

BUSH AND GORE VIEWS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEBATED

It wasn't Boston and Jim Lehrer was not there, but the debate that took place on October 5 at the American Association for the Advancement of Science presented some of the same issues discussed at the session earlier in the week. Former House Science Committee Chairman Robert Walker represented the Bush campaign and the Vice President's Domestic Policy Adviser David Beier represented the Gore campaign. Joe Palca of National Public Radio served as moderator.

Beier stressed the Vice President's long interest in and leadership on science and technology issues, which he described as stronger "than [that of] any other presidential candidate in history." He noted Gore's early understanding of the role of information technology on U.S. economic productivity and his work on ozone depletion, defense, and arms control issues. Gore has been "a science and technology oriented Vice-President," Beier declared.

Furthermore, Gore worked on these issues within a framework of fiscal discipline, without which the increases in federal research and development (R&D) funding could not have occurred, Beier remarked. He also noted the "balanced portfolio" approach of the Clinton-Gore administration. Not only have funding increases been proposed in the biomedical research area, he explained, but for other science agencies as well, including the National Science Foundation (NSF), which is on track for a doubling in funding.

When discussing the Human Genome Project, Beier noted that this new technology "must reflect the nation's oldest values" and warned against genetic discrimination practices by insurance companies and others. He concluded his case for Gore by proclaiming that the Vice President had a "horizontal view" on these issues, clearly understanding the connection between science and

(Cont'd on page 7)

DECADE OF BEHAVIOR LAUNCHED ON CAPITOL HILL

On September 25th, the social and behavioral science community launched the *Decade of Behavior* on Capitol Hill. The initiative, designed to take "science to the streets," began more than two years ago and incorporates five major themes:

- A Healthier Nation
- A Safer Nation
- A Better Educated Nation
- A More Prosperous Nation
- A More Democratic Nation

Under the umbrella of these themes, expert behavioral and social scientists will disseminate their research to the public, allow community groups to give feedback, and help retool social outreach programs according to the responses.

"This is going to be a wonderful emphasis, I think, for a full decade," declared Representative David Price (D-NC). Price, who has a Ph.D. in political science, emphasized that there "is a lot going on in political science and in the social sciences and it has tremendous potential for human betterment, to contribute to good public policy, and to enlightened attitudes and behavior on the part of our citizenry." Price also noted that "promoting democracy is one of the emphases of this ten-year program. I think that is entirely appropriate."

Price also read a letter of support from the President (see page 3).

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“Why is the *Decade of Behavior* so important to you and to me and to our country?” asked Rep. Brian Baird (D-WA), co-chair of the newly formed Congressional Health and Behavior Caucus (see story on page 3). “[It] is about giving social science away. By that I mean taking the information that you develop in your research, in your clinical work, in your applied work, in your consulting, and bringing it to the governmental process, to inform governmental decision-making.” Baird emphasized his belief that “if we can apply what we have learned in the behavioral sciences, it is not an exaggeration to believe that we can save this nation billions of dollars over the coming decade. If we apply ourselves well, if we do good research, and if we apply that research to public policy, . . . we’ll have performed a great service to this great country,” he concluded.

In closing, Baird urged the science community to become engaged in the political process. “We cannot afford to have an ivory tower here in Washington, D.C., and ivory towers in our academic institutions. They must communicate with each other, and it’s up to you to do that.”

