the release of the 1976 cross-section data file, i.e., 11 cases originally identified as 'panel only' interviews were reclassified as 'panel and cross-section' in the master (combined) data file. No record could be found--even in the 1976 control tape file--which provided information about refusals in 1976. [NOTE: Assuming 2248+11 pre interviews out of a sample of 3191+11 in 1976, the pre response rate would be 2259/3202 or 70.5%; assuming 1909+11 post reinterviews from 2248+11 pre respondents produces a reinterview rate of 1920/2259 or 85.0.%]*
- 1974: *Response rate per memo dated October 20, 1975 by Art Miller, "Final Report on Progress of 1974 Election Study--Mass Survey Component." Refusal rate provided by Charlotte Steeh. Note that the parenthetical response rate must be taken as approximate, since it is described in the source as the 'overall' cross-section response rate, and the cross-section originally included respondents ineligible to vote in 1974 (16 and 17 year-olds), who were dropped from the released dataset. However, the original sample N is unknown, either including or excluding 16 and 17 year-olds that were deemed eligible for cross-section selection.*

- 1972: From 1972 field report tally sheet, undated: 2712 interviews, sample N 3613, 523 refusals. Assuming 7 pre 'interviews' were dropped subsequent to the completion of the source tally sheet but prior to the release of the 1972 dataset (which included 2705 interviews), 7 cases were reclassified either non-interview or nonsample. Arbitrarily assuming that the cases were discovered to be nonsample in order to provide at least a closely estimated sample size for the purposes of the table, the parenthetical sample N represents the tally sheet sample N (3613) minus 7, although sample N could actually have been anything between 3613 and 3606. Response rate has been calculated here as $2705/3606$, refusal rate as $523/3606$. Number of post refusals on source tally sheet is 290 but is identified as a nonfinal total, so that the post refusal rate calculated as $290/2705 = 10.7$ is only roughly approximate. Note also that an undated longhand note by unidentified NES staff recorded a 75.1% pre response rate. Pre wave refusal rate as provided by Charlotte Steeh concurs with table value (14.5%).
- 1970: From memo dated February 19, 1971 by John Scott, "Response on 1970 Election Study." Sample size is given in source as 2040, with 1580 interviews, response rate 77.5%, and refusal rate 14.1%. Above table, however, disregards 73 nonsample cases in the released dataset (ineligible Rs), except for refusal rate, which was provided in source without refusal N. Refusal rate in table has been calculated as $1507/(2040-73) = 14.1$. Note that the refusal rate provided by Charlotte Steeh was 14.4%.
- 1968: Pre data from field report tally sheet dated 11/22/68. Number of interviews given in source is 1557, 274 refusals, sample N 2011. Response rate was calculated in table as $1557/2011 = 77.4$; refusal rate calculated as $274/2011 = 13.6$. Note that refusal rate provided by Charlotte Steeh was also 13.6%. The codebook indicates a response rate of 77%.
Post refusal rate (8%) taken from report dated February 1971 by Arthur C. Wolfe, "Response Rate on the 1968 Election Study." Note that this post source gives a pre response rate of 77% and a pre refusal rate of 14%.
- 1966: The 1966 "Fall Omnibus" study conducted during November-December of that year (which also incorporated an economic survey) produced an inadequate number of political interviews, so that a supplementary NES interviewing effort with a small additional sample was undertaken in January of 1967. According to the "Preliminary report on the 1966 Fall Omnibus Study" by Art Wolfe (dated 4/25/87), within a total sample of 1674 individuals the number of total interviews granted was 1291 [1184 during the initial effort, another 107 in January]. This same report provided a refusal N (25) only for refusals from the supplementary sample. In an additional document, however, an undated tally sheet of results from the first sample of the election study, initial sample refusal N is indicated as 206, for a total of 231 NES refusals in 1966. 1291 cases constituted the released dataset. Numbers in the table above are results of calculating response rate as $1291/1674$ and calculating refusal rate as $231/1674$. Memo dated February 19, 1971 by John Scott and the same person's memo of February 2, 1971 provide separate response and refusal rates for the initial and supplementary samples without providing Ns. A memo dated December 10, 1968 gives response and refusal rates for the initial sample only. Refusal rate provided by Charlotte Steeh was 13.2%. The 1966 codebook indicates a response rate of 77% and a refusal rate of 14%.
- 1964: Pre data from field report tally sheet dated November 1964. Sample N is given in source as 1948, number of interviews 1571, number of refusals 243. Response rate is calculated in table above as $1571/1948 = 80.6\%$; refusal rate calculated as $243/1948 = 12.5\%$. Note that refusal rate provided by Charlotte Steeh was also 12.5%.
Post data from field report tally sheet dated January 1965. Number of interviews in source is 1452, number of refusals 54, sample N 1569 (not including 7 pre respondents who became nonsample in the post). Release dataset has 1450 post interviews. It is possible to assume either of the following occurred subsequent to the preparation of the post tally sheet (source): 1) 2 more pre cases were judged to be nonsample, or 2) 2

