Newspapers to YouTube
Audience-Media Interaction in a New Information Environment

By John D. Loft
Conference Chair

This issue's *President's Column* speaks to a number of issues related to media exposure in our rapidly evolving technological environment. For those seeking to shape public opinion as well as for those seeking to learn about recent events, this environment offers an astounding array of forums in which to share information, offer commentary, and further positions on key issues. The capability of immediate interaction within virtual communities has blurred the distinction between speaker and audience -- those exposing and those exposed to media -- in ways that challenge both the conceptual models of media exposure and opinion formation and the methods of measuring these concepts.

This year's conference theme is "Newspapers to YouTube: Audience-Media Interaction in a New Information Environment." Our intent is to encourage research about the consequences of new communication options on opinion formation and exchange. The following questions are suggestions intended to generate thoughts on possible research topics. As always, MAPOR welcomes abstracts on any or all aspects of the theme, as well as any topic relevant to public opinion research, theory, or methodology.

How do those seeking to influence opinion use different media to target audiences? What are methods of keeping track of exposure to new modes of media exposure?

How do audiences evaluate content in different media? Are some forms viewed as more reliable than others? Are there differences in audience involvement or reaction to media exposure based on demographic or other characteristics?

How do audiences choose their own exposure to media? Does the variety of media formats encourage exchange of numerous positions or insulation of virtual communities repeating familiar content?

Again, MAPOR welcomes research proposals addressing any aspects of the theme or other topics relevant to public opinion research, theory, or methodology.

As in recent years, MAPOR encourages proposals for panels of papers on similar topics. If you plan to propose a panel, please submit your proposal along with a complete list of participants.

The conference will be November 16-17, 2007, at the Radisson Hotel & Suites, Chicago.

Please submit abstracts as electronic attachments in MS Word or PDF format via e-mail to mapor2007@rti.org. If you are unable to send attachments, send the abstract by regular mail to:

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All abstracts must be received no later than **June 30, 2007, 5pm CDT**. The details are on the Call for Papers.

We are also holding our tenth MAPOR Fellows Student Paper contest (see the Student Call for Papers). Each paper is thoroughly reviewed by top public opinion scholars in our field.

Finally, please consider making your hotel reservations early, and plan to take advantage of the special MAPOR rate. If you make your reservations through the hotel and use the MAPOR rate, you'll help us meet our room guarantee and help us control the costs of the conference. I hope to see all of you at the 2007 MAPOR conference.

Media Exposure:

A Central, Often Ill-Measured Concept in Research

By David Tewksbury
MAPOR President

In early April of this year Nielsen Media Research announced that it was implementing a plan to track television viewing that takes place outside of the home. In doing so, Nielsen is joining Arbitron, which has begun a rollout of its own technology for tracking out-of-home viewing.

A recent report from Arbitron reported that 35% of 2506 respondents in a national survey reported viewing television outside of the home in the previous week. Nielsen now measures whether audiences watch a television program and its advertisements at the time of broadcast or at a later, time-shifted, point.

Nielsen also has an affiliate organization, NetRatings, which maintains a panel of Internet users to track audience use on that medium, as well.

I call our attention to these developments to observe that these national ratings companies are attempting to adjust their audience measurement to keep pace with the changing national media environment. They can see that with more content choices and delivery platforms available to the American audience every year, their positions as the experts on what people do with the media is being severely challenged.

Is the public opinion field keeping pace with these companies? Are we rising to the challenge, as well? I am not so sure.

Whether we often acknowledge this or not, MAPOR has traditionally been a place where public opinion researchers have shared a central interest in the measurement of media and audiences.

Indeed, I have long thought of MAPOR as being comprised, in large part, of the members of AAPOR most concerned with the relationship between public opinion and media use. Thus, the question of whether we measure media use accurately and meaningfully is perhaps more relevant for us than for most of our colleagues on the national level.

