

A chapter from

A Meeting Place

The History of The American Association for Public Opinion Research

Edited by
Paul B. Sheatsley
and
Warren J. Mitofsky

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Origins: The Central City Conference

Don Cahalan

We “Central City Survivors” agree that Harry Field, more than any other individual, was the key leader in the founding of the American Association for Public Opinion Research. It was Harry who masterminded the first national conference on survey research that led to the establishment of AAPOR a year later. Because of Harry’s leadership and style, this conference was very much a success despite the fact that it was held in the most improbable of places: Central City, Colorado, forty-two miles over winding mountain roads from Denver, which itself was more than eight long hours by plane from the eastern seaboard, where the survey research organizations were most heavily concentrated. And this was right after the end of World War II, when most research leaders were at their busiest in staffing up and finding the financing to reestablish themselves after five years of war.

Many of those who were around at the time have often said that only Harry could have carried off the conference in a style and spirit that set the foundations of AAPOR as a tolerant, low-keyed meeting ground to bring together the diverse and sometimes mutually antagonistic interest groups concerned with furthering the advancement of survey research. His background and personality were hand-tailored to making the conference a success. Harry, who died at forty-six in a plane crash only four weeks after the Central City conference, was a transplanted Englishman who admired the American spirit fully as much as Lord Bryce did several generations before him. He was educated in English “public” schools, and enlisted in the British Army at the outbreak of World War I, when he was only seventeen. Serving with distinction throughout the war and emerging with the rank of Captain at twenty-one, he became acquainted with Americans while on loan to the American Expeditionary Forces as a combat training officer during the last year of the war. He emigrated to the States soon thereafter to work in New York advertising agencies, where he became a friend of George Gallup when they worked together in the Young & Rubicam advertising agency.

In 1936, just after Gallup had founded the American Institute of Public Opinion, Harry went back to England for a short time to found and direct the affiliated British Institute of Public Opinion. Harry soon missed the broader scope that the United States offered to public opinion researchers, and so he returned to New York in 1939 to start an independent organization, People's Research Corporation. In 1941, when Britain was being pounded by Hitler's air raids and America was on the verge of joining the conflict, Harry's concern about doing more to further the cause of democracy led to his founding the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Denver.

NORC was initially funded by a grant from the Field Foundation (Marshall Field was not a relative of Harry's, but he liked his ideas). As NORC's report on its first forty years summarizes Harry's goals,

he was a man with a mission. That mission was to establish a nonprofit research center, affiliated with a university, that would conduct surveys in the public interest. It would not do market research or even forecast elections. Rather it would attempt to give the people a voice in its political, social and economic decision-making. It would also offer its survey services, on a cost basis, to non-profit organizations and to university social scientists and educators, and it would conduct methodological experiments to improve the art and science of measuring public opinion (NORC, 1982)

It was a mystery to some of Harry's friends why he chose to launch NORC at the University of Denver, then a relatively small church-related private college without great financial resources. Some suspected that the key reason was that Harry thought Colorado's climate might be helpful to his terminally ill wife. Harry had known Caleb Gates, chancellor of DU, at Princeton, and he especially admired Ben Cherrington, director of the Social Science Foundation at DU. The Social Science Foundation was an educational organization that promoted the goals of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which Cherrington had helped to found.

Harry soon found Denver a most hospitable town. He was warmly welcomed by the civic leaders, for his national survey press releases proved helpful in drawing attention to the city and to the University, where enrollment was to increase tenfold with the influx of veterans immediately after the war. But Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese less than two months after NORC's founding, and thus most of Harry's energies for the next four years were devoted to conducting surveys for the government, particularly the Office of War Information,

Office of Price Administration, and the State Department. During those hectic years, he spent as much time in Washington and in NORC's New York office (directed by Paul Sheatsley and primarily devoted to government surveys) as he did in Denver. As soon as the war was over, Harry set about fulfilling NORC's delayed mission of providing training and a laboratory for improving survey research methods. He saw NORC's sponsoring a national conference on survey research as a way to draw attention to the organization's goals, and also as a chance to help improve communication and to impose professional standards among the diverse elements in the growing survey research field.