post interviews were reconsidered insufficient partials or other non-interview. I have the post sample N as 1571-7 or 1564 and used 1564 to calculate the reinterview and post refusal rates (1450/1564), (54/1564), but this may be just slightly imprecise.

- 1962: No record of response rate.
Refusal rate provided by Charlotte Steeh
- 1960: No record of response rate or refusal rate. 1960 project 440's field report pre tally sheet and post tally sheet give response and refusal numbers, but panel-only cases are impossible to identify, so that cross-section totals cannot be calculated.
- 1958: From "Memorandum No. 3, 431 Response Rates and Totals," June 1959: sample N given is 1858, number of refusals 226, number of interviews 1452. Since only 1450 cases were present in the release of 1958 data we can assume either of the following: 1) 2 'interviews' were later judged to be insufficient partials (or other noninterview); or 2) 2 cases were discovered to be nonsample. I have assumed the latter instance for the purposes of the table above, wherein I reduced the given sample N of 1858 by 2 (in parentheses) rather than considering noninterviews increased by 2, for the simple reason that it was impossible to guess whether 2 more noninterviews were also 2 more refusals. Response rate is calculated in table as 1450/1856, refusal rate as 226/1856, and these are at least closely approximate.
- 1956: Pre data from field report tally sheet dated November 8, 1956. This is an unusual study, because the released version of the data only included those cases where the respondent granted both a pre and a post interview: there are no pre-only cases in the released data. The table's numbers in parentheses represent calculations which used the fact that actually 1939 pre interviews were granted, although only 1762 of these Rs later granted a post interview. Numbers on the source tally sheet: 1939 interviews, sample N 2281, 175 refusals. Pre refusal rate in table above is 175/2281 (7.7%), response rate 1939/2281 (85.0%). The codebook indicates an identical response rate of 85%.
- 1952: From undated table produced by NES staff on 1952 study results. Sample N in source is 2338, number of interviews 2007, refusal rate 6.2%, response rate 85.8%. The number of interviews in the released version of the dataset was 1899: subsequent to the production of the source document 8 'interviews' were (apparently) dismissed as either noninterview or nonsample. Arbitrarily assuming the disposition of these 8 cases as nonsample in order to provide at least close estimates for the table, I have used 2330 (in parentheses) as sample N, but the actual sample size may have been anything between 2330 and 2338. Since 100 interviews were post-only, the number of interviews granted for the pre wave was actually only 1799 instead of 1899, and the pre response rate which appears here represents 1799/2330 (the source response rate is based on 1899 interviews). The refusal rate cannot actually be calculated but must be taken as approximate to 6.2%. Charlotte Steeh also provided a refusal rate of 6.2%.