Many of us will admit that we often fall short of our ideals when we get to the part of our research that assesses media exposure. The survey research experts among us have been assessing and battling the challenges posed by new telecommunication technologies that threaten the validity of our samples, but those of us who care about media use have not yet staged a sustained rally to identify and address how the changing media environment may be affecting our measurement. This is something we sorely need to do.

I see two broad issues we need to consider. The first is whether we are developing and applying concepts relevant to media use that reflect the experiences of Americans today. I see this problem in my own writing when I find myself using media "exposure" and "use" as almost synonyms. I am not sure that is a good idea.

This problem is symptomatic of an imprecision about what matters for the audience (user?). Is it acquisition of content that matters or is there more to media use in the current environment? Certainly, the answer will depend on the theory and context we are discussing, but I am not at all sure we always have a good handle on the distinctions in our work.

The second issue is one of measurement. Even when we are precise in our concepts, I think that our measures of media use are pretty blunt. We measure exposure in days, hours, or minutes, and we often measure attention on some level, but that seems to leave a lot of the experience of media use untapped.

I think there is likely quite a

MAPOR Seeks Officer Nominations

The MAPOR Board is seek-ing nominations for two officers in 2006-2007. The officers that will be elected are Vice President/President Elect and Program Chair. The Vice President/President Elect assists with the Board's decision-making process and becomes president of MAPOR in the subsequent year. The program co-chair assists the program chair in the subsequent year. MAPOR elections are held in the fall. New officers as-sume their duties following the year's conference in November. Nomina-tions should be e-mailed to:

David Tewksbury
President -- MAPOR
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MAPOR's Agendas from 1977 to 2005:
Subjects, Institutions, Organizations and People

By David Weaver and Yue Tan -- *Presented at the 30th anniversary annual meeting of the Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research, Chicago, Illinois, November 17-18, 2006.   Chicago, Illinois, November 17-18, 2006.*

The Scope of MAPOR's Agenda— Number of Papers Presented

Table 1 shows that the average number of papers presented per year has increased by nearly three-fold from 1977-80 to 2001-05, from 36 to 83, and the preliminary program for this year (2006) shows a total of 115 papers by my count, which may be an all-time high for MAPOR.

In many time slots for this year's (2006) meeting, there are four concurrent sessions, whereas there used to be only two or three, and a poster session with 13 papers has also been added, which is a fairly new development.

In fact, the notable increase in number of papers from the 1980s to the 1990s led to the scheduling of three concurrent sessions for the first time in 1991 by program co-chairs Rob Daves and Paul Lavrakas.

In 1995, the number of concurrent sessions was expanded to four for the first time, which was possible by the remodeling of the Radisson mezzanine to include four meeting rooms instead of the three on the mezzanine of the old Sheraton Plaza.

The first poster session of MAPOR was also scheduled in 1995, as was the first plenary session, both initiated by program chairs Ellen Dran and Fiona Chew.

So there is no doubt that the agenda of papers presented at MAPOR has expanded greatly in the past 30 years.

Has this expansion in numbers changed the agenda of subjects of the papers?

MAPOR's Subject Matter Agenda

Table 2 shows the percentage of papers in each time period that focused on different subjects, with percentages of 10 or more in boldface type.

These percentages suggest that there has been a shift over time away from a focus on public opinion, elections and media to new media and new technology issues and to political participation and media effects, and also to the testing of theories. These trends are even more apparent in Table 3, which contains the rankings of the various subject categories of MAPOR papers over time.

It's clear from this table that public opinion research methodology has been the most popular topic of papers across the entire 30 years of MAPOR's existence, except for the first decade when it was essentially tied with public opinion, elections and media. But this second place topic of public opinion and elections became less salient beginning in the middle 1980s, as studies of media effects and theory testing became more numerous.

Studies of political participation also became more numerous in the 1990s, but dropped back to pre-1990s levels after the turn of this new century.

And studies of new media and new technology became more numerous in the last half of the 1990s, but dropped somewhat in the first half of this present decade.

