traditional key punching. This is admittedly a mechanical process but nevertheless worthy of the professional’s attention. And second, in Chapter 8 (Statistical Analysis) the authors spend much time documenting other books, papers, and monographs covering various analytic techniques when they could have rendered a greater service to us by compiling an easily digestible, quickly referenced guide to the which-why-how-when of these many parametric and nonparametric techniques. (This is why I, along with two colleagues, recently completed a company publication entitled the Response Analysis Guide to Analytical Techniques.)

On a scale of 10-high/1-low I would give Sonquist and Dunkelberg a 9 for effort, 8 for execution, and 10 for contribution. It is a text that you will refer to frequently.

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This slender volume (156 pages, excluding methodological appendix and bibliography) starts by reviewing the power of media to shape public attention to political issues. The discussion draws heavily and predictably on the authors’ extensive research experience. Succeeding chapters by them and their colleagues in the agenda-setting business present refinements of the hypothesis, with varying success, in such areas as voters’ need for orientation about political affairs, issue salience, differences between newspapers and television, and the role of advertising.

The conclusions drawn from these inquiries hinge on comparison between the prominence given issues by the media and the aggregate importance attributed to issues by the public. Fascination with this correlation reminds one of an important though generally overlooked conclusion drawn decades ago from hundreds of newspaper readership surveys. Attention scores for individual editorial items can be accurately predicted from knowledge of news play—size of article, headline, page position, use of art, and the like. Knowing the news topic adds little to the predictive equation. So we have learned, not surprisingly, that people pay attention to what editors tell them to notice by their control of stimulus intensity.

Our problem in judging agenda-setting research is to gauge where it takes us. What does it tell us that we want to know about communication and political behavior? One answer: The studies perform a useful alerting function, reminding us that more research should be invested in understanding voters’ information processing about candidates, issues, and campaign events—and about political actors and public policy that surface between elections. In short, we need to elaborate the dependent variable.

We can expect the significance of political cues to shift with media emphasis. The directions in which attribute space stretches and the speed of change among different segments of voters can become the intellectual scaffold for theories of communication and politics.

Shaw, McCombs and colleagues anticipate studies uncovering the circumstances in which the public’s images of issues change or remain stable, the conditions under which emergent new issues supplement or
erase the recollection of old issues, the factors governing contingencies among issues (when an issue and a political figure are jointly salient and when not, for example), or the situation in which agendas coalesce into a few prominent issues monopolizing attention, compared to circumstances that split agendas, as we suspect happens at the level of local political affairs.

A convincing picture of the agenda-setting process will also require direct observation of newsmen and their information priorities. How they define the boundaries of issues and link issues to public figures reflects the mechanical imperatives of their medium (print or broadcast), the organizational rivalries and bureaucratic sanctions that lend personal significance to journalistic work, and reporters' cognitive styles. Fortunately, a research literature is blossoming in these fields, but much of it is anecdotal (though riveting) and difficult to coordinate with surveys of news consumers.

Methodologies for agenda research are well developed, however. They include open-ended interviewing, sophisticated content analysis, and computerized algorithms for smallest-space analysis. Frustratingly, our eagerness to uncover the links between media portrayals and political perceptions outraces efforts to supply relevant data.

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The purpose of the study summarized in this volume is to explore problems of protecting human subjects in social, as distinct from biomedical, research. Developments since the study's inception in 1975 only lend importance to such efforts. The trend so far has been toward increasing government regulation, with no distinction being made between biomedical and social research, despite obvious differences in the risks as well as the benefits they pose.

Supported by the National Institute of Mental Health, the study included a review of the literature, a series of organized discussions carried out at national and local professional association meetings, a review of professional codes of ethics, and a special survey of the interests and activities of organized citizens' groups. It also included the deliberations of a task force (consisting of M. Brewster Smith, Bernard Barber, George M. Foster, Charles F. Cannell, Irving Crespi, Albert J. Reiss, Jr., and Albert Biderman) brought together in a two-day meeting to provide the perspectives of sociology, anthropology, public opinion research, political science, social statistics, and psychology on the problems of protecting subjects in social research. Ultimately only studies dealing with special groups and presenting special ethical issues, such as studies of children, prisoners, and other institutionalized populations, were excluded from consideration.

The book presents a useful brief review of government regulations in force as of 1978, and a concise discussion of the potential risks posed by social research: coercion, deception, invasion of privacy, breach of confidentiality, psychological stress, collective and social injury. Although not all of these are peculiar to social research, the particular form they take differs from that in biomedical research, and other risks—especially that of physical harm—are notably absent from the list.