

Introducing the Newsletter

The Survey Research Laboratory has grown at a phenomenal rate during this past year, its first full year of operation. From a group of less than ten people at the start of the year (who saw each other so often that they could hardly bear it) the Laboratory has grown to at times over fifty people, many of whom do not even know all of the other people in the same section.

In addition, there are between 175 and 200 interviewers scattered over the state, who only know what is going on when they are called upon to work on a particular study.

Some form of communication is clearly needed so that everybody can have a broader understanding of what the Laboratory is doing and of where their work fits into the general picture. It is the purpose of this newsletter to provide such a means of communication. To this end, the newsletter will try to keep you informed on what studies are going on, what studies were completed, of new personnel in the Laboratory, and of any other items concerning the operations of the Lab that may be of general interest.

We hope to be able to publish this newsletter every two or three months depending on the amount of time available and on the amount of news that has accumulated. There is no particular format for the newsletter and anybody is free to contribute materials, though we cannot, of course, promise that we will publish everything that is received.

Please send any such materials, as well as ideas on what might be included, in the newsletter, to Marilyn Cooney.

We hope that this newsletter will contribute to your understanding of the operations of the Laboratory.

RESEARCH LETTER

Fall, 1966

Number 1

Less Bursting at the Seams

Those who have had to do filing and other work in the hall these past months should be happy to know that the Lab has received more office space.

The new floor plan is:

- 411 - Director
- 414 - Administrative Section
- 417, 418, 421 - Field Section
- 435 - Sampling Section
- 436 - Data Processing
- 437 - Data Repository and
Data Processing

We hope to have more space later on so everyone can work in relative comfort.

Chicago, Here We Come

The time has come to start a branch of SRL on one of the Chicago campuses. This branch would be small at first and would rely on most of our resources here in Urbana.

The function of this branch would be to make the services of SRL more easily available to the two Chicago campuses, and to have a senior staff member in Chicago whose primary task would be to assist faculty members at the University's city campuses in planning and designing surveys. We are now looking for a senior staff member to fill this job.

Criminologist Joins Staff

Why does SRL need a criminologist? Since our internal crime rate has dropped considerably, we really don't need one.

But, Dr. Sarah L. Boggs, who started her appointment with the Lab on September 1, is also a population analyst, and that SRL does need.

Salle has been primarily appointed as a demographer to study social statistics and their relation to population changes and shifts in Illinois. As a research assistant professor in SRL, she will do population analyses for the state, in addition to designing and implementing our informal teaching programs. Later on, Salle will teach credit survey methods courses for us.

SRL will share Salle with the Department of Sociology, where she will be an assistant professor researching and teaching in her areas of special interest--crime and alcoholism.

Salle arrived in Champaign-Urbana in late August (you probably saw the many cartons of books that arrived first) from St. Louis, where she received her B.A, M.A., and Ph.D., in sociology from Washington University. She was also a research associate in their Social Science Institute while doing graduate work.

Her doctoral thesis was a study of urban crime patterns, using a newly created way of calculating crime rates in environments that encourage crime. She has done research on social and personal disorganization, urban environments, and social participation of the aged in society--the last topic was the subject of her master's thesis.

Salle (and her vicious Chihuahua) will live in Urbana, where she has rented a duplex apartment. Her office will be Room 432, DKH, in which she promises to raise plants and other greenery to give SRL a more natural environment. Everyone will probably have a chance to work with her, since one of her first tasks will be to familiarize herself with our four sections.

Two New Research Assistants

Jim Elsesser, who started working for SRL early in July, will now be a research assistant in the Field Section. Jim received his B.S. in industrial administration from the University of Illinois last June and is presently working on his master's. He is an ensign in the U.S. Navy on leave of absence in order to get a master's degree. Coordination of the Hennepin Project is Jim's first assignment as a research assistant.

Paul Winn, who is also working in the Field Section, began working on September 19. Paul received his B.S. in marketing from the University of Illinois last February. He then started working on his master's, also in marketing, after graduation. Paul has had some previous research experience from working with the 3M Company as a junior project analyst and has also assisted Professor Llyod DeBoer of the Department of Marketing on research projects. It takes a little time to learn all the functions of SRL and this is what Paul will be doing the first few weeks prior to being assigned a study.

We wish you both luck and hope you enjoy your stay with us.

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ONGOING STUDIES

Hennepin Study--Recently, the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation broke ground for a steel plant in Hennepin, Illinois. Until recently, this area had been rural, with agriculture and light industry as the occupations of most residents.

The study involving many subject areas such as sociology, anthropology and industrial psychology seeks to measure, and in some ways anticipate, all the changes that will occur as this community goes from a rural, small town to a large, industrial center.

This industrial transition provides an excellent "natural experiment" for study and research of the processes and consequence of industrialization on the social and cultural environments in a rural farm area.

Integrated Advertising--The Civil Rights movement is having an influence on the promotional strategies of many commercial companies. One of these influences has been the use of Negro models in advertisements. An objective of this study on the "Measurement of Negro-White Response to 'Integrated' Advertising," is to see what Negroes and whites think of mixed photographic advertising. We will start on this study in early October.

Librarian Study--In the fall, SRL will be doing a mail survey dealing with the characteristics of professional personnel in academic libraries.

The goals of the study are to get basic information on the current employment, work history, and educational background of college and university librarians, data that so far have not been available. The information will be obtained from a national sample of one out of five professionals in libraries throughout the country.

By obtaining information on librarians, Anita Schiller, project director, feels that knowledge of their qualifications will aid in selecting and training future librarians. The information and research needs of the academic community are so diverse, and place so many new demands on the library, that a detailed analysis of the characteristics of the academic librarian seems important.

