

The Center on Policy Attitudes is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group of social science researchers that specializes in in-depth research on American public attitudes on public policy issues. For those seeking a greater understanding of public and elite attitudes on public policy, COPA is uniquely qualified to provide the highest quality state-of-the art research.

COPA is *entirely devoted to the study of attitudes on public policy*. This makes us distinct from other opinion research firms, most of which are devoted to market research or political consulting and only study attitudes on public policy as a sideline. COPA's distinctiveness in this regard offers a number of unique advantages for our clients.

COPA researchers bring to their work an *in-depth knowledge* of public policy as well as research methodology. In addition to *familiarity with existing public opinion research*, COPA's research staff is highly *attuned to contemporary policy debates*. COPA's advisory board is comprised of eminent public opinion researchers and policy experts from leading universities and public policy research institutes throughout the country.

Since 1992, COPA research has resulted in a large body of *groundbreaking studies* on public attitudes on a range of domestic and foreign policy issues, including health care, education, poverty, America's role in the world, the United Nations and UN peace keeping, globalization and international trade, and global warming. These studies, which have been supported by major foundations, have helped solidify COPA's reputation as a premier research center adhering to the highest methodological and professional standards.

In addition to releasing pioneering reports, COPA *actively disseminates its research findings* and has become a major resource for government officials and the press. COPA personnel have testified before Congress and delivered briefings at the White House, the State Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, US AID, the United Nations, and NATO. COPA studies have been widely cited in major publications, including The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, International Herald-Tribune, Los Angeles Times, The Christian Science Monitor, The Economist, the Associated Press, Reuters, CNN, NBC, BBC, NPR, and others.



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What We Do

Analyzing Existing Research

A unique service of COPA is to collect and analyze all existing research on public opinion on a topic, integrating even seemingly contradictory data. Such analyses can be an end in themselves or can provide the foundation for a new research project that is more carefully targeted to break new ground.

Polls

COPA is noted for conducting polls that are both rigorous and innovative. Numerous COPA polls have received extensive attention in the press and among government officials because they have revealed new dimensions of insight into public opinion.

Focus Groups

COPA also has extensive experience recruiting, moderating, and analyzing focus groups in all regions of the country. We can recruit to your specifications and provide you the detailed, deeper understanding you need of how the public talks about your issues.

In-Depth Interviews

COPA has conducted hundreds of interviews with policymakers and opinion leaders to better understand their attitudes and their perceptions of public attitudes. COPA has the experience and access to Washington insiders to get you the information you need.

Web-Based Research

COPA has worked with the Internet polling company Knowledge Networks to implement methodologically sound, cutting-edge research with truly representative samples. Because web respondents can absorb more information and make more complex trade-offs than is possible in telephone polls, web-based research offers distinct advantages for exploring public attitudes.

Educational Television

COPA has worked with Washington-based Quorum Television to produce its own PBS television series, *Vox Populi*. If you want to turn your research into an educational program or to disseminate your findings to the public and to key audiences via television, we have the necessary knowledge and experience.

How We Work

COPA is committed to maintaining the highest standards for designing, implementing, and reporting of public opinion research studies. We adhere to codes of ethics and standards outlined by the industry's two major professional societies, the American Association of Public Opinion Researchers (AAPOR) and the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO). These standards require, among other things, that if any data from a study are publicly released, the survey instrument be made available for independent examination by other responsible parties. These guidelines are critical for safeguarding our reputation for integrity and impartiality. More importantly, they give our clients' studies a credibility they may not enjoy if carried out by political consultants or market research firms.

What Makes COPA Unique?

Depth of Knowledge

Because COPA focuses exclusively on attitudes on public policy, COPA researchers bring a substantial level of existing knowledge to any new project. Unlike other research organizations, COPA incorporates all publicly available opinion research in its analysis of public attitudes on an issue. Any research COPA conducts will not waste time and money covering ground already traversed, ensuring that your research will be on the cutting edge.