Overall, then, public opinion research methods, elections and media, and new media/technology were the most common topics of MAPOR papers for the past 30 years, but media effects, theory testing, and the formation seem to be on the rise.

MAPOR'S Institutional Agenda

Table 4 shows the ranking of educational institutions in terms of number of papers presented from 1977 to 2005. It's clear that there has been a shift in rankings before and after 1990.

Before 1990, in the first half of MAPOR's existence, the most visible schools were Cleveland State with 46 papers, Indiana with 45, Michigan State with 30, and then Ohio State and Wisconsin with 29 each.

From 1990 to 2005, Wisconsin rose to first place, followed by Ohio State, Southern Illinois, Cleveland State, and Michigan. Indiana fell from second to sixth place, and Michigan State fell from third to 11th place in the rankings.

Nevertheless, all these institutions are solidly Midwestern, reinforcing the Midwestern character of MAPOR, although some schools outside the Midwest, such as Syracuse, Tennessee, Middle Tennessee, Colorado State, and Cornell have become quite active in MAPOR.

MAPOR's Organizational Agenda

Tables 5 and 6 indicate that in addition to academic institutions, commercial organizations have also contributed significantly to MAPOR over the years, with the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* leading the list, thanks to the efforts of Rob Daves, followed by

MAPOR's Agendas . . . .

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Market Opinion Research, thanks mainly to Cecile Gaziano, and other prominent public opinion organizations such as Gallup and Nielsen. In addition to public opinion organizations, there have been contributions from other media organizations such as the *Chicago Tribune* and *CBS News*. This mix of commercial and academic contributions has been one of the hallmarks of MAPOR (and AAPOR) from the beginning, and it enriches the programs by maintaining a focus on practice as well as theory.

MAPOR's Personal Agenda

Table 7 shows the ranking of individual scholars in terms of number of papers authored or co-authored, and here we see that the bulk of the most productive paper presenters have hailed from Midwestern universities such as Northwestern, Cleveland State, Southern Illinois, Ohio State, Wisconsin, Indiana, Minnesota, Illinois and Iowa, reinforcing the Midwestern character of MAPOR. But other schools from Kentucky and Tennessee are also represented in the top third of this list, giving MAPOR a bit of Southern flavor as well.

Conclusions

This brief look at the programs of MAPOR from 1977 to 2005 suggests that the number of papers presented annually at MAPOR meetings has grown dramatically, from about 36 to more than 80 per year (and more than 100 this year); that the subject matter of these papers remains mainly research methodology, public opinion and elections, new media or new technology, political participation, and media effects, with an increase in theory testing; and that the institutions and people who have been most active have come mainly from Midwestern universities and organizations.

Based on this preliminary analysis of nearly 30 years of MAPOR programs, it seems that this organization has maintained its focus on public opinion research and the Midwest very consistently, while at the same time becoming a bit more theoretical and growing to accommodate more presenters and some additional topics, such as media effects and new media and technology issues.

In short, the organization has lived up to the expectations of the original founders such as F. Gerald Kline, Donna Charron, George Bishop, Arlene Ruksza, Gene Telser, Doris Graber and Sidney Kraus, who wanted it to be a Midwest Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and ". . . to stimulate research and study in the field of public opinion and social behavior; to facilitate the dissemination of research methods, techniques and findings through annual conferences . . .; to promote the use of public opinion research in democratic policy formation; [and] to encourage the development of professional standards . . . ."

In an April 1980 survey of the MAPOR membership conducted by Gene Telser mailed to 128 members and attendees of the 1979 conference, the most common answer to what they liked best about the conference was the small size of the meeting and its informality and opportunities for interaction.

Given the dramatic growth in the number of papers presented at MAPOR meetings, it will be a challenge to maintain this atmosphere in the future, but let's hope it can be done. We all have plenty of larger, more formal meetings to attend each year.