While Harry clearly had been planning the Central City conference for some time before he brought me to Denver in February 1946 to head up NORC's training activities on a joint appointment with NORC and the University, I don't recall his mentioning his plans to all of us on the staff until almost April. We all were immediately excited over the idea, but we saw many barriers to making it a success. For one thing, the staff members were already up to their ears in supervising the continuing training of a national staff of interviewers and in getting out reports; and I was very much taken up with organizing and teaching a full load of courses in research methods in the behavioral sciences. As I said to Harry, reluctantly: "A great idea, but who would come way out here, when they are all so busy, or broke, and it takes a whole day to get here from New York, and . . ."

"Not to worry," Harry said, his eyes twinkling behind his thick lenses, "I have an intuition about it, and Marshall Field agrees with me that it would be a good way to spend his money."

"But how can you get them to come? Sure, it would be great if you could get these people to talk to each other, but some of them go out of their way to avoid each other."

"Not all that difficult," he said. "Just use a little strategy. First I will get Ted [Gallup's nickname] to agree to come. That will be easy, because he always says 'Yes' to my ideas until his people talk him out of it. As soon as he says 'Yes,' I'll broadcast it to everybody and get them to thinking that if they don't come, they might be talked about. Besides, they can combine it with a vacation, good trout fishing, splendid mountains, great air. How can we miss?"

Harry was a master at making difficult things work out well, as I had learned soon after arriving in Denver. For instance, one Saturday morning as I was discussing conference plans with Harry in his study, his visiting nephew, a shy, pale English lad who had been trying to mow the

lawn, came in with downcast eyes, saying, “Puddy [Harry’s jut-jawed, underslung English bulldog] keeps nipping me hinder!”

Harry patted the boy on the shoulder and said, “There, there, we’ll fix that. She just wants to do her part!” Whereupon Harry tied a stout cord to Puddy’s collar and the other end of the cord to the front of the lawnmower, and the bulldog proceeded to trudge a straight line down the lawn with the boy guiding the lawnmower in her wake.

We all soon shared Harry’s enthusiasm for sponsoring a national survey research conference, for the first postwar year was a time of infectious optimism throughout the country. The defeat of Hitler and Tojo and Mussolini, and the emergence of the United Nations, meant to us the triumph of democracy, and the Cold War was not yet upon us. The war had accelerated the growth of sample surveys, and it would be most timely to capitalize on the wartime cooperation between academics and survey practitioners by bringing them together again to reminisce and to discuss research issues in a relaxed, vacation-style setting.

We agreed with Harry that a conference would be a healthy way to bring about better cooperation and reduce tensions among various research camps on such issues as probability versus quota sampling and open-ended versus structured interviewing techniques. Harry also sensed that this time of optimism provided an opportunity to restructure people’s thinking about the importance of survey research to the country’s welfare. The universities were filling up with bright veterans on the GI Bill, and earnest professors were talking excitedly about the opportunities for breaking down the barriers between previously hid-bound behavioral science departments. Also, infectious optimism about the usefulness of survey research had spread to government agencies and private business and foundations, thus raising our hopes that we could have more confidence in a bright future for surveys in general.

Many of us shared a missionary’s hope that surveys could provide a mechanism to reform some of the shortcomings of the reductionist behavioral science disciplines, which had largely ignored survey research methods before World War II. As can be inferred by reading between the lines of Link’s retrospections (1947) on psychologists’ role in pre-World War II marketing and advertising surveys, there had been a reductionist reliance on so-called “representative samples of typical undergraduates” in the 1920s and 1930s. And among sociologists in those days, many who considered themselves methodologically sophisticated thought that it was perfectly all right to study the interrelationships between variables in nonrepresentative samples with the assumption that the relationships would be similar to those found in truly

representative samples. Even the Division of Program Surveys within the Department of Agriculture, which became a front-runner in the advocacy of true “probability” samples in the closing days of World War II, had been using relatively crude quota or interviewer-judgment samples just two years earlier.

Prior to the war, there had been relatively little contact between the academic community and early market research and election polling organizations. As recounted by Archibald Crossley (1957), marketing surveys in the 1920s and 1930s were conducted primarily by people in subdepartments within advertising agencies, and their backgrounds were in business and journalism rather than in the social sciences. However, during World War II, people such as Gallup, Roper, and Crossley, who had just begun to publish the results of national surveys of social issues and election forecasts, found themselves joining forces with people from the universities in conducting surveys for the government on civilian and military morale, and on such issues as rationing and other wartime controls.