Notes on sources for response rates-- non-time-series studies (Table II.):

- 1991 Pilot- Source: NES control datafile. Some of the 2000 respondents from the 1990 Post became 'nonsample' for the 1991 Pilot wave for the same reasons encountered in time-series personal reinterviewing and, in addition, because of the impossibility of telephone administration. The numbers in the 1991 Pilot codebook introduction are slightly incorrect: the codebook indicates 223 cases nonsample and 392 noninterview, but 226 were nonsample and 389 noninterview. I am using what the codebook introduction calls 'cooperation rate' as the response rate, i.e., $1385/(2000-226) = 1385/1774 = 78.1\%$. There were 172 refusals so the refusal rate has been calculated here as $172/1774 = 9.7\%$.

- 1990 Senate- Source: Tom Ivacko of NES staff. Number of refusals and sample N were provided as 'close approximates' to the actual numbers.
- 1989 Pilot- Source: ISR Telephone Facility final field report. NES codebook gives a response rate of 74% and a reinterview rate of 80%, even though codebook agrees with source's sample Ns and numbers of interviews.
- 1988 Super-Tuesday- Source: ISR Telephone Facility final field report. Table disregards 41 minimum partials in wave I response rate and number of interviews. In wave II, interviews were sought from these 41 respondents. NES codebook gives a wave II response rate of 79.4. (Note: if wave I minimum partials were included in the N for wave I 'interviews,' the response rate for wave I would be $2117/3504=60.4\%$. If the 41 minimum partials were disregarded, however, to calculate the rate of reinterviewing, then the wave II reinterview rate would be $1688/2076=81.3\%$.)
- 1988 Senate- Source: Tom Ivacko of NES staff. See note above, 1990 Senate Study.
- 1987 Pilot- Source: ISR Telephone Facility final field report. 4 wave I cases became nonsample in wave II. (N.B.: the final field report gives a sample N of 617; the sample N mentioned in the NES codebook [633] includes cases which were actually nonsample, however the codebook provides a response rate [wave I] which closely matches source.)
- 1985 Pilot- Source: NES codebook.
- 1983 Pilot- Source: NES codebook.
- 1982 CATI- Source for Michigan CATI: ISR Telephone Facility final field report. The Michigan CATI sample N in table does not include 36 cases of successfully obtained interviews which were accidentally lost or severely damaged. 500 interviews were indicated in field report, but only 497 cases were in the released datafile: 3 'interviews' were reassigned disposition subsequent to the completion of the source document. Numbers in parentheses are based on sample N and number of refusals provided in source, because it is indeterminable whether the 3 cases in question were refusal, noninterview or nonsample.
Source for Berkeley CATI: NES Control File on tape. 503 interviews were indicated in field report, but only 501 cases were in the released datafile: 2 'interviews' were reassigned disposition subsequent to the completion of the source document. Numbers in parentheses are based on sample N and number of refusals provided in source, because it is indeterminable whether the 2 cases in question were refusal, noninterview or nonsample.
Additional source: "Alternative Approaches to Survey Data Collection for the National Election Studies: A Report on the 1982 Method Comparison Project" by J. Merrill Shanks, Maria Sanchez and Betsy Morton. This report cites a 'completion rate' of 62% for the CATI samples combined. Note that it also gives the 'completion rate' for the personal interviews as 72%, which matches the response rate appearing in Table I. If the 36 damaged interviews from the Michigan CATI study were added to the Michigan CATI sample N as noninterviews (rather than being nonsample), the total telephone sample size would be 1598, and 998 interviews would represent a total CATI response rate of $998/1598=62.45\%$
- 1979 Pilot- Source: NES codebook. No wave I information could be found elsewhere.
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Notes on sources for response rates-- panel studies (Table IIIa.-IIId.):

