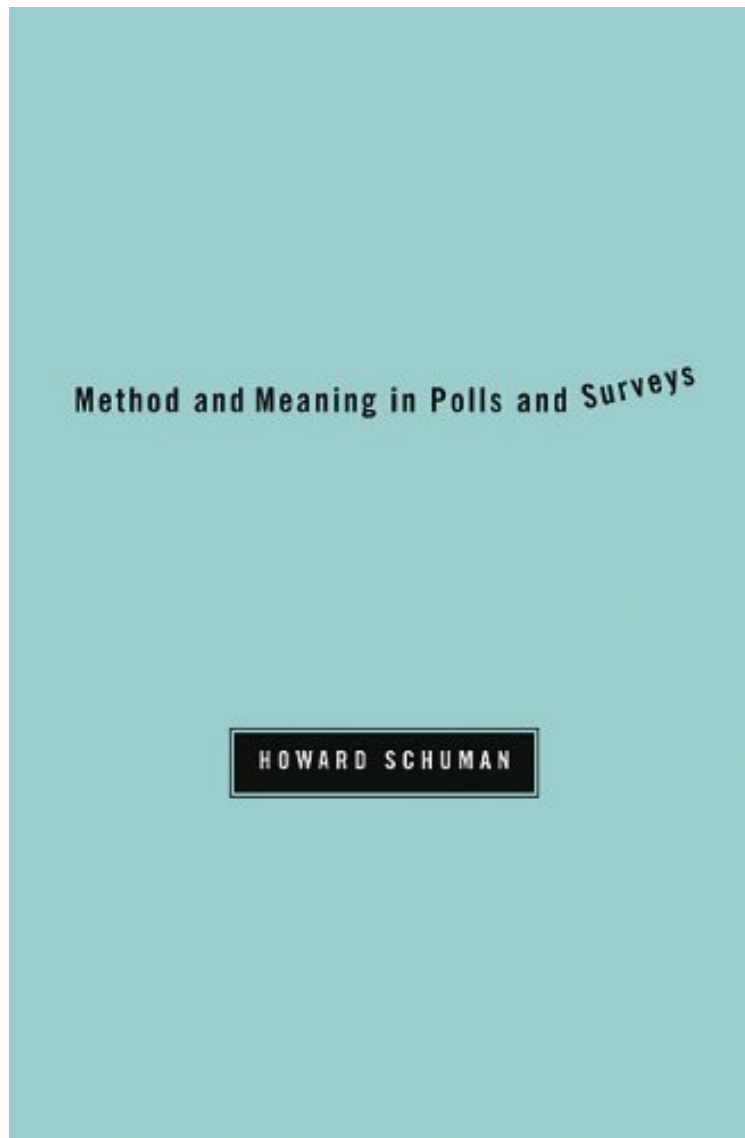


(Download pdf ebook) Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys

Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys

Howard Schuman

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Howard Schuman : Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys:

Howard Schuman is one of the premier scholars of social surveys. His expertise concerns the way questions about attitudes and beliefs are worded and the effects questions have on the answers people give. However, Method and

Meaning in Polls and Surveys is less about the substance of wording effects and more about approaches to interpreting the respondents world, and how surveys can make that world understandable though often in ways not anticipated by the researcher. Schuman examines the question-answer process that is basic to polls and surveys, as it is in so much of life. His concern is with the nature of questioning itself, with issues of validity and bias, and with the scope and limitations of meaning sought through polls and surveys. Writing with both wisdom and humor, Schuman considers the issues both at a theoretical level, bringing in ideas from other social sciences, and empirically with substantive research of his own and others. The book will be of interest to social scientists, to survey researchers in academia and business, and to all those concerned with the pervasive influence of polls in society.

The premier expert on academic survey research, Howard Schuman is a man of superb judgment, balance, and wisdom. On any debate that flies through cyberspace on survey methods, Schuman's is the voice I most await, and listen to. Here, he urges readers to take a judicious position about surveys, neither ritualistically taking their results as reflecting revealed truth, nor rejecting them as misleading, full of error and bias, and signifying nothing. *Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys* is an original and erudite contribution from the field's eminent scholar. (David O. Sears, University of California, Los Angeles) *Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys* makes a notable and vital contribution to the field of public opinion and survey research. Not only will Schuman's search for a "larger meaning to responses to survey questions" deepen our understanding of the discipline of method, it will leave us with fundamental epistemological questions to ponder for years to come about the limits of survey-based knowledge. (George Bishop, University of Cincinnati) Howard Schuman's *Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys* is a wonderfully written exploration of methodological issues both broad and narrow by one of the field's masters--a must-read for survey researchers and poll watchers alike. (Andrew Kohut, President, Pew Research Center) This book represents the culmination of sociologist Schuman's more than four decades' devotion to social surveys. Reading the book is akin to sitting in Schuman's research methodology class and listening to his wisdom and skepticism about surveys... Insights leap from virtually every page. As a bonus, the book is an enjoyable read. Schuman writes with passion and humor, and the examples--Americans' perceptions of the communist threat in the 1950s, the Vietnam War in the 1960s-70s, the role of "moral values" in the 2004 presidential election, gun permits--are often engaging and stimulating. One of the best books on social surveys available, it should quickly become required reading for students of research methods. (J. Li Choice 2008-12-01) *Method and Meaning in Polls and Surveys* is an exemplar of what social science research should be. It adds significant insight into survey research methods and how survey research can advance the scientific understanding of society. (Tom W. Smith Field Methods 2008-11-01) Once more, Howard Schuman brings his scholarly imagination and methodological rigor to the task of deciphering the question-and-answer process... It is the work of the master craftsman, the consummate methodologist demonstrating how to discover the multifaceted "meaning" of responses to survey questions through the discipline of "method" construed in all its manifold forms. Think of it as the practice of survey research at its very best. (George Franklin Bishop Public Opinion Quarterly 2010-03-01) About the Author Howard Schuman is Professor of Sociology and Research Scientist, Emeritus, at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center.