

INTER-UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM FOR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

P.O. BOX 1248 • ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48106 • AREA CODE 313, 764-2570 • CABLE: ICPSR

16 April 1979

TO: Official Representatives
FROM: ICPSR Staff
SUBJECT: Availability of American National Election Study, 1978

The first ICPSR version of the 1978 American National Election Study is now available. Data requests that have been submitted are currently being processed, and forthcoming requests will be filled in the order in which they are received. The codebook for this study is being provided on tape. Please note that the main survey for this study is in Class I form, although the supplementary files described below are available as Class II.

Warren E. Miller, National Election Studies/
Center for Political Studies;
THE AMERICAN NATIONAL ELECTION STUDY, 1978
(ICPSR #7655)

2304 respondents, 49 cards of data per respondent, and 1046 variables. The respondents were interviewed in a sample of 108 congressional districts after the 1978 congressional elections.

The 1978 American National Election Study is the first to be conducted under a grant from the National Science Foundation (grant # SOC 77-0888) providing long-term support for the American national election studies. The primary objective of this survey was to analyze the attitudes and behavior of the American electorate in the context of the 1978 congressional elections. Major emphasis was placed on respondents' evaluations of their district's candidates -- both the incumbent and opponent -- along several dimensions. They were asked to assess the candidates in terms of their issue-orientations, performance in office, behavior during the campaign, and ability to represent the interests of the constituency.

As in the past, the study included a series of questions on the media coverage of the campaigns and scales that measured the respondents' position on major social issues -- including urban unrest, protection of the rights of the accused, aid to minority groups, government insurance plan, and women's role in society. The perceived position of the political parties, as well as certain political leaders, on these issues was also ascertained.

In addition to the survey data, the 1978 election study also contains several contextual components that have been added to the respondents' file. These data consist of: 1) Historical Election Returns, at the state, congressional district, and county levels for elections to the offices of president, governor, U.S. Senator and Representative, 1972-1976; 2) 1978 Election Returns for primary and general elections to the same offices; 3) Incumbent characteristics, including information pertaining to the incumbent U.S. Representatives of the 95th Congress from the 108 congressional districts sampled in the survey (a major feature of this component is a series of performance ratings that each member of Congress received from certain interest groups and from the Congressional Quarterly); and 4) Candidate Characteristics which apply to the Democratic and Republican candidates for the office of U.S. Representative in the 1978 general elections (the latter data were obtained from a 1978 candidate questionnaire that was administered by Congressional Quarterly, Inc.) Class I.

Also available for use with the 1978 Election Study are five files of data initially prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. Each of these separate datasets contains social, economic and demographic information recorded for the places of residence of the respondents in the 1978 election survey. Four datasets include information at the congressional district level; the items contained in these files were drawn from the computer-readable files produced by the Census Bureau entitled Congressional District Data Book (93rd Congress). There are, respectively, 377, 421, 247 and 21 variables contained in the four files. A fifth dataset, comprising census tabulations at the county level, was prepared from the Census Bureau's County and City Data Book, 1972 file. The 204 variables in that dataset include all data items specific to counties that were presented in the original file prepared by the Census Bureau.

The five datasets described above were prepared by ICPSR staff by subsetting from the original Census Bureau files only those geographic locales (congressional districts or counties) in which the 1978 survey respondents resided. Each of these files contain a record for every survey respondent. The records include the interview number of the survey respondent and the relevant congressional district or county census variables, which permit these files to be easily used with the main 1978 election study file. Printed codebooks describing the variables in the five ancillary census data files can be provided upon request. These data are available in Class II form.