- 1980 Major Panel-** Source: NES 1980 Integrated File control file. This file is nearly identical to information appearing in the NES codebook. The exceptions are: for P1, the codebook gives a sample N of 1351, a response rate of 74.6, and a refusal rate of 17.9; for P2 the codebook gives a sample N of 1008, a response rate of 83.6 and a refusal rate of 10.3.
- 1980 Minor Panel-** Source: NES 1980 Integrated File control file. This file is nearly identical to information appearing in the NES codebook. The exceptions are: for C1, the codebook gives a sample N of 1307; for C4 the codebook gives a sample N of 965, a response rate of 84.8, and a refusal rate of 6.8 based on 66 refusals (control file indicates 62 refusals).
- 1972-1974-1976 Panel-** Sources for 1974 disposition of 1972 cases: NES storage tape files and "Response to 1974 Election Study," dated February 7, 1975 by unidentified NES personnel. Numbers in brackets { } are approximates only, and perhaps not very close to actual. Part of the problem in establishing exact numbers was that result codes have changed considerably since the early 1970s and documentation is scarce or nonexistent for information in old data files. Source for 1976 disposition of 1972 cases: NES storage tape files. Information was too unclear for 1976 to attempt approximates other than refusals (in brackets). NOTE: for the 1976 disposition of 1974 cases (1974-1976 panel), no other information could be found.
- 1956-1958-1960 Panel-** Sources for 1956-1958: NES master file on tape and 2 study¹² memos by unidentified NES personnel: "Memorandum No.3, 431 Response Rates and Totals," dated June 1959, and "Study 431 Memo #1: 1956-1958 Panel Mortality and Characteristics," dated May 23, 1959. The earlier memo gives 1958 dispositions of all 1956 pre cases; the later memo gives refusal, nonresponse, and interview Ns broken down according to: 1) panel-only movers, 2) cross-section-only new respondents, and 3) panel-and-cross-section nonmoving respondents. The numbers provided in each memo are as follow for the original sample of 1939 respondents:

MEMO 1:	1354 IWs	MEMO 2:	1354 IWs
	194 refusals		243 unlocated
	34 deceased		205 refusals
	99 other NI		
	240 unlocated		remainder not broken down (137 cases)
	<u>18 other NS</u>		
	1939		

Strictly using the Ns from the first memo yields percentages of the original sample (N = 1939) which are very close to those in the table: 69.8% interviewed, 10.0% refused, 1.8% deceased, 5.1% other non-interview, 12.4% moved and unlocated, .9% other nonsample. However, because the later memo contains much other data which is corroborated elsewhere-- and also because it is later, and study totals are often better sorted and defined as time elapses (especially for earlier studies when processing was less automated and more painstakingly slow), I have preferred to take from it what was available, the Ns for unlocated Rs and for refusals, which are, respectively, 3 more and 11 more than indicated in the first memo. Because I think cases were most likely to be ambiguously classified--or reclassifiable--between 'other NI' and refusal [rather than between 'deceased' and refusal or nonsample and refusal], I have used as the Table IIId. number of 'other NI' cases 11 less than the number given in the first memo, as compensation for 11 more refusals.

Likewise, the number of 'other NS' in Table III.d. is 3 less than the number in the first memo, because 243 rather than 240 cases are unlocated movers in the table, and it seems most likely that these 3 cases would have been (possibly) reclassifiable from 'other nonsample.' This compromise in Table III.d. is, of course, an idiosyncratic decision, and it may be preferable for some to rely on the information in the first memo alone, using the percentages given above. Source for 1956-1960: NES master file on tape and a study memo (see footnote 12) by unidentified NES personnel: "Study #440 Memo #1: 1956-1960 Panel Mortality," dated April 5, 1961.

FOOTNOTES:

¹ (PAGE 1) For a 1978-1990 table of NES nonresponse components (time series studies), see the Addendum, page 19.

² (PAGE 1) For information about NES studies conducted by telephone (except Senate Studies), I was also permitted some access to files in the ISR Telephone Facility. Senate Study data was provided by Tom Ivacko, who was the NES Study Manager for both the 1988 and 1990 Senate Studies, which were conducted, respectively, by Market Opinion Research and Market Strategies, Inc. In addition, for information on the 1972-1974-1976 panel (as well as the 1980 panels and the 1982 CATI data for Berkeley), a number of NES storage tapes were retrieved and examined.