The spirit of cooperation between academicians and survey practitioners of the wartime years was now threatened by conflicts over methods, and competitiveness over government and foundation survey contracts and grants. Since Harry Field was widely acquainted with many academics and commercial survey people, he was in an excellent position to sponsor a conference that could bring about better understanding and mutual tolerance among the various interests.

Engineering the Conference

While I served as the general coordinator for the conference, and the other staff members (especially Gordon Connelly, Herbert Hyman, Paul Sheatsley, and Anne Schuetz Zanes) contributed many suggestions, most of the planning and delicate negotiations were engineered by Harry himself. It was amazing how quickly the whole thing was arranged, even though Harry was almost blind during the last two months before the conference because of a detached retina. (A painful operation restored his vision just a few days before the beginning of the conference in late July.)

Harry’s planning for the conference was a tribute to his flair for showmanship; it was also based on familiar survey research techniques. On April 8, he sent a letter to eighty-seven persons prominent in the survey field, including academic and government researchers sug-

gested by the members of his advisory board. This board included Hadley Cantril of Princeton, and Gordon Allport and Samuel Stouffer of Harvard. Stouffer had been head of the War Department's survey research branch during World War II. The letter included the names of all the addressees, and a questionnaire asking for preferences among a dozen topics for discussion, for additional suggestions on conference content, and for names of other persons who might wish to attend. As bait, it said glowing things about the Central City locale:

Late July—29th through 31st—seems like the time, and the Teller House, in Central City, Colorado, the place. This is the fabulous inn the mining millionaires built, where a pavement of silver blocks was laid for President Grant to walk on from stagecoach to hotel entrance. It has the original "Face on the Barroom Floor," too.

Today, Central City is an hour's drive from downtown Denver, and Denver is only eight hours by air from New York and four and a half hours from Los Angeles. The scenery and climate of the Mile-High State is unsurpassed in July and August.

Responses to the first letter helped to swell the final invitation list sent early that summer to 264 persons who represented a wide range of those potentially interested in such a conference. Those invited included the leaders of survey agencies and their clients, many academicians who had some acquaintance with surveys, and representatives of government agencies and of the press and radio. Such a list would seem small today, now that AAPOR's membership has grown to more than a thousand; but the 264 who were urged to attend included everybody, down to the level of junior research analysts, whose names turned up through Harry's dragnet inquiry.

A final follow-up letter was sent out from Denver on June 28, including a folder put out by the Central City Opera House Association, with Harry's plea, "Don't be alarmed by the prices mentioned in this brochure, as they are Opera Festival prices. During the conference, Teller House rooms will cost not more than \$4.00 for a single and \$6.00 for a double." Only after arrival did the guests learn that there were no private baths, occasioning Robert Harvey's famous crack that he wished there were "less history and more plumbing."

Extraordinary efforts were exerted to make conferees feel welcome, including assigning each NORC staff member to seek out specific individuals, answer their questions, and tend to their wants (such as vacation arrangements after the conference). Each conference session was covered by one or two staff members, plus a stenographer who took

notes that were later used to write up the proceedings. At the beginning of the conference, Harry distributed detailed memos to the chairs of the eleven sessions. These memos noted that there would be only one session at a time so that everyone could attend all sessions; and also that sessions would be two hours in length with at least that much time in between, so that there could be at least thirty to forty-five minutes of discussion followed by a five-minute summary by the chairman (or his designate) of the sense of that meeting.

Most conference participants who came by plane or train were met by a staff member and driven to Central City in ample time before the beginning of the three-day meeting on July 29.