Exhibits

The September 25th launch featured more than 13 interactive exhibits, each offering a visual

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example of how science can address and reconcile some of society’s ongoing challenges. Exhibits included:

- **Using Human Factors to Build an Efficient and Safe Future Aviation System** by Raja Parasuraman, Professor of Psychology, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC
- **S.E.S., Health and Longevity**, Robert Willis and J. Thomas Juster, University of Michigan
- **Smoking Cessation and Nicotine Dependence in African Americans: A Research Program**, Jasit Ahluwalia, University of Kansas School of Medicine
- **Insights Into Children’s Temperament**, Sandee Graham McClowry, New York University
- **The Learning Sciences Meet Technology**, John Bransford, Vanderbilt University
- **Indian By Birth - The Lumbee Dialect**, Walt Wolfram, North Carolina State University
- **Improving Mathematics Teaching and Learning**, Thomas P. Carpenter, University of Wisconsin, Madison
- **Market Principles of Price Discovery**, Charles Plott, California Institute of Technology
- **Youth and Civil Society**, Constance Flanagan, The Pennsylvania State University
- **Integrating Behavioral Research and Teaching: The Case of Crime and Punishment**, Kent Portney, Tufts University
- **Social Networks and the Use of Treatment Systems**, Bernice Pescosolido, Indiana University
- **Developing Healthy Lifestyles Among Adolescent Girls**, Mimi Nichter, University of Arizona
- **Stress in Pregnancy and Effects on the Offspring Throughout the Lifespan**, Christine

Dunkel-Schetter, University of California, Los Angeles, and Marci Lobel, State University of New York, Stony Brook

WHITE HOUSE LETTER

Warm greetings to everyone gathered in our nation's capital to launch the *Decade of Behavior*.

Some of America's most pressing health and social challenges — from smoking and substance abuse to racism, teen pregnancy, and domestic violence — are rooted in unhealthy behaviors. The consequences of untreated behavioral problems are staggering in both human and economic costs. Affecting people of all ages, such behaviors cause severe long-term health problems for millions of our citizens and undermine the quality of life in communities across the country.

The behavioral and social sciences offer us invaluable resources in identifying and eliminating the causes of many of these seemingly intractable problems. Psychologists, political scientists, public health professionals, sociologists, and so many other skilled and dedicated scientists can bring invaluable experience and innovative ideas to bear on our efforts to promote the health, safety, education, prosperity, and civic involvement of every American.

I commend the 47 scientific and professional organizations that are working together during the *Decade of Behavior* to increase awareness of the serious and widespread impact of negative behaviors and how science can help us change and modify such behaviors. Through your commitment to research and your efforts to enhance the public's understanding of the behavioral and social sciences, you are bringing hope to so many of your fellow citizens and helping to create a brighter, healthier future for us all.

Best wishes for a successful observance.

- Bill Clinton

America needs solutions to its burgeoning social ills now more than ever," said Richard McCarty, Executive Director for Science at the American Psychological Association. "No one person can solve all the problems, but the *Decade of Behavior* hopes to do its part by working in conjunction with the community to make significant and long-term impacts on these challenges of the new millennium."

According to McCarty, the launch was just the first of many nation-wide events expected over the next ten years. Additional planned activities include:

1. A prime time *Decade of Behavior* public television series, *Human Behavior: The Inner Frontier*, highlighting behavioral and social science research outcomes and processes.
2. The development of public outreach programs in concert with behavioral and social science departments and programs in colleges and universities throughout the country.
3. A *Decade of Behavior* website hosting a searchable database of funding opportunities in the behavioral and social sciences. The database, expanded from a prototype developed by the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences of the National Science Foundation, will include federal and foundation sources of research and training support. The database will be launched in late 2000.
4. A Distinguished Lecture series supporting major addresses on *Decade of Behavior* themes at national professional meetings. The series will be inaugurated in 2001 with generous support from the James S. McDonnell Foundation.

For more information, see the *Decade of Behavior* web site at: www.decadeofbehavior.org.

CONGRESSIONAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR CAUCUS ESTABLISHED

In September, Reps. Edolphus Towns (D-NY) and Brian Baird (D-WA) joined together to establish the Congressional Health and Behavior Caucus.

The goals of the newly established Caucus are “to highlight the role of behavior in health and to improve health and quality of life.”

According to the “*Dear Colleague*” letter circulated to Members of Congress, the impetus for the formation of the Caucus comes largely from the startling realization that six of the ten leading causes of death are behaviorally based: diet, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, smoking, violence, and accidents.