³ (PAGE 1) Charlotte Steeh, when consulted in October of 1991, could not recall and had no record of specific source documents used for her table of refusal rates, which she continued to update until 1986. She had gathered her data by examining available Field Office files, sometimes with the assistance of a Field Office staff member. The refusal rates in her 1952-1986 table are in general very close to (or identical to) refusal rates which I established independently. Her article appeared in 1981 in the Public Opinion Quarterly, "Trends in Nonresponse Rates, 1952-1979."

⁴ (PAGE 1) 'Sample N' as used here is not the same as sample of households initially drawn for the study; households can become 'nonsample' if it is determined that they are vacant (for example) or have no residents who are eligible to be respondents [e.g., residents are all non-citizens]. Otherwise, unless it is determined to be nonsample, a household may be considered as 1 unit in the 'sample N:' in this way, sample N refers to the number of potential respondents, since from each occupied household containing eligible respondents 1 person can be selected as designated respondent for the study interview, using a standard selection procedure. For reinterviews, the 'sample N,' at least as I've used it, is roughly equal to the number of interviews in the initial wave, because these all represent potential reinterviews. Actually, however, some cases become nonsample subsequent to the initial wave, such as when former respondents move away and cannot be traced. {Not to flog the issue, 'sample N' here is also not to be confused with 'sample size' in the way it is sometimes used to identify the number of selected eligible respondents who actually grant interviews-in short, the number of interviews. Note also that 'sample size' in Chapter 1 of the NES Sourcebook refers to the number of interviews for which valid data are present and usable to define the respondent within a category of a particular demographic breakdown, for example income or race.

⁵ (PAGE 2) The method of administration assigned to a sample case was not necessarily the final and/or only method used in successfully administering an interview or in attempting to administer one. Of 969 cases originally assigned for telephone administration, 2 were reassigned to personal; of 1276 cases originally assigned for personal administration, 35 were reassigned to telephone. Thus, 1002 cases were at least attempted by phone (but not necessarily by phone only), and 1243 cases were at least attempted in person (but not necessarily in person only). The number of interviews ultimately designated with an "interviewer of record" who was a telephone interviewer was 873, and the number of interviews ultimately designated with an "interviewer of record" who was a personal interviewer was 1116: however, any interview may have involved a combination of attempts and interviewers, either in person or by telephone. 59 refusals were ultimately designated with an "interviewer of record" who was a telephone interviewer, and 94 refusals were ultimately designated with an "interviewer of record" who was a personal interviewer.

⁶ (PAGE 4) "Consequences of War" panel is not included in this section [see Table II, 'Non-Time-Series Studies,' which includes pilot studies]. The projected 3-wave panel on the U.S. Persian Gulf war shall be comprised of interviews conducted in the 1990 Post, 1991 Pilot/Panel reinterviews, and 1992 pre-post interviews.

⁷ (PAGE 6) Information about 1960 disposition of 1958 cases (including 1958 cross-section) could not be found, except for the fact that 1407 respondents were reinterviewed in 1960 out of 1726 total interviews which were taken in 1958 for the panel and the cross-section combined (1407/1726=81.5% reinterview rate).

⁸ (PAGE 9) 'New' members were defined as household members with zero chance of selection in 1972, including individuals underage to vote (16 or 17 years old in 1972), but who were eligible as 18-or-19-year-olds in 1974. 'New' members also included individuals 16 or 17 years old in 1974 who would be eligible to vote in 1976 [for the 1974-1976 panel reinterviewing]. Approximately 1679 total cross-section interviews were obtained WITH the inclusion of interviews with respondents who were only 16 or 17 years old in 1974 (source: "Final Report on Progress of 1974 Election Study--Mass Survey Component," dated October 20, 1975, by Art Miller).

