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# On the RECORD



*Leonore Annenberg*  
*1918-2009*

# From the Director



Photo: Kyle Cassidy

The Annenberg Public Policy Center mourns the loss of the gracious woman who, with her husband, defined our mission in 1993 and inspired our work in the years that followed. Student Voices, Justice Learning, FactCheck.org, the National Annenberg Election Survey, the APPC Adolescent Communication Institute and the APPC Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics are among the byproducts of the Annenbergs' commitment to improving the well-being of the nation and its children. This summer, as we install the portraits of Walter and Lee Annenberg in our elegant new building and place the Annenberg motto "citizenship is a person's most important calling" in its agora, we will remember their words of encouragement with fondness and rededicate ourselves to meeting the high expectations they had for our work at the policy center that bears their name.



Photo: Kyle Cassidy

Leonore Annenberg (right) at the September 2002 announcement of a \$100 million special operating trust established for the Annenberg School for Communication and the Annenberg Public Policy Center.

**Front Cover Photo:** Leonore Annenberg  
**Photo Credit:** Alan Kolc

**Back Cover:** The expertise of scholars at the Annenberg Public Policy Center is often sought out by media in the U.S. as well as around the globe.

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Established in 1993, the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania conducts and disseminates research, hosts lectures and conferences, and convenes roundtable discussions that highlight important questions about the intersection of media, communication and public policy.

The Policy Center, which has offices in Philadelphia and Washington D.C., conducts ongoing research in the areas of political communication, information and society, media and the developing child, health communication and adolescent risk. Its research helps to bring difficult problems into focus.

### ON THE RECORD

Susan Q. Stranahan  
 Editor-in-Chief

Karen Riley  
 Editor

Jennifer McCleary  
 Graphic Designer

Gary Gehman  
 Web Director

Annenberg Public Policy Center  
 3535 Market St., Suite 200  
 Philadelphia, PA 19104  
 Phone: (215) 898-9400

Visit the Annenberg Public Policy Center's website:  
[www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org](http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org)

# Leonore Annenberg:

## Remembered with Gratitude and Affection

When one thinks of Leonore Annenberg, what comes immediately to mind is the presence of dignity, of refinement, taste, elegance, integrity and high standards – in short, the presence of a very classy person with a deep sense of civic commitment and an unparalleled social conscience. One thinks, as well, of her great generosity and her extraordinary kindness.

Mrs. Annenberg's life wove together the themes of art and education, culture and public service, knitting together a tapestry of honor, service and vision that put her nation and many others around the world deeply in her debt. It was a privilege to have this remarkable woman of grace, vision, passion and compassion as my friend. We will all feel her loss for a very long time to come.

*Vartan Gregorian  
President, Carnegie Corporation*

Lee Annenberg was an extraordinary person who lived every day with elegance, generosity and a dedication to improving the quality of life of her fellow man. Her death is a profound loss to all of us who were fortunate enough to know her. No two people have been more personally committed to education, public service and philanthropy than Lee and Walter Annenberg.

*U.S. Rep. David Dreier  
Washington, D.C.*

Barbara and I were saddened to hear of the death of our dear friend Lee Annenberg. We send our most sincere condolences to her family. She and her late husband, Walter, exemplified service to others and were two of God's very special people. She will be sorely missed.

*Former President  
George H. W. Bush*

Lee Annenberg's death is a huge loss for all of us. She was a dear and longtime friend who provided tremendous personal support in the many years of Ronnie's illness and since his death. She served as Ronnie's Chief of Protocol during our first few years in Washington and we spent many wonderful evenings with Lee and her husband, Walter.

Lee and Walter Annenberg were unparalleled in their philanthropic giving that spanned everything from politics to the arts. They left an indelible print on education in the United States and there are millions of young people that have or will benefit from their extraordinary generosity.

