The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) held its fifty-eighth conference in Nashville on May 15–18, 2003. It was dedicated to the memory of survey research pioneer Bud Roper. The conference program included a wide range of topics of central interest to survey researchers and public opinion scholars.

Many of the presentations addressed one of the three major themes of the event:

Public opinion formation, change, and effects: The conference was rich with discussions of how public opinion is shaped (both cognitively and socially) and its consequences for individuals and collectives.

Survey methodology: especially response rates. Numerous presentations of many types addressed all aspects of survey research methodology. A major focus was on response rates in federal government surveys, in commercial surveys, and in academic surveys, highlighting response rates currently being obtained, recent trends in those rates, explanations of those trends, and the impact of those rates on sample representativeness. In addition, presentations addressed (1) Internet- and Web-based data collection; (2) interviewer selection, training, and attrition-retention; (3) the use of respondent and interviewer incentives; (4) response and nonresponse error stemming from questionnaires, interviewers, and survey modes; (5) sampling design; (6) statistical data management, analysis, and presentation; (7) pretesting, cognitive interviewing, focus groups, and qualitative research; (8) legislative and regulatory (e.g., institutional review boards) threats to survey and public opinion research; (9) privacy and confidentiality of survey data; and (10) the use of surveys for jury selection, legal strategy, and testimony in court.

Trust in American life. A stream of presentations addressed the major substantive focus of the conference: trust. Foci included trust in government, businesses, the judicial system, the law enforcement and intelligence communities, the stock market, the ecotony, the military, the electoral system, Congress, and the presidency; individuals' and social groups' levels of trust in one another; and trust from all quarters in the methodologies and quality indicators of survey research.

The conference program included 194 oral paper presentations, 6 roundtables, 10 poster presentations, and 57 interactive paper presentations. The