Nonpartisan and Unbiased

COPA has never worked for political candidates and is not affiliated with any political party. Our staff regularly consults with policy specialists across the spectrum of opinion in order to ensure the integrity and quality of COPA's research instruments. This independence is critical to delivering results that are scientific and credible to other organizations, policymakers, the media, and the public.

Policy Relevant

COPA specializes in posing questions in ways that simulate the process policymakers go through in making decisions. For example, COPA polls not only ask questions in a neutral fashion, they also present strongly worded pro and con arguments — the kind that policymakers hear. COPA's polls require respondents to make tradeoffs, similar to those policymakers must make. We find out if attitudes are being influenced by misperceptions and determine the effects of supplying correct information.

Rigorous

COPA is committed to hypothesis-based research, bringing academic standards and time-tested methods to bear on every project. Our adherence to the highest methodological and ethical standards assures you of an unassailable "product," one that will withstand critical scrutiny and be accepted as legitimate by all.

Innovative

COPA is constantly developing and assessing innovative methods and cutting-edge research techniques to augment its capabilities. For example it recently developed a new internet-based interactive method to enable a representative sample of Americans to show how they would distribute the federal budget.

Provocative

COPA is not afraid to challenge the conventional wisdom, take on tough issues, knock down unsubstantiated assertions, and dispel myths about public opinion. COPA work has been described as "original and iconoclastic" and "public opinion research at its very best."

COPA Advisory Board

- I.M. Destler (*University of Maryland*) ♦ Gloria Duffy (*Commonwealth Club*)
- ♦ William Frenzel (*Brookings Institution*) ♦ Alexander George (*Stanford University*)
- ♦ Alan Kay (*American Talk Issues Foundation*) ♦ Catherine Kelleher (*Aspen Institute*) ♦ Benjamin Page (*Northwestern University*)
- ♦ Robert Shapiro (*Columbia University*) ♦ Frederick Steeper (*Market Strategies*)
- ♦ Daniel Yankelovich (*Public Agenda Foundation*).

COPA Research Staff

Steven Kull

Director, is a political psychologist specializing in the study of public and elite attitudes on public policy issues, and a faculty member of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland. He founded COPA in 1992. His most recent book, co-authored with I.M. Destler, is *Misreading the Public: The Myth of a New Isolationism* (Brookings Press, 1999). Dr. Kull is regularly interviewed by the press and appears on radio and TV. He has given briefings for Congress, the White House, the State Department, NATO, the UN and the EU. He has been a fellow at the Center for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University, an SSRC MacArthur Fellow, and has taught at Stanford University. His articles have appeared in *Foreign Policy*, *Harper's*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *The Washington Post* and *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Clay Ramsay

Research Director, has been with COPA since 1992, and is on the faculty of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland. With a background in history and psychology, he has focused on the study of ideology and mass psychology. He received his Ph.D. in History from Stanford University, has taught at Oberlin College, and is the author of *The Ideology of the Great Fear* (Johns Hopkins). He is a Fellow at the Center for International and Security Studies (CISSM), School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland.

Peter Benda

Associate Director, previously served as associate director of the International Center for Migration, Ethnicity and Citizenship at the New School University. A political scientist by training, he was Program Associate for Public Policy at The Pew Charitable Trusts, has held faculty appointments at the University of Virginia and Swarthmore College, and served on the professional research staff of the Government Division, Congressional Research Service, U.S. Library of Congress.

Monica Wolford

Senior Research Fellow, worked for 10 years as a survey researcher at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. At COPA, she contributes to the design of poll questionnaires and is the lead statistical analyst. A Ph.D. candidate at the University of Michigan, her primary research interests are the sources and duration of context effects in surveys, sources of nonresponse in longitudinal surveys, and structural equation modeling of attitudinal data. Her articles have appeared in *American Statistical Association Proceedings* and the *National Political Science Review*.

Phillip Warf

Research Associate, has an extensive background in domestic and international politics and survey research. Previously at Greenberg Research, Inc., he implemented survey research projects for political campaigns, corporations, and organizations in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. He has co-authored articles on public attitudes toward the UN and NAFTA, and holds a Masters degree in International Studies from the University of South Carolina.