*Mrs. Ronald Reagan*

A Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania, Lee Annenberg brought to her role as a trustee the same style and sensitivity that benefited our country when she was Chief of Protocol of the United States. Her appreciation and support of excellence in education, as in the arts, inspired Penn to strive toward ever greater distinction. As individuals, we will miss her grace, determination and most important, her friendship. As an institution, Penn will miss her profound dedication to education and citizenship, and her willingness to commit her resources to support those ideals.

Lee and her late husband, Ambassador Walter Annenberg, were dedicated benefactors whose extraordinary financial contributions transformed Penn. The impact of their generosity is beyond measure. Lee and Walter Annenberg's legacy will continue at Penn in the many wonderful programs they established and in all the individuals whose lives they touched.

*Amy Gutmann  
President,  
University of Pennsylvania*

# Delivering the Evidence to Guide Health Policy

The Obama administration has made its policies and its priorities clear: Health care and education have moved to the top of the national agenda as programs “absolutely critical to the nation’s future,” in the president’s words. Innovation and reform – new approaches to address long-standing problems – will be given a fast track and increased federal funding.

But before additional billions are poured into these initiatives, existing programs and new proposals will be subjected to a critical standard: Evidence that they work.

“This is an administration that wants evidence before, instead of after it makes policy,” said Amy Jordan, director of the Media and the Developing Child area of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. As a result, she believes, decision-making will be grounded in facts and responsive to emerging scholarship.

The evidence will come from data compiled by researchers, including those at the Annenberg Public Policy Center whose work involves a number of the health policy issues now being discussed in Washington. Among the questions are these:

What factors are triggering the surge in childhood obesity and what behavioral changes could reduce the problem? What strategies can protect children from sexual content in the media but not run afoul of the First Amendment? What works – and what doesn’t – to convince kids to avoid cigarettes or practice safe sex? How best to provide adolescents with accessible information about sex without also leaving them open to exploitation online?

For the scholars at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, these are familiar topics. For politicians and policymakers in Washington, they are issues ripe for review.



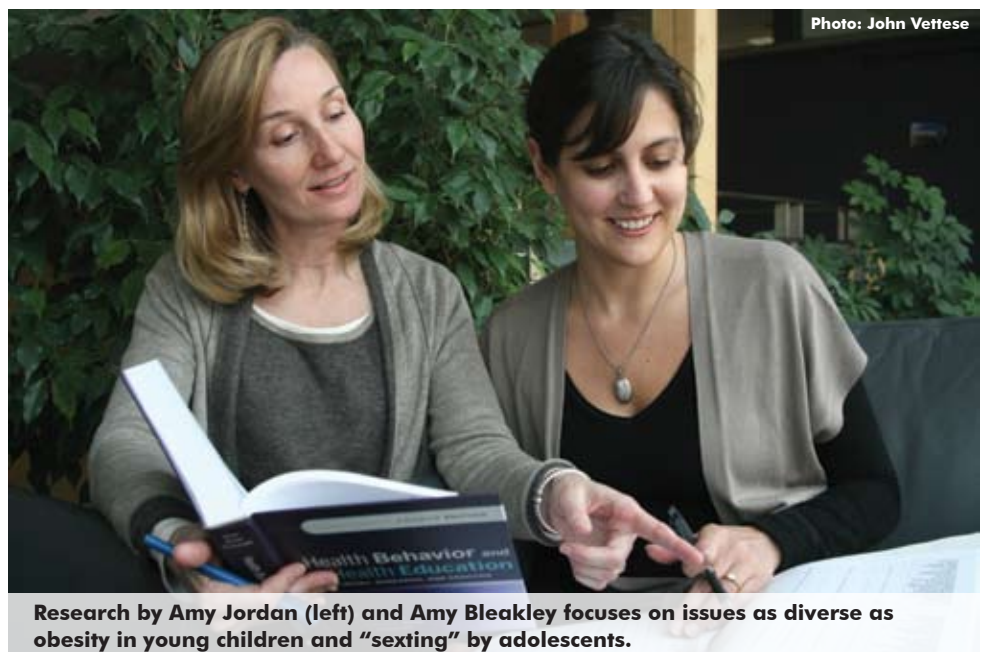
Amy Jordan has long studied the impact of media on children, and has been at the forefront of national research into media usage and childhood obesity. (Last year she served as special editor of an issue of *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* devoted to overweight and obesity in children.)