Harry helped to promote an informal conference atmosphere by encouraging several bits of “Western-hospitality” showmanship dreamed up by staff members. These included individual rustic wooden badges with the name of the conference participant burned into the wood in a cattle-brand script (by Jacqueline Pindell Wiseman, then NORC editorial assistant and now professor of sociology at the University of California at San Diego). Harry himself wore a vivid red plaid shirt and encouraged staff members to wear blue jeans and boots or moccasins. The *pièce de résistance*, though, was probably the doleful burro who was led and prodded up and down the street in front of the Teller House and Opera House by a couple of NORC staff women dressed in unaccustomed cowgirl blue jeans, boots, chaps, bandannas, Stetsons, and six-guns. The burro was a great hit with the Easterners at the conference, although he lost much of his following when he began leaving “calling-cards” on the street behind him.

As the NORC *Sampler* newsletter sent out to NORC interviewers and staff members a week after the conference reported, the

keynote of the conference atmosphere was the friendly informality. [The] majority of pollsters had rooms in the Teller House, famous hotel of the 1860 boom town. The rich and elaborate, though old, furnishings compensated somewhat for the limited facilities in other lines. Conducive to getting to know one another were the lines that formed each morning at the restricted number of plumbing units . . . a bathroom for about every twenty-five rooms. Despite this aspect of “roughing it,” most of the men had their shaves before the morning panel meetings . . . The forty-two miles distance between Denver and Central City provided about a twenty degree difference in temperature. Mountain showers each afternoon added to the cool comfort of the conference scene. Open houses, tours to Mount Evans, Echo Lake, Idaho Springs and other nearby mountain resorts, hikes out of Central City, and walking tours of historical local spots were worked in between panel sessions.

But that newsletter failed to mention the sometimes night-long diversions the conferees managed for themselves, including poker sessions, and singing and whiskey-drinking soires in which holdover singers from the just-completed Central City opera season joined in the merrymaking. Forty years later, the “Central City Survivors” fondly reminisce about such scenes as Harry Field in his pajamas groping his near-sighted way at dawn into a room filled with smoke and card-players, grumbling, “Can’t anyone get any sleep around here?”; and on how Wilfrid Sanders (of the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion) was ready to throw a chamber pot at late-night carollers beneath his window until they broke into a chorus of “Annie Laurie,” to which no good Scotsman could object.

A number of strangers were led to abandon their prejudices against each other in the course of such activities. For example, after Morris Hansen of the U.S. Census Bureau got at the piano and played rather good ragtime and boogie-woogie, and shared drinks with the singers, the commercial researchers came to perceive him as a regular guy instead of as someone who was threatening to push expensive probability sampling down their throats.

The Conference Participants

The conference proceedings published by NORC that fall enumerate seventy-three attendees, of whom thirty-six were formally listed as speaking on one or more of the eleven panels. The seventy-three fell into the following classifications as to principal or most recent occupation:

Media (radio, newspapers, magazines; this was before the age of television)	19
Academics (including a few graduate students)	18
Commercial research	13
Nonprofit research organizations (mostly NORC staff)	11
Government employees	7
Advertising agencies	3
Others	2

Twenty-five were from the Denver area, including several representatives of local newspapers and radio stations (Harry saw to it that the conference got a lot of media coverage). Twenty-six were from the Eastern seaboard; fourteen came from between Denver and the Eastern seaboard; four were from west of Denver; and four were from foreign

countries (Laszlo Radvanyi, director of the Scientific Institute of Mexican Public Opinion, from Mexico City; Wilfrid Sanders, director of the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion; Stuart Dodd, professor of sociology at the American University, Beirut; and Arne Okkenhaug from the Norwegian State Broadcasting organization).

This attendance of 73 out of 264 invitees almost exceeded Harry Field's optimistic hopes, considering the isolated locale of the conference with attendant expensive travel, and the fact that in that summer of 1946 so many potentially interested persons were extremely busy re-establishing their own businesses or university connections in the aftermath of the war. And survey research in those days had such a slender economic toehold that relatively few could really afford the expense of attending such a conference. True to his promise, George Gallup came and participated actively throughout, but several other leading directors of national survey organizations could not come, including Elmo Roper (though he sent Julian Woodward, his vice president) and Archibald Crossley (who reluctantly cancelled his reservations because his mother had died just before the conference). Nobody came from the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, which Rensis Likert was busy establishing that summer. Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia, who had worked with Harry during the war, did not manage to get there, nor did the academic members of Harry's Board of Trustees, perhaps because they did not think their institutions would consider a public opinion survey conference to be an appropriately academic activity on which to spend scarce travel funds.