Tables Appear on Pages 5-9

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bit more we can do to assess why and how people use a medium or source. What is more, the rapid pace of change in content and technologies often has us playing catch-up. New measures of media use could have us better prepared to stay current with changes as they occur. It is time we apply such measures.

The conference theme this year is intended to motivate and inspire researchers to think about how we conceptualize and measure media use. A sustained effort by the public opinion field to question and improve how we think about these issues can lead to a new understanding of the relationships between audiences, media, and other citizens.

I invite you to submit abstracts on the conference theme or some other topic of interest to you. You might also encourage your colleagues and students to submit abstracts on the theme or any other MAPOR topic. I look forward to talking with you in Chicago this year.

MAPOR's Agendas (Tables). . . .

Table 1. Number of Papers Presented at MAPOR, 1977-2005

	Total number	Average number per year
1977-1980	144	36
1981-1985	191	38
1986-1990	229	46
1991-1995	316	63
1996-2000	304	61
2001-2005	414	83
Total	1598	55

Table 2. Subject Matter of Papers Presented at MAPOR, 1977-2005 (Percentages)

Subject Categories	77-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-00	01-05	Total
Methodology of Public Opinion Research	**15.3**	**16.8**	**18.8**	**27.9**	**21.2**	**15.9**	**19.3**
Public Opinion, Elections, Media	**15.3**	**18.9**	9.6	8.5	**11.7**	6.5	**11.8**
New Media or Technology Issues	4.9	**13.6**	8.3	**12.8**	**19.3**	**11.8**	**11.8**
Public Opinion, Politics, Participation	8.3	7.9	9.6	**13.9**	**14**	**11.1**	**10.8**
Investigating Media Effects	4.5	6.9	**16.6**	**13.8**	**10**	**14.3**	**11**
Public Opinion and Policy Issues	8.5	9.9	8.7	5.2	5	2.4	6.6
Public Opinion Formation	5.6	8.4	9.6	3.8	7.4	**12.1**	7.8
Theoretical Testing	3.5	3	**11.4**	8.5	**10.7**	**15.7**	8.8
Opinion Research in Health Issues	3.2	2.8	7.4	6.2	5.3	3.9	4.8
Professional Journalism or Journalists	3.2	2.6	4.9	5.1	4.7	2.2	3.8

Others
Opinion and Education
Newspaper Readership Studies
Media Credibility Studies
Business Issues of News Media
Content Analysis Studies
Analysis of Public Agenda

Table 3. Subject Matter of Papers Presented at MAPOR, 1977-2005 (Rankings)

Subject Categories	77-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-00	01-05	Total
Methodology of Public Opinion Research	1.5	2	1	1	1	1	1
Public Opinion, Elections, Media	1.5	1	5	5.5	4	7	2.5
New Media or Technology Issues	6	3	8	4	2	5	2.5
Public Opinion, Politics, Participation	4	6	5	2	3	6	5
Investigating Media Effects	7	7	2	3	6	3	4
Public Opinion and Policy Issues	3	4	7	8	9	9	8
Public Opinion Formation	5	5	5	10	7	4	7
Theoretical Testing	8	8	3	5.5	5	2	6
Opinion Research in Health Issues	9.5	9	9	7	8	8	9
Professional Journalism or Journalists	9.5	10	10	9	10	10	10

Others
Opinion and Education
Newspaper Readership Studies
Media Credibility Studies
Business Issues of News Media
Content Analysis Studies
Analysis of Public Agenda

Table 4. Number of Papers Presented at MAPOR by Educational Institutions, 1977- 2005