FUTURE STUDIES

Studies that have been accepted, but that may not get underway for some time, are:

Anti-smoking Education--The objective of this survey is to identify the psycho-social aspects of the junior and senior high school smoker and the rural youth smoker. Since this appears to be a critical period for getting the smoking habit, a scientifically based smoking education program at the junior high school level seems important.

Oral Language Evaluation Study--This study seeks to assess the impact of an eight-week institute program on the classroom practices and policies of institute participants in the elementary schools.

Survey of Comparative Psycholinguistics--This study is part of a larger project to determine standardized meanings of a large number of words cross-culturally in about 20 countries.

COMPLETED STUDIES

Mental Health Study--Public knowledge and attitudes towards mental health facilities in Macon and Madison Counties were sought on this study that was done for Professor Merlin Taber of the University School of Social Work. A total of 949 interviews were obtained for this study and the results are now being analyzed.

Retired Housing Study--This study investigated the needs of retired faculty, hourly, and nonacademic staff for the Provost's Office. We obtained 669 interviews on this study and the results have been submitted to the Provost for further action.

College Attendance--Another project that was recently completed for the Provost's Office was to determine the present and future education plans for youth 14-22 years old. We were able to get 2,031 interviews (the goal was 2,000). The results are now being prepared for submission to the Provost.

Food Purchasing Study--Glenna Lamkin, director of this study and member of the University's Home Economics Department surveyed the food purchasing habits of families with preschool children. Total interviews obtained were 283, and Miss Lamkin is now doing the analysis.

Religious Living Study--Professor Bernard Lazerwitz, on leave from the Sociology Department, was trying to determine people's religious beliefs and practices. The work we did is part of a larger study in which many families and religious leaders in the state of Illinois will be interviewed.

Who Are the Interviewers and
Where Do They Come From?

This is one of the first questions asked by clients of the Lab. How do you find people who enjoy asking questions of strangers? About two years ago we asked ourselves this

same question. A field staff of 175 part-time interviewers was needed at the Lab's sampling points throughout the state. When a survey was undertaken, competent interviewers had to be readily available at the locations in Illinois where the survey would be made.

The obvious sources for interviewers were newspaper want ads and the Illinois State Employment Service. These proved insufficient since the people needed for this occasional part-time work would probably not read or advertise in want ads. The people we wanted were those who had some time free to work, but who would not need to depend on a steady income. Also, we do not know when surveys will be requested, where they will be done, or how long they will last.

One advantage to interviewing work is that the interviewer can generally set up his own work schedule. With this in mind, the following new sources were used:

School teachers--In each county, the County Superintendent of Schools helped locate interviewers by carrying a description of the need for interviewers in the notices and memos sent to all county teachers. The interviewers obtained from this source had enough free time to work as a part-time interviewer.

University of Illinois Mothers Association--In Illinois there are about 26,000 mothers who are members of this Association. With their children away at school, they have some time available for interviewing. "The Illi Notes," a publication of this Association, is sent to all members four times each year. We have been able to carry notices about the need for interviewers in "The Illi Notes."

Newspaper articles--A number of newspapers in Illinois published articles, prepared by us, about the start of the Lab. Some of the articles also mention the need for part-time interviewers, and many requests for further information were received because of these articles.

In addition to these sources, the following proved to be valuable in locating interviewers:

- Illinois Welfare Association
- National Association of Social Workers
- American Association of University Women
- County Farm Advisors

Local organizations such as women's clubs, JC's, garden clubs, church groups, and TV and radio stations were also a source for interviewers.

The present field staff has been selected from these sources and we are pleased with the personnel. There is, however, a constant need for more interviewers both to replace those who resign and to expand the staff in areas where large surveys are requested. Therefore, we keep looking for more applicants as a matter of policy.

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As a sociology major at a Canadian university visiting both a U.S. campus and a small midwest town for the first time, it was almost inevitable that I would make a few generalizations about this experience. In comparing the University of Illinois with the University of Toronto, I found some rather striking contrasts.

The most apparent feature is the wholly different attitude toward education in the United States. Almost everyone here wants to go to college, and it seems that many actually do get a degree. In the backwoods of Canada, however, only about seven percent of college-age people ever go to a university. Until recently, few women were even slightly emancipated. But the trend is changing; there are now just as many women as men undergraduates at the University of Toronto. Graduate

work is completely different. In addition to our having a very small graduate school, an indication of the Canadian attitude toward education is the solitary graduate dormitory at Toronto—a hallowed, fortress-like building in which no women are permitted, except as dinner guests.

As a "foreign" student visiting your country, I had a chance to see various parts of the University bureaucracy that are really different from those in Canada. The Health Clinic, for instance, is four times the size of the U. of I. Medical Center, but the quality of doctors is not the same. (For instance, the U. of I. doctor who refused to confirm my red spots as German measles because I was not yet covered by the medical plan!)

The U. of I. Housing Office is also much larger and certainly has the student in mind. My rent was only half of what the contract stated. Counseling Service (there is none at Toronto) is so efficient that a counselor managed to prove from a battery of tests that I am concurrently introspective and aggressive.

A major difference is the completely relaxed and informal atmosphere on this campus. Compared with the British school system, this university appears liberal, especially faculty-student relationships. Perhaps this is because the undergraduate regulations here are so antiquated that the administration has to keep things relaxed to prevent a rebellion!

I could continue, but in view of the fact that I may return here again, perhaps it would be best if I stopped now. I really just had to get back at those who considered me a pioneer from the economic wasteland to the north, or an Eskimo from the 51st state.

J. Cummings

Suggestion Box

Most of you have probably seen the suggestion box in the hall outside Room 421. Please feel free to put suggestions or gripes on SRL activities in it. Every suggestion will be considered. If you have an idea and don't know who would be the "proper" person to tell it to to get some action-- drop it in the box.