⁹ (PAGE 10) In addition, 2 post-only cases from 1956 were reinterviewed in 1958- and again in 1960- and were included in the panel file. [Note that the release version of the 1956 study only included those respondents who granted both pre and post interviews, i.e., excluded pre-only respondents; however, all references in this section to 1956 respondents include pre-only cases as well as pre-and-post cases, plus the 2 post-only cases mentioned].

¹⁰ (PAGE 10) To reduce field costs, only half as many such additional respondents were added as would have been selected if their probability of selection had been identical to that of the reinterviewed respondents. For this reason, the 1958 cross-section data is weighted.

¹¹ (PAGE 11) Rs who were interviewed in 1956 but not in 1958 were considered in 1960 for reinterview only as part of the panel study (not cross-section). Rs who had refused being interviewed in 1958 and who were not interviewed in 1956 were not contacted for interviewing in 1960 as part of either study. The 1960 cross-section also included as new respondents eligible Rs from new sample dwellings and Rs selected from dwellings vacated by 1958 respondents: these new respondents, however, were non-panel.

¹² (PAGE 15) '431' was the internal study number assigned to the entire 1958 NES effort on behalf of both the panel and cross-section. '440' was the internal study number assigned to the entire 1960 NES effort on behalf of panel and cross-section.

Addendum: NES NONRESPONSE 1978-1990

	<i>Year</i>						
CATEGORY	1990	1988	1986	1984	1982	1980	1978
ORIGINAL SAMPLE	3440	3503	3833	3591	2278	2609	3852
NS - no eligible respondent	171	140	120	115	71	58	77
NS - vacant trailer space	25	20	9	9	7	8	10
NS - SLIP ^g	91	72	59	85	43	52	90
NS - occupants in residence elsewhere (ORE)	17	22	36	11	22	22	22
NS - seasonal vacant (SV) ^h	59	55	77	30	60	57	98
NS - house vacant	271	301	317	210	115	163	212
NET SAMPLE	<u>2806</u>	<u>2893</u>	<u>3215</u>	<u>3131</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>2249</u>	<u>3343</u>
NI - no contact (R determined or undertermined)	71	49	73	114	41	54	78
NI - permanent condition	65	71	87	75	29	54	71
NI - redline district	24	-	-	-	-	-	-
NI - temporary condition and other NI	75	90	55	38	50	59	131
REF - before household unit listing,R determined	88	114	148	458	78	91	204
REF - by someone other than R	59	74	80	70	51	34	57
REF - by respondent	424	455	596	119	293	343	498
INTERVIEWS	2000	2040	2176	2257	1418	1614	2304
NET SAMPLE	<u>2806</u>	<u>2893</u>	<u>3215</u>	<u>3131</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>2249</u>	<u>3343</u>
eligibility rate ^j	81.6%	82.6%	83.9%	87.2%	86.0%	86.2%	86.8%
response rate	71.3%	70.5%	67.7%	72.1%	72.3%	71.8%	68.9%
refusal rate	20.3%	22.2%	25.6%	20.7%	21.5%	20.8%	22.7%
unavailable rate ^k	2.5%	1.7%	2.3%	3.6%	2.1%	2.4%	2.3%
other NI rate	5.8%	5.6%	4.4%	3.6%	4.0%	5.0%	6.0%

NS = nonsample

NI = noninterview

REF = refusal

^g "sample listing isn't proper:" listing does not describe a housing unit or listing is outside the sample ASP or segment boundary

^h also, seasonal occupants residence elsewhere (SORE)

^j net sample/original sample

^k no contact/net sample

The standard notion of 'response rate' is the following percentage:

$$\frac{\text{number of interviews granted}}{\text{sample N}}$$

Rules are not cast in stone for defining which cases are 'noninterview,' 'refusal' or 'nonsample.' The organization conducting a study may have guidelines not identical to the guidelines of another survey organization, and guidelines might vary somewhat within an organization depending upon the study being conducted (for National Election Studies, a household is nonsample if no one in it is a citizen, for example). Moreover, an organization's guidelines or practices which determine disposition of noninterview cases is something that can change over time. To quote Charlotte Steeh (see footnote 3, page 16),