Schools	77-79	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-00	01-05	Total
Wisconsin	4	10	15	32	23	55	139
Ohio St.	8	10	11	9	24	45	107
Southern Illinois	1	1	11	29	20	38	100
Cleveland St.	10	15	21	14	12	11	83
Michigan	5	3	6	19	21	20	74
Indiana	6	15	24	3	8	12	68
Minnesota	5	8	15	13	9	10	60
Chicago or NORC	8	7	6	18	9	9	57
Northwestern	2	7	9	25	6	4	53
Syracuse	7	3	3	12	16	11	52
Michigan St.	3	15	12	3	1	6	40
Tennessee	2	1	3	8	11	9	34
Cincinnati	5	6	4	4	0	13	32
Middle Tenn. St.	-	-	-	8	11	12	31
Iowa	1	3	4	7	0	15	30
Illinois (U-C)	3	7	1	6	6	7	30
Northern Illinois	4	5	4	8	1	2	24
Nebraska-Lincoln	-	-	-	-	-	22	22
Colorado St.		2	7	10	1	1	21
Cornell	-	-	-	-	-	21	21
Murray St.	-	-	-	-	-	15	15

Table 5. Number of Presentations by Non-Academic Organizations at MAPOR, 1977-2005

	Total number	Average number per year
1977-1980	42	10.5
1981-1985	67	13.4
1986-1990	51	10.2
1991-1995	45	9
1996-2000	54	10.8
2001-2005	55	11
Total	314	10.8

Note: The presentations include panel papers, luncheon speeches, and Pedagogy Hour talks.

Table 6. Number of Presentations at MAPOR by Organization, 1977-2005

Organizations	77-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-00	01-05	Total
Minneapolis Star Tribune	0	0	3	6	6	2	17
Market Opinion Research	4	5	1	1	0	0	11
The Gallup Organization	0	2	0	1	3	4	10
Research Solutions, Inc	0	0	1	2	5	1	9
Apogee Market Strategies	0	0	2	6	0	0	8
Nielsen Media/ Interactive Research	0	0	0	0	1	7	8
Market Facts, Inc	3	1	3	0	0	0	7
Chicago Tribune	0	3	0	0	1	2	6
Research Triangle Institute	3	1	0	0	1	1	6
Market Share Corporation	1	2	1	0	0	1	5
Chicago Academy of Sciences	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
American Viewpoint Inc.	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
RTI	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
CBS News	0	0	0	1	1	2	4

Note: The presentations include panel papers, luncheon speeches, and Pedagogy Hour talks.

Table 7. Number of Papers Presented at MAPOR by Individual Scholars, 1977-2005
(only 4 or more listed here)

Name	Count	Name	Count
Paul Lavrakas	46	W. Zhang	9
Leo Jeffres	31	Steve Everett	9
Thomas Johnson	26	Vincent Price	8
Lee Becker	24	Timothy Johnson	8
Allen White	24	C. Armstrong	7
Dhavan Shah	22	Douglas McLeod	7
David Atkin	22	Doris Graber	7
Gerald Kosicki	21	K. A. Rasinski	7
Gary O'Keefe	18	Tony Atwater	6
Kim Neuendorf	18	Fred Fico	6
David Weaver	16	Rob Daves	6
Mark Miller	14	David Domke	6
Phillip Tichenor	13	Tony Rimmer	6
David Tewksbury	13	Julie Andsager	6
Dan Berkowitz	13	Pamela Shoemaker	5
Eric Fredin	12	Wayne Wanta	5
Dietram Scheufele	12	William Elliott	5
David Fan	11	David Pritchard	5
Patricia Moy	11	Robert Wyatt	5
Michael Traugott	11	J. Cho	5
Cecile Gaziano	10	J. D. Miller	4
Jack McLeod	10	Steve Lacy	4
Jean Dobos	9	Jae-won Lee	4
K. Viswanath	9	Lars Willnat	4
Rick Perloff	9	Charles Salmon	4
M. C. Nisbet	9	T.K. Chang	4

Appendix: Examples of Subject Categories—Papers Presented at MAPOR in 2005

Methodology of Public Opinion Research

1. A better correction for non-response bias? The advantages of a mixed mode survey for analysis of and correction for non-response bias using the continuum of resistance. **Alisha Baines**, Minneapolis VA Medical Center; **Michael Davern**, U of Minnesota: **Melissa R. Partin**, Minneapolis VA Medical Center.
2. Implications and consequences of email versus other methods of recruitment for focus group participants. **William L. Rosenberg**, Drexel U.