“We know from our respective training in social work and psychology,” stressed Towns and Baird, “that as a result of advances by behavioral and social science research, this is truly a caucus whose time has come.”

Towns and Baird highlighted the recent Institute of Medicine report, *Promoting Health: Intervention Strategies from Social and Behavioral Research*, which focuses on the role of social and behavioral factors as they influence health and disease at various stages of the life cycle. The study underscores that “by itself, . . . biomedical research cannot address the most significant challenges to improve the public’s health in the new century. . . Behavioral and social interventions therefore offer great promise to reduce disease morbidity and mortality, but as yet their potential to improve the public’s health has been relatively poorly tapped.” (See UPDATE, September 11, 2000)

CENSUS 2000 UPDATE - TOWARDS RESULTS

Now that the 2000 census has been administered and the count is over, the task of processing the information is well underway. Some further interviews may be conducted to fill gaps in the data, but the data collection is essentially complete. So, where are the numbers?

The return rates have been calculated and the figures are posted on the Census website (www.census.gov). Despite the concerns of some over the issue of privacy and the long form, the potential problem of numerous non-responses that might have resulted was less significant than expected.

One of the primary purposes of the Census is to count the population for the purpose of apportioning seats in the House of Representatives among the 50 states. The Census Bureau will release the national and state-level population figures that determine apportionment by the end of December. These figures will also provide the first indication of the degree of a potential undercount when compared to population projections.

The more interesting data for researchers should become available in early March, 2001. This block-level data will first go to the states for the purpose of redistricting. A day or two after the states receive this data, it will become available to the public via CD-ROM and the Internet.

The heated issue of the accuracy and legality of using “adjusted data” (based on statistical sampling) has yet to be settled. On September 28, Norman Y. Mineta, Secretary of Commerce, decided to delegate to the Census Bureau the decision on whether to release statistically corrected figures. This “is designed to ensure that politics are not a part of this important decision,” he declared. If adjusted data is ruled more accurate, the adjusted data will become available alongside the non-adjusted data in early March.

The issue of race and ethnicity has gained prominent attention this year as respondents may now check more than one box for race. Demographic profiles compiled from the short form should be available on a flow basis between June and September of 2001. A summary file of data by race *and* place should be released by July, 2001.

Data from the long form at the census tract level is scheduled to be released periodically between December 2001 and 2003.

Also of interest to researchers is the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files. These contain records of a sample of housing units (with identifiers removed to maintain confidentiality). The Census Bureau will release the one percent sample in 2002 and the five percent sample in 2003. Both will be available on CD-ROM.

MIXED RESULTS FOR CLINTON'S COPS PROGRAM

An Urban Institute report sponsored by the National Institute of Justice evaluates the first four years of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. Requested by the Clinton administration and launched by Congress in 1994, the six-year, \$9 billion program was designed to put more officers on the streets, foster interaction between police and communities, encourage innovation in police methods, and develop new technologies to assist officers in reducing crime.

“... The COPS program had broad national impact on levels and styles of policing,” according to Jeffrey Roth, director of the Urban Institute’s Crime Control Policy Studies. Grants distributed to local police departments under the program through May, 1999 will have contributed to the funding of between 62,700 and 83,900 additional full-time police officers by 2003. “To those who considered the level of policing in 1994 inadequate, this constitutes success, even though it falls well short of the target of 100,000 new cops on the beat.”

The researchers also found that the program’s resources went where they were most needed. Thirty-one percent of all COPS funds awarded through 1997 went to COPS grantees with the highest one percent of murder counts. Half of all awards went to grantees with the highest ten percent of murder counts.

In the effort to advance locally-defined versions of community policing, the COPS program has helped to fuel the observed acceleration of such movements, according to the report. Community policing entails establishing partnerships between police and the community, programs for proactive crime prevention, and innovation in police management. The report laments the finding that levels of participation in community policing varied substantially.