There is some confusion about the definitions used for various types of nonresponse at the Survey Research Center, as there is in survey research as a whole. Interviewer's manuals from the 1950s through the mid-1960s provided no explanations for the simple classifications which were employed. Since the late 1960s, however, noninterview forms have become increasingly complex and categories of nonresponse less and less comparable.

Without exploring the detailed history of dispositions of NES nonresponse cases as they have changed over time, and without the benefit of an official and exhaustive account from SRC, a simple overview of response, nonresponse and refusal as these terms currently apply to NES studies follows.

REFUSALS.

A refusal may occur at several stages of an interviewer's attempt to obtain an interview.

- after a respondent is selected and after the interview has begun
- after a respondent is selected, refusal by the designated respondent
- after a respondent is selected, refusal by someone else
- before a respondent is selected

If the interviewer is not able to communicate with the person who is selected among household members as the respondent for the study, the refusal may be given by someone else such as a spouse who insists his or her partner would never concede to an interview. However, in most cases an effort is made by the interviewer to receive the refusal directly from the designated respondent, who might be disposed to an interview even though another household member is certain otherwise. In addition, the interviewer MAY be able to convert the selected respondent's initial refusal into an interview, by determining exact reasons for refusal and employing diplomatic reasoning and perhaps the intercession of an appropriate 'persuasion letter' or two. Rs who begin an interview, on the other hand, may grow annoyed or hostile and cease cooperating, whereupon the interview becomes a refusal (unless the interview had progressed sufficiently to be a 'minimum partial'). Finally, in some instances the interviewer is faced with an adamant rejection by a household member before it can be determined who is the selected respondent, i.e., the "household listing" is not completed. Without the household listing, of course, it is not conclusively determined whether an eligible respondent resides in the household at all: the person answering the door may be sitting an unoccupied house, for example. Unless nonsample status is actually made evident, however, a household refusal without a listing still signifies a sample refusal.

In considering the size of a study's refusal N, the number of times interviewers attempt to communicate with the designated respondent, the number of times interviewers attempt to convert an initial refusal, the number of persuasion letters and the amount of time available for persuasive efforts (not to mention how the efforts are conducted) are all determinant factors.

NONINTERVIEWS.

Simply speaking, noninterviews are (sample N - number of interviews). Refusals are a special component of noninterviews, however the distinction between 'refusals' and other types of noninterviews is not completely clear-cut. For example, a selected respondent, in refusing to be interviewed, may declare that he or she is too 'old' or 'sick' or 'busy,' though in fact an interview is actually feasible but the respondent is unwilling (e.g., if the R is very old and tires easily, the interview can be administered in several installments). On the other hand, an individual selected as respondent may not actually refuse but may in

fact be too old or sick or busy for interviewing to be possible: for example, if the individual works several jobs, and all attempts to arrange an interview time are foiled by his or her working schedule, or, if s/he is bedridden and unable to communicate. Also considered as cases of 'inability' are those where the selected respondent has died (although an already-deceased person is never selected as respondent because he or she is not included in the household listing). Usually it is the case that the deceased R has died soon after the interviewer obtained the household listing and made the respondent selection, or, in the case of reinterviewing, the respondent has died since the last interview. 'Deceased' is not nonsample unless the person to whom it applies is the only HU member and no respondent at all is selected.

Cases of noninterviews due to inability are coded as either 'permanent condition' or 'temporary condition' noninterviews. Other 'permanent conditions' for noninterviews include senility, retardation, deaf/mute, and some cases where the selected respondent cannot speak English, although currently many interviews are conducted in Spanish in U.S. areas where the percentage of Spanish-speaking population is high.

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