



## Pacific Chapter of American Association for Public Opinion Research

*Bringing together professionals  
in public opinion and  
survey research in the western  
United States*

### The PAPOR Trail

Conference Issue | December 2015

### President's Letter



As my year as PAPOR president comes to a close, I'd like to ruminate on a recent *New Yorker* article that gave me pause. Author Jill Lepore lays out a sort of doomsday scenario about polling, questioning whether current sampling methods are really representative, whether election forecasting is important, and whether polling is even good for democracy. It is a deeply researched and nuanced article and should make us all think twice about the assumptions we take for granted.

flawed, that mixed mode methods are flawed, that data science doesn't have all the answers, that researchers are not transparent about their methods, and that therefore measuring public opinion may be bad for democracy and may not be important anyway—is her failure to see public opinion research through a wider lens, beyond its execution failures.

express their will, but what are the other avenues for expression?

According to a Dec. 7 Pew Research Center survey, 76 percent of Americans (including 76 of *both* Democrats and Republicans) say that money has a greater influence on politics than ever before. Among the many arguments in favor of polling its role as a counter-vailing force against special interests

For instance, is public opinion research really only about elections? Voting is one way for the people to

*Continue on Page 2*

However, I did not find an answer in Lepore's article to the fundamental question about whether measuring public opinion is important. She asks this question in several ways, but ends up pointing to methodological and historical polling flaws and declining trust in polls as justification for why it might be bad for democracy. She seemingly guides the reader to her answer by laying out a scenario for the co-founder of CrowdPac, Steve Hilton, in which a perfect measure of public opinion could be provided to a lawmaker before a key policy decision is made. She then quotes the reaction of Hilton: "A worried look crossed Hilton's face... Hilton shook his head. 'You can't solve every problem with more democracy,' he said."

What I found troubling about her bottom line—that traditional methods are

### Message from Conference Chair



Welcome to the 2015 annual conference of the Pacific Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (PAPOR). There are very many aspects to public opinion and polling research that impact the validity and reliability of the data we collect and report. Each of these aspects deserve and, to varying degrees, have received scholarly attention directed toward the goal of achieving a better understanding and continuous improvement. The path towards this goal has

rarely been easy and is frequently fraught with obstacles, like the introduction of new methods and technologies, and shifting demographics, attitudes, and behaviors in the population.

We at PAPOR believe it is through professional gatherings like ours that we learn how to better navigate that path. The coming together and sharing of knowledge about important aspects of public opinion and polling research can enlighten each of us and enable us to improve what we do. At this year's conference events will cover a wide variety of the aspects of public opinion and polling research, and provide many opportunities to gain new knowledge and skills, and network with colleagues old and new.

*Continue on Page 2*

## President's Letter

is, in my opinion, one of the most important.

This goes beyond election predictions and candidate races and speaks to the heart of our democracy. "Providing a voice for the people" is not a cute or passé phrase. In fact, in an era of extreme political polarization and super PACs, it strikes me as a more important objective than ever. It means that leaders in our industry must find solutions to today's polling challenges. When I pick up my

copies of *Public Opinion Quarterly* (POQ), follow the threads on AAPOR-net, meet up for lively discussions with my PAPOR colleagues, read about the latest methodological research being conducted by Pew (and on and on), my faith is renewed.

Thank you for letting me serve as PAPOR president. It has been an honor!

Sonja Petek, President  
2015 PAPOR Executive Council

## Message from Conference Chair

· Scholars in our five well-rounded paper panels and poster session present some very timely research on analysis and design methods, uses and ethics of survey data collection, improvements to survey modes, mobile survey response and design, and recent trends in American politics.

· Our plenary on using big data in public opinion and polling research features three speakers with the expertise and hands-on experience to engage in an exciting discussion about what big data is, how we can use it, pitfalls and issues, and an outlook on the future.

· Instructors of our short courses have a depth of knowledge and experience about two recent developments that are quickly becoming standards in the field: dual-frame cell phone and landline survey design, and

mobile devices and modular survey design.

· Our reception and tasty dinner before our plenary on Thursday, Italian-themed lunch on Friday, and breaks with coffee and snacks throughout the conference provide many opportunities to meet, mingle, and muse with fellow PAPOR members, colleagues, clients, and friends.