Public Opinion, Elections, Media

1. Consecrating the bully pulpit: Using presumed influence to model evangelical voting behavior. **Ken Blake**, Middle Tennessee State U; **Marcie Hinton**, Middle Tennessee State U; **David Pernell**, Middle Tennessee State U; **Robert O. Wyatt**, Middle Tennessee State U.
2. The effects of favorability, image, credibility, involvement and party preference on voting intention in the 2004 presidential election. **Terrence L. Chmielewski,** U of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

New Media or Technology Issues

1. Cyber-rule in Pan-Asia: Users' perspectives. **Yong Jin Park**, U of Michigan.
2. The political effects of online information-gathering. **Michael Xenos,** U of Wisconsin-Madison; **Patricia Moy,** U of Washington.

Public Opinion, Politics, Participation
1. Structure or predisposition? Exploring the interaction between discussion orientation and structural features of political discussion on political participation. **Eunkyung Kim**, U of Wisconsin-Madison; **Dietram Scheufele,** U of Wisconsin-Madison**; Jeong Yeob Han**, U of Wisconsin-Madison.
2. Theorizing social capital and civic engagement. **Weiwu Zhang**, Austin Peay State U; **Ellen Kanervo,** Austin Peay State U.

Investigating Media Effects
1. Picturing the Iraq War: Identification of causalities and viewer reaction. **Edmund Lo,** San Antonio College; **Steve Hallock**, Southern Illinois U-Carbondale; **Liliana Serban**, Ohio U; **Hong Ji,** The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey; **Daniel Riffe,** Ohio U.
2. Audience sovereignty and mass communication effects: The need for a new paradigm. **Harold Mendelsohn,** U of Denver.

Public Opinion and Policy Issues
1. Trust in government and freedom of the press. **Bruce W. Hardy,** U of Pennsylvania.
2. Doing unto others as one does unto one's self: exploring the association between support for public censorship and self-censorship. **Jason B. Reineke**, The Ohio State U.

Public Opinion Formation
1. Ethnic and religious diversity in America. **Tom W. Smith**, NORC/U of Chicago.
2. The discursive model of public opinion. **Won Yong Jang**, U of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Theoretical Testing
1. Self vs. (which) others: An examination of how defining others influences third-person perception. **H. Allen White**, Murray State U**; Julie L. Andsager**, U of Iowa; **James T. Crawford**, Murray State U.
2. Who cares about what others think? Moderating factors of the spiral of silence. **Nicole Cann**, Auburn U; **Martha Isom**, Auburn U; **Sei-Hill Kim**, Auburn U.

Opinion Research in Health Issues
1. Assessments of public opinion about cigarette smoking using essay surveys. **David Fan**, U of Minnesota; **Thomas J. Ernste**, U of Minnesota.
2. Cross-national study in danger perception of drug use among youth in 15 Veteran countries of the European Union. **Xiaoming Liu,** U of Nebraska-Lincoln/Gallup Research Center; **David Palmer,** U of Nebraska-Lincoln/Gallup Research Center.

Professional Journalism or Journalists
1. Writing about women: Community and organization determinants of news coverage. **Cory L. Armstrong**, U of Florida.
2. Journalists on polls and public opinion: What are their views? **David Weaver,** Indiana University (in 2003).

Conference Committee Members Sought

Volunteers are being sought to serve on MAPOR's Conference Committee. Four committee members would help at the MAPOR conference registration desk, one would assist during the conference luncheon and keynote address, and two would ensure technology is working properly during paper and panel sessions.

Students are particularly encouraged to participate.

Those who are interested in serving on the Conference Committee should contact:

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