The gains from the new technology funding have been limited, according to the report. These funds helped police departments to deploy mobile computers and computer-aided dispatch and to employ computer systems to assist with

management and administration. Implementation, though, has been slow in many departments and productivity gains have been lower than expected. Departments with the new technology, however, have benefitted from more accurate and timely incident reports, improved safety of officers, faster recovery of stolen vehicles, and expanded sharing of information with the community and other law enforcement agencies.

Of course, the big question is, has the COPS program reduced crime? The recent study was not designed to answer this question, if indeed this program’s effect on crime rates can be isolated. However, the study suggests that through mid-1998, the COPS program had done reasonably well in meeting the four main goals described above. There is now ample opportunity to investigate which specific tactics reduce crime most reliably at the local scale, and what aspects of their implementation are most effective.

For further information, visit the Urban Institute’s webpage on criminal justice publications (www.urban.org/news/focus/focus_crime.html) and the National Institute of Justice homepage at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY DISCUSSED AT NBAC MEETING

Since its inception, the National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) has examined ethical issues related to human research and has submitted four separate reports to the President. The Commission is comprised of physicians, theologians, ethicists, scientists, lawyers, psychologists, and mental health advocates. It is chaired by Harold Shapiro, President of Princeton University.

Each report contains recommendations regarding particular aspects of human subjects protection. In May of 1999, the Commission wrote to the President indicating areas of concern and presenting preliminary findings regarding oversight of human research. The Commission felt that some of the preliminary findings required further action by the federal government.

These included:

- Federal protections for persons serving as subjects in research do not yet extend to all Americans.
- Federal protections do not always include specific provisions for especially vulnerable populations of research subjects.
- Many federal agencies find the interpretation and implementation of the “Common Rule” (the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects [45 CFR.46, Subpart A]) confusing and/or unnecessarily burdensome.
- Federal protections are difficult to enforce and improve effectively throughout the Federal Government, in part because no single authority or office oversees research protections across all government agencies and departments.
- New techniques are needed to ensure implementation at the local level.

A final report regarding human subjects protection will address (1) the adequacy of the current regulatory framework and structure and (2) the institutional review board (IRB) system. It will specifically address, among other things:

- How research involving humans is defined, and whether other related activities warrant IRB review
- Alternatives to the current regulatory structure of oversight and rulemaking for human research
- The scope of federal regulatory protections and whether they should be extended to the private sector
- Identification and protection of vulnerable populations
- Mechanisms to improve the functions of IRBs
- Education and training of IRB members, institution officials, and investigators
- Quality control mechanisms, including audit, certification, site visits, and accreditation
- Resource needs and infrastructure

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Social and Behavioral Science

At the September NBAC meeting, Joan Sieber, Professor of Psychology at California State University, Hayward, discussed and made

recommendations regarding issues of privacy and confidentiality of human subjects in social and behavioral research.

According to Sieber, the “Common Rule” governing human research discusses privacy and confidentiality in ways more suited to biomedical research than to social and behavioral research. Sieber offered “more useful definitions.” She emphasized, however, that “even with more useful definitions . . . the interpretation of these ideas into an effective protocol requires kinds of knowledge, experience, and problem-solving skills that are absent from the training of most scientists, students, and IRB members.”

IRBs, said Sieber, “need more education, not more regulations.” She underscored the difficulty in defining privacy and confidentiality and stressed that many confusing definitions have emerged the last few years resulting from the rise in personal privacy concerns.

It is difficult to “fathom, define, understand, or respect the privacy of other persons situated differently from ourselves with respect to age, ethnicity, locale, socio-economic status, gender, or the context in which the issue of privacy arises,” argued Sieber. She further explained that privacy is an “aspect of respect for persons that can be difficult to translate into respectful behavior in cultures and contexts in which one does not understand the relevant norms and beliefs.” She stressed that without a useful definition or theory of privacy to guide them, or at least guidelines to remind them of possible threats to privacy, researchers and IRBs must depend on their own “cultural-bound notions of what people consider ‘private.’”