I hope you enjoy the conference location, the Marines' Memorial Club & Hotel which was created as a living memorial to service members. While here, I encourage you to visit the General E.O. Ames Library and Museum, located on the 11th floor near our event, but please note that it is a quiet area. Also, if you have the

**For the full conference program, including presenter bios, please visit:**  
[http://www.papor.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2015\\_PAPOR-Conference-Program.pdf](http://www.papor.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2015_PAPOR-Conference-Program.pdf)

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES Austin, Texas

AAPOR 71st Annual Conference  
May 12-15, 2016  
Hilton Austin

WAPOR 69th Annual Conference  
May 10-12, 2016  
Hotel Van Zandt

International Field Directors &  
Technologies (IFD&T) 50th Annual  
Conference  
May 15-18, 2016  
AT&T Executive Education and  
Conference Center



time, try to enjoy all that San Francisco has to offer. Visit our conference registration table to pick up a copy of the *San Francisco Visitor's Planning Guide 2015* for more information, or just to say hello.

Thank you for your attendance and support,  
Benjamin L. Messer  
2015 PAPOR Conference Chair



## PAPOR Annual Student Paper Competition

PAPOR is pleased to sponsor the annual Student Paper Competition to encourage undergraduates and graduate students participation.

Congratulations to the winners of the 2015 PAPOR Student Paper Competition!

### First place winner

Alejandra Gimenez/Joshua Cooper, both undergraduates at Brigham Young University studying Political Science.

*Conflicting Thoughts: The Effect of Information on Support for an Increase in the Federal Minimum Wage Level*

The 1<sup>st</sup> place paper is awarded a cash prize of \$250, a conference registration, up to \$250 for travel expenses to attend the conference, a

honorary one-year membership to PAPOR and a spot at the PAPOR conference to present research.

### Runner-up

Justine Gardner, a PhD candidate from University of Nevada, Las Vegas in the School of Environmental and Public Affairs.

*Exploring the Financial Landscape Facing Veterans in Nevada: Financial Literacy, Decision-making, and Payday Loans.*

The runner up receives a honorary one-year membership to PAPOR and a spot on the PAPOR conference program.

Jessica Gollaher, PAPOR Student Paper Competition Chair, and two volunteers (Paul Johnson and Bianca DiJulio) judged the 2015 paper submissions.

### Socializing before PAPOR Annual Conference, December 9, 2015



## CONFERENCE VENUE



For the third consecutive year, the PAPOR Annual Conference will be held at the Marines' Memorial Club & Hotel, just one block off Union Square at 609 Sutter Street, in the heart of downtown San Francisco. The two-day conference, short courses and AGM will be held December 10-11 on the 11th floor of the hotel.

The Beaux Art-style building enjoys San Francisco's protected landmark status. The Marines Memorial Club was recognized on June 25, 2015 by the California Heritage Council for its uniqueness as a Living Memorial and for efforts to preserve the character and charm of old San Francisco.

PAPOR would like to thank the NorthWest Chapter of the Marketing Research Association (MRA) for extending an invitation to PAPOR members to attend the Bay Area holiday party in the hotel's Leatherneck Restaurant & Lounge on December 9th. We look forward to meeting some of the NorthWest and Southern California (SoCal) MRA members at our PAPOR conference.



*Thank You!*

## 2015 PAPOR CONFERENCE SPONSORS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

Event Registration

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Mid-Morning Break

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Mid-Afternoon Break

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Plenary Dinner Wine

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Plenary Dinner Food

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*Thank You!*

## 2015 PAPOR CONFERENCE SPONSORS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

Event Registration

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Poster Session & Break

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Lunch

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## SPONSORSHIPS

PAPOR offers several levels of corporate sponsorship, providing intimate exposure to both AAPOR and PAPOR members throughout the calendar year.

**Corporate Friend of PAPOR – \$50**  
Company name listed in “Friend of PAPOR” section of website and included in our annual listing.

**Contributing Sponsor – \$250**

All the benefits above plus:

- Logo displayed in printed PAPOR event promotion materials and event signage.
- Company name in all printed PAPOR event promotion materials.
- Contact name in all printed PAPOR event promotion materials.
- Listing on PAPOR website with link to your Company’s website
- National recognition of Company’s PAPOR sponsorship in printed promotional materials for Chapter Reception at AAPOR Annual Conference.

**Donor – \$500**

All the benefits of Contributing Sponsor plus:

- Advertisement in annual conference brochure.
- Named sponsorship of break at annual conference or co-sponsorship of meal.

**Fellow – \$1,000**

All the benefits of Contributing Sponsor plus:

- Advertisement in annual conference brochure

- Named sponsorship of meal at annual conference.
- One complimentary event registration.

**Benefactor – \$2,000**

All the benefits of Contributing Sponsor plus:

- Advertisement in annual conference brochure.
- Named sponsorship of meal & break at annual conference.
- Two complimentary event registrations.