After the Central City Conference Proceedings were circulated, it became evident to the social science and commercial research communities that a national survey research association would probably be formed at the meeting the next year in Williamstown. As is discussed in the next chapter, attendance at the Williamstown conference, at which AAPOR was founded, was substantially greater than attendance at Central City.

The Conference Sessions

There were eleven sessions at the Central City conference, and a closing general session. All sessions were reported in some detail in the 109-page report issued by NORC that fall, *Proceedings of the Central City Conference on Public Opinion Research* (1946), priced for participants at \$10 for two copies, in lieu of a registration fee. These sessions are summarized below.

Public Opinion and International Affairs. George Gallup chaired the meeting, in which informal papers were presented by Henry David of Queens College, New York; Stuart Dodd of American University, Beirut; and Wilfrid Sanders, Director of the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion. Topics included the contributions that research on international affairs could make to world peace, and the possible development of an International Barometer of Public Opinion. The tone of the meeting reflected the one-world idealism of the speakers and of the times; but there was some practical discussion of the need for some criteria regarding which types of international research would be most helpful and feasible.

Technical and Ethical Standards in Public Opinion Research. This session was also led by Gallup, along with Clyde Hart (then in the U.S. Office of Price Administration, and soon to succeed Harry as Director of NORC), Julian Woodward of Elmo Roper, and Harry Field. There was a rather candid discussion of the need for self-regulation of standards by an association of survey researchers, some concern over whether it is ethical to withhold survey results that might be injurious to certain groups (Joe Belden told of his dilemma over whether to publish results from his Texas Poll revealing that gubernatorial candidate Rainey was especially popular with blacks), and the need to guard against the manipulation of surveys (as by politicians) to serve private ends. Woodward emphasized the need for survey researchers to set up a committee to promulgate standards; this was adopted as one of the recommendations in the closing session, and implemented (after some acrimony) the following year at the Williamstown meeting at which AAPOR was founded.

Interviewing Problems. Chaired by Donald Murphy of *Wallace's Farmer and Iowa Homestead* the other participants being Jack Maloney of the *Reader's Digest*, Paul Sheatsley of NORC, and Nancy Cooley of the Chicago Certified Interviewers Association. This was largely a bread-and-butter practical discussion of issues of selection, training, and supervision of field interviewers; problems of potential interview falsification or bias; and which modes of interviewer compensation were most effective. By the time of the Central City conference, most major survey organizations were already selecting and training their interviewers through in-person contact rather than by mail, but the discussion evidently contributed to a number of organizations' intensifying their quality-control efforts in recruitment and supervision.

Local (City or State) Survey Problems. Chaired by Henry Kroeger of the Iowa Poll, joined by Joe Belden of the Texas Poll and Lloyd Borg

of the Minnesota Poll. Participants eventually concluded that while all of these local polling organizations were patterned after the Gallup Poll with respect to the ways in which they prepared newspaper releases on issues of the day—particularly political issues and election forecasts—they were in a much better position to influence public thinking and spark remedial action in their own areas than were most national polls.

Validity in Public Opinion Surveys. H. H. Remmers of the Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People chaired this section, and was joined by Palmer Hoyt, publisher of the *Denver Post*, and Herbert Hyman of the New York office of NORC and Brooklyn College. Semantic problems (especially the need to avoid words loaded with surplus meaning) were discussed. So was the issue of how to overcome the impression that most survey research findings are ipso facto “validated” by virtue of the fact that it is possible to predict most presidential elections accurately. (This was two years before all of the major national polls mis-predicted the outcome of the 1948 election.) While the discussion was a rather elementary one by latter-day standards, Hyman did stress the need for an emphasis on construct validity, or tests of the congruence of survey findings not only with overt behavior but with other relevant attitudes and values.

