

About the Conference

The rapid growth of public opinion polling over the past three decades and the increasing use of polls by politicians suggest that the public voice is being considered more frequently than in the past. Some applaud the increased use of public opinion polls as evidence that democracy is working. Others decry the use of polls as a simplistic representation of the public voice because they misrepresent what the public really thinks. Yet, surprisingly, there has never been a forum such as this that simultaneously examines both sides of the public opinion/policymaking divide, despite its obvious importance for democratic theory.

This conference will bring together researchers, pollsters, journalists, and politicians to consider these issues. They will explore interrelationships among polls and public opinion, policymakers, the mass media, and policy outcomes. Among the questions to be answered: Do polls accurately measure public opinion? Do polls drive policymakers' decisions? Under what circumstances do policymakers ignore or even seek to manipulate public opinion? What is the nature of the relationship between polls, public opinion, and public policy?

Institute for Policy Research

2040 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60208-4100
www.nwu.edu/IPR

Conference Organizers

Dennis Chong, IPR-Political Science, Northwestern
Fay Lomax Cook, IPR-Education & Social Policy, Northwestern
Susan Herbst, IPR-Political Science, Northwestern
Lawrence Jacobs, Political Science, University of Minnesota
Charles Manski, IPR-Economics, Northwestern
Jeff Manza, IPR-Sociology, Northwestern
Benjamin Page, IPR-Political Science, Northwestern

A Conference presented by the Program on Communications, Media, and Public Opinion, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

POLLS, POLICY, AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Saturday, May 13, 2000, 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM
Norris Center, Room 1E, Northwestern University, Evanston Campus
1999 S. Campus Drive (off Sheridan Road at the lake)

Conference on Polls, Policy, and the Future of American Democracy

May 13, 2000, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

- 8:30 Registration (Room 1E, Norris Center, Northwestern University, Evanston Campus)
- 8:45 Welcome **Fay Lomax Cook**, Director, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University
- 9:00 **Panel I: What Do Polls Reveal about Public Opinion and What Can They Reveal?**
Moderator: **Dennis Chong**, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University
Speakers: **Charles F. Manski**, Department of Economics, Northwestern University
Martin Gilens, Department of Political Science, Yale University
Commentators: **Scott Althaus**, Speech Communication & Political Science, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana
Peter Miller, Department of Communication Studies, Northwestern University
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 **Panel II: Do Politicians Pander to the Public?**
Moderator: **Jeff Manza**, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University
Speakers: **Lawrence R. Jacobs**, Department of Political Science, University of Minnesota
James Stimson, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Commentators: **G. William Domhoff**, Department of Psychology, University of California, Santa Cruz
- 12:15 Lunch and Keynote Addresses
Senator Richard J. "Dick" Durbin, U.S. Senator (D-Illinois) (invited but not confirmed)
William Schneider, Senior Political Analyst, CNN
- 1:45 **Panel III: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy**
Moderator: **Kenneth W. Abbott**, School of Law, Northwestern University
Speakers: **Steven Kull**, Center on Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland
Robert Y. Shapiro, Department of Political Science, Columbia University
Commentators: **Richard C. Longworth**, *Chicago Tribune*
Amy Searight, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University
- 3:15 Break
- 3:30 **Panel IV: Public Opinion and Social Welfare Policy**
Moderator: **Craig L. LaMay**, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University
Speakers: **Fay Lomax Cook**, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University
Paul Burstein, Department of Sociology, University of Washington
Commentators: **Jack C. Doppelt**, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University
David Axelrod, President, Axelrod & Associates
- 5:00 Closing Address: "The Role of Public Opinion Polls in Promoting Democracy and Good Government: A Look Around the World"
Humphrey Taylor, Chairman, The Harris Poll, Harris Interactive
- 5:30 Rapporteur: **Benjamin I. Page**, Department of Political Science, Northwestern University

Registration Form

Yes. I will attend the conference. Please reserve a place for me.

I will need information about hotels.

Name _____

Organization or School _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

For more information contact:

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Note: Conference will be held in Room 1E, Norris Center, 1999 S. Campus Drive, Evanston Campus, Northwestern University. Space is limited. If you wish to attend, please respond by May 1, 2000. You may fax your registration to 847-491-9916.