**Champion – \$3,000 (available for only one major event per year)**

All the benefits of Contributing Sponsor plus:

- Headline sponsorship of major event.
- Advertisement in annual conference brochure.
- Named sponsorship of meal & break at annual conference.
- Two complimentary event registrations.

Sponsorships are available on a first-come, first-served basis for the given calendar year in which a sponsorship is received.

*In addition to the annual contribution levels outlined above, applications are currently being accepted for naming rights on our Student Fund Endowment.*

For recognition at our events and in our sponsor directory, your logo art

should be submitted as either JPG or GIF format. Email logo art to the Sponsorship Chair at [sponsorship@papor.org](mailto:sponsorship@papor.org).

In addition to logo art, please provide the following optional information:

- Company name
- Company website address
- Company contact name
- Company contact email

For more information on how your company can support PAPOR in 2016, visit [www.papor.org/sponsorship/](http://www.papor.org/sponsorship/) to download the sponsorship information packet.

### Thanks to PAPOR Sponsors

Thanks to our 2015 annual sponsors for their generosity and support of PAPOR. We love them. Please support their businesses.

**Ciruli Associates**

**Cvent**

**Davis Research**

**Goodwin Simon Strategic Research**

**The Henne Group**

**Issues + Answers Network, Inc.**

**LA Research Inc.**

**LMU/Thomas and Dorothy Leavey**

**Center for the Study of Los Angeles**

**Research Now**

**Southern California MRA**

**SSI**

**Survox Inc.**

**TechSociety Research**



## 2015 PAPOR Executive Council



### **President - Sonja Petek**

Goldman School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley  
pres@papor.org



### **Vice-President/President-elect - E. Paul Johnson**

SSI  
vpres@papor.org



### **Secretary - Jill Bruins**

Bruins Analysis and Consulting  
secretary@papor.org



### **Treasurer - Bianca DiJulio**

Kaiser Family Foundation  
treasurer@papor.org



### **Conference Chair - Benjamin Messer**

Research Into Action  
confchair@papor.org



### **Associate Conference Chair - Paul Harwood**

Twitter  
Confassoc@papor.org



### **Membership Chair - Jennifer Romano Bergstrom**

Facebook  
membership@papor.org



### **Student Paper Competition Chair - Jessica Gollaher**

Public Health Survey Research, Sacramento State University  
StudentPaper@papor.org



### **Councilor-at-Large/Webmaster - Brian Fowler**

CFMC  
webmaster@papor.org



### **Councilor-at-Large (Short Course) - Vasudha Narayanan**

Westat  
shortcourse@papor.org



### **Councilor-at-Large (Sponsorship) - Melinda Jackson**

Department of Political Science, San Jose University  
sponsorship@papor.org



### **Councilor-at-Large (Newsletter) - Donna Fong**

Population Research Laboratory, University of Alberta  
atlarge2@papor.org



### **Councilor-at-Large (Mini Conference) - David Vannette**

Department of Communication, Stanford University  
atlarge4@papor.org



### **Councilor-at-Large (Student Representative) - Jenny Yeon**

Hypothesis Group  
atlarge5@papor.org



### **Immediate Past President - Sarah Cho**

SurveyMonkey  
pastpres@papor.org

## Join PAPOR

### Benefits of PAPOR Membership

By becoming a member of PAPOR, you will receive many benefits:

- Enhance skills by interaction with top research professionals.
- Exchange ideas and knowledge in areas of public opinion research specific to your interest and your clients.
- Keep up-to-date on the legislation affecting our industry.
- Increase exposure for both company and individuals through association involvement.
  - Seminars
  - Conferences
  - Paper presentations
  - Networking
- An opportunity for up-and-coming scholars to showcase their work in our annual student paper competition.
- Receive *The PAPOR Trail*—our Chapter newsletter, which includes the latest information on Chapter and industry news, local educational seminars/ conferences, events, tips of the trade and tools to help you do your job more successfully.

As of November, 2015, PAPOR has 169 members paid through December 31, 2015. The majority of members reside in California (109), Mountain states (16), and the Pacific Northwest states (14). In addition, we have members from Hawaii, ten states outside the PAPOR region, and Canada. Seventy-nine percent of PAPOR members are also current AAPOR members.

## PAPOR Mission

- Educate members about the standards of professional conduct and ethics for surveys and public opinion research.
- Facilitate networking through annual chapter conferences contributing to an environment conducive to the open exchange of information among all members.
- Provide members with the opportunity to enhance their business and research skills.
- Build and maintain membership within the chapter.