Sampling Problems. Chaired by Morris Hansen of the Bureau of the Census, with discussants including Norman Meier of the University of Iowa (technical consultant to the Iowa Poll and a long-time friend of Gallup’s from the latter’s graduate student days), Lucien Warner of *Life* magazine research, and Elmo C. Wilson, Director of Research for the Columbia Broadcasting System. This discussion came at a time when there was a heated controversy in survey circles over the issue of whether it was legitimate to recommend to one’s research clients the application of “quota sampling” (entailing the exercise of interviewer judgment of whom to interview in filling quotas in terms of age, sex, and socio-economic status), when “probability sampling” (random assignment of respondents within established strata) was being advocated by those responsible for statistical standards for the U.S. government. Since the primary users of the newer probability samples (including representatives of the Survey Research Center at Michigan) did not attend the conference, Hansen stood virtually alone when he marshalled the classic textbook arguments that no true statements of statistical reliability can be made if sample selection is not demonstrably random. Although the discussion was fairly polite, the speakers largely spoke past each other rather than reaching a meeting of minds. The lack of communication may have come about in part because most

survey organizations had not yet converted to the much more expensive probability methods, because they were afraid that their clients would be unwilling to pay the extra costs. However, the discussion was a useful one. It tweaked the consciences of some prominent researchers about their research standards. It also reminded the advocates of probability sampling that they could improve their ways of selling their concepts to other researchers, and could do a better job of simplifying probability sampling procedures so as to cut costs. As is reported in later chapters, within a few years after the Central City conference all major survey organizations had adopted probability sampling, thanks to the struggles over sampling within AAPOR during the next few years, and to the U.S. government's imposition of sampling standards in grants and contracts.

Public Relations Research. Chaired by Dilman Smith of Opinion Research Corporation, joined by Lt. Comdr. Paul Berkman of the Navy's Office of Public Information and Edward Whittlesey, director of public relations for the University of Denver. This panel discussed the problems of the public relations practitioner in establishing good two-way communications between his clients and the general public, and how the practitioner might avoid being caught in the middle.

Wording and Order of Questions. This panel was chaired by Floyd Ruch of the University of Southern California, whose primary discussants were Theodore Lenz of Washington University, St. Louis; Laszlo Radvanyi, director of the Scientific Institute of Mexican Public Opinion; Jack Elinson of the Troop Attitude Research Branch of the War Department (now emeritus professor of Public Health at Columbia), who discussed the use of Guttman scales in minimizing question bias, and Valerie Tamulonis, graduate student at the University of Denver. This panel discussed a number of recent studies that had been conducted by NORC and others on the effects of such elements as loaded question wording, ambiguity, and the influence of order of questions or alternatives within a question. Much evidence was presented that careful attention to the wording and order of questions is crucial to the validity of survey results. There appears to be even less emphasis on wording and order in the professional journals of today than there was then, forty-odd years ago—perhaps because such issues common to the whole field of survey research are considered by some of the newer research analysts as less prestigious than issues specific to their own academic disciplines.

Use of Special Groups. Chaired by Elizabeth Herzog (later Mrs. Ralph White) of the Correspondence Panels of the Bureau of the

Budget, Dave Wallace of *Time*, and Robert Harvey of National Analysts Philadelphia. This discussion dealt with correspondence panels, mail questionnaires to magazine subscribers, and consumer panels. These non-probability-sample modes of research were in special vogue during World War II, when in-person interview surveys were more difficult to conduct. Such panels are still found useful, although they have not often been dealt with in recent AAPOR conferences.

Radio Research. Chaired by Hugh Terry of KLZ, Denver, joined by Allen Miller of the Rocky Mountain Radio Council, Jeanette Sayre Smith, a former researcher at Harvard and Columbia, and Elmo Wilson of CBS. The panel members placed much emphasis on the need for more socially responsible programming—a concern also not unknown in the field of television today.

Newspaper Research. Chaired by Joe Belden of The Texas Poll, with Ralph Nafziger of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism, and Donald Murphy, Editor of *Wallace's Farmer and Iowa Homestead* as the major discussants. They dealt with examples of five types of newspaper research—readership and reader interest studies, readability of copy, content analyses, attitudes toward newspapers' policies or services, and reinterviews of news sources to determine reactions to specific items. All agreed that in order for newspaper research to be most effective, these various types of research need to be closely coordinated.