Sieber offered two basic recommendations for consideration by NBAC:

- 1) Provide, in the Common Rule, clear, separate definitions of privacy and confidentiality that are broad enough that researchers and IRBs can apply them to diverse research activities in different disciplines.

2) Recommend to OHRP the development of web-based educational materials. Two web pages are recommended: a major web page to provide the knowledge needed to design research ethically and prepare an effective protocol, and a smaller page that would guide IRBs in locating, organizing, and tailoring information to serve local needs.

NBAC SEEKS COMMENTS ON “ETHICAL ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH”

The National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) has also drafted a report examining the ethical, legal, and policy issues surrounding clinical research subject to U.S. regulations and sponsored or conducted in other countries. Comments are due by November 13, 2000.

A copy of the draft report may be obtained from NBAC by calling 301/402-4242 or by fax at 301/480-6900. Copies may also be downloaded from NBAC’s website: www.bioethics.gov. Written comments may be provided by mail (6705 Rockledge Drive, Suite 700, Bethesda, MD 20892-7979), fax (301/480-6900), or email: nbac@od.nih.gov.

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technology and other policies.

Walker connected the Bush campaign views on science and technology to many of the general themes the Texas governor has enunciated during the campaign. The former Chairman noted at the outset that the Governor understands that “the 21st Century will be built on knowledge, much of it supplied by scientific research.”

Walker discussed five areas where science and technology policy will be important. He began with education, reiterating the Bush campaign’s views on education policy and the need for true reform. Part of that reform, he announced, will include increased use of education technology. The second area Walker dubbed, “real investments in R&D.” These include making the R&D Tax credit permanent, increasing funding for Defense R&D, doubling NIH

(National Institute of Health) research, increasing the NSF budget, and encouraging basic research. His third area was tort reform, a major Bush campaign thrust. Walker decried the legal barriers to innovation that are created by the threat of lawsuits. Turning to regulatory reform, Walker argued for a minimum amount of government intervention, and suggested the Internet should not be taxed. Finally, Walker reiterated the campaign’s case for tax reform. He defended Bush’s plan to help the top one percent of taxpayers, saying that these are the entrepreneurs who understand how to invest in the future and take the risks that are “fundamental to the new economy.” They should not be stymied, he argued, by a “confiscatory tax system.”

The former Chairman concluded by quoting former Netscape CEO James Barksdale, who said that although Bush is “not one of us [a high tech person], he is one with us.”

During a question and answer period that included inquiries about the Advanced Technology Program, the Space Program, Genetically Modified Organisms, Stem Cell Research, Aeronautics R&D, and Encryption and Export Control policy, there were two questions that touched on social and behavioral science research. One concerned the meager amount of federal funding for education research. Both Beier and Walker responded by discussing their candidate’s proposals for education technology. A question about how the results of NIH-supported research on children could be translated into effective programs in areas like children’s mental health sent both speakers into a separate debate on which candidate’s prescription drug benefit program was better.

COSSA STAFF CHANGES

COSSA is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Ryan as the new Associate Director for Public Affairs. Ryan replaces David Hess, who has moved to the Office of Legislative and Public Affairs at the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice. Ryan will edit the COSSA Newsletter and will also cover crime and criminal justice issues, education issues, and the Census.

Ryan recently earned a Master of Science in Geography at Penn State University, where he helped to establish a Center for Natural Hazards. He received his Bachelors in Geography and Sociology in 1997 from the University of Colorado at Boulder. After college, he toured the British Isles on a bicycle and Eastern Europe on a shoestring before returning to Colorado for a job in environmental education and resource management.

NEW COSSA CONTRIBUTOR

COSSA welcomes West Virginia University as our newest Contributor. We look forward to working with the university on issues of mutual concern to its social and behavioral scientists.