Looking back at Central City ten years later, Clyde Hart and I noted (1957) that the later AAPOR conference programs put “more emphasis upon broad problems of method, and an equally great increase of emphasis on methods and techniques of analyzing data with, perhaps, less attention to sampling, interviewing, and other procedures involved in data collection. Correspondingly, AAPOR programs have given more and more attention to such basic problems as the determinants of political behavior and the formation of public opinion. At the same time, programs dealing with technical subjects have tended to move on a higher and higher level of sophistication.” It should also be noted that in the immediate postwar days of Central City, there was little interaction between the regular practitioners in survey research and academicians because the latter (with the exception of a few like Lazarsfeld and Stouffer) were just then beginning to get involved in testing behavioral science hypotheses through working with large-scale survey data. Thanks largely to the mediating influence of AAPOR conferences in the exchange of ideas and the readier interchange of the role of academic and practitioner in later generations of researchers, surveys have

come to play an essential role in helping us understand the complexities of human behavior in this latter part of the twentieth century.

Closing General Session and Resolutions

After discussion, the following five resolutions were approved unanimously by the conference participants:

1. It is the sentiment of this conference that a second conference on public opinion research be held in 1947, and that a Continuing Committee of five, elected by this conference, be empowered to make all arrangements for the 1947 meeting.¹
2. This conference favors the creation of a national association of public opinion research organizations, dedicated to the improvement of research standards and to the wider employment of opinion research techniques.
3. This conference delegates to the Committee on Standards, the responsibility of representing it in working with the nucleus committee.²
4. This conference favors the ultimate establishment of an international organization for the encouragement of opinion research on a world-wide scale. This conference expresses its hope that foundation subsidies can be obtained to aid in establishing this world organization. This conference further asks its Continuing Committee to appoint a committee to implement this resolution.
5. The participants in this conference hereby record their earnest appreciation for the pioneering vision of Harry H. Field in creating this first conference of workers in the field of public opinion research and for the effective way in which he and his staff of NORC have planned and carried through the conference program.

1. Harry Field, George Gallup, Julian Woodward, Clyde Hart, and Lloyd E. Borg were elected to serve on the Continuing Committee, which subsequently appointed Stuart Dodd and George Gallup as co-chairmen of a subcommittee to be concerned with international polling problems, particularly the development of a "Barometer of International Security" and the possibility of being of service to the United Nations.

2. Named to the Committee on Standards were: Morris Hansen, Henry David, and Elmo Wilson. The "nucleus committee" referred to consisted of George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and Archibald Crossley, who had announced plans for organizing an association of polling agencies.

Just before the close of the conference, Harry Field voiced a final word of appreciation for the cooperative spirit of all of the participants:

In my opening remarks I said I was awfully happy to see you. Little did I know how happy I was. Having you here has been a tremendous pleasure for me and all of NORC. You have seen for yourselves a team that works. This whole conference and the running of it would have been impossible without the tremendous cooperation that we had, first from members of NORC and then from you. I said at first that it was your conference, and I think it was you that made it a success and it was we who gave the time and place.

Then Julian Woodward adjourned the meeting with this concluding comment: "We all feel Harry has started something here, not for our field of activity alone, but for democracy itself. In passing the resolution of appreciation for his efforts, we did so with our hearts. It is far from the usually perfunctory gesture of thanks for making the conference arrangements and doing its housekeeping. We owe a real debt of gratitude to Harry and NORC for what they have done."

After the Central City Conference

Only a month after the conference, Harry Field was dead. He was killed in an Air France crash at Le Bourget Field outside Paris while he was in Europe to further the creation of an international organization of survey researchers and to get UNESCO to incorporate provisions for public opinion polls in its charter. His close friend, Clyde Hart, took over as director of NORC.

Shocked and saddened by Harry's death, the survey research community nevertheless moved with remarkable swiftness in establishing a national and international survey organization along the lines of Harry's wishes. As related in the next chapter, the public opinion research meeting the following year, in Williamstown, saw the founding of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (with Clyde Hart serving as the first president) and also the World Association for Public Opinion Research. (WAAPOR and AAPOR have traditionally held joint conferences every other year.) Since that time, AAPOR has grown to more than a thousand members, and its yearly conferences draw huge numbers of researchers in comparison to the seventy-three at Central City. But over the years since Central City, the leadership of AAPOR has managed to preserve much of the spirit of informality and

openness to new ideas that characterized that first national meeting four decades ago.

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