Recently, Jordan became interested in measuring how children’s bedtime routines affect obesity. “Kids who don’t sleep enough are at greater risk for being overweight,” she said. The reason is not clear. Kids who watch TV late into the night, who play vid-

eo games or surf the Internet may become too tired to exercise or may snack more for the energy boost. Or, there may be some other unexplored mechanism researchers have yet to discover.

Not all kids are equally at risk. For those who are genetically predisposed to being overweight, who have limited opportunities or incentives to exercise, or who don’t have healthy food options, “media may be the tipping point,” Jordan says. She has proposed research on the bedtime habits of 4- to 5-year-olds. Although childhood obesity has leveled off in other age groups, it has not in these youngsters. “This is an age where we can still intervene,” she explained.

That intervention may be difficult – for kids *and* parents. In all probability, any solution will involve parents and lifestyles.



Research by Amy Jordan (left) and Amy Bleakley focuses on issues as diverse as obesity in young children and “sexting” by adolescents.

“You can’t change kids’ media behaviors without changing the whole family environment.”

“For too long, we’ve been relying on the electronic storyteller,” concedes Jordan. Even so, all technology isn’t necessarily bad and thus a simple “pull the plug” strategy may not solve the problem. What is needed, she said, is more research to show what works and what doesn’t. From there, evidence-based recommendations can be made. This is an issue that involves edu-

“You can’t change kids’ media behaviors without changing the whole family environment.”

Amy Jordan

cators, child psychologists, pediatricians and sleep researchers, said Jordan. “Media is such an integral part of everyday life” – even for 4- and 5-year olds – “that just turning off the TV won’t solve the problem. We need to find something to fill in the gap.”



“Sexting” – sending nude pictures via text message – is a new phenomenon, but an increasingly common one, according to a recent survey by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

Twenty percent of teens surveyed reported posting nude pictures or videos of themselves online or on cell phones, and 39 percent of teens said they are posting sexually suggestive messages. Earlier this year, a prosecutor in upstate Pennsylvania threatened to file sexual abuse charges against three teenagers whose seminude photos were found by investigators on someone else’s cell phone.

For years, parents have struggled to protect their children from inappropriate content in the media and on the Internet. On average, young people use various forms of media almost 6.5 hours daily. Through use of tools like the V-chip or web filters, parents can achieve a degree of control over what their children see. But the flow of explicit

content on individual handheld devices, such as cell phones, makes adult oversight difficult, if not impossible.

Sexting represents the latest manifestation of kids being exposed to sexual information, explains Amy Bleakley, a research scientist in the Annenberg Public Policy Center’s Health Communication area. She recently co-authored an article with her Annenberg colleagues entitled “It Works Both Ways: The Relationship Between Exposure to Sexual Content in the Media and

Adolescent Sexual Behavior,” published in the journal *Media Psychology*.

Does sex in the media encourage sexual activity among teens, as some media watchdogs (and parents) have argued? The Annenberg research, which draws on data from the larger Annenberg Sex and Media Study of 14- to 16-year olds, provides evidence for what Bleakley calls a “feedback loop.” Sexually active teens seek out sexual content in their media, possibly as an affirmation [feedback] of their behavior, while exposure to sexual content in the media may cause teens to engage in sexual activity.

“Kids seek out sexual information from the media, possibly because they want information and often can’t talk to other people,” explained Bleakley. As a result, they may utilize media sources – and each other – to bolster their knowledge and validate their behavior. The role of handheld devices offers one new – and uncensored – alternative to communicating sexual images and messages with friends and strangers.

“And that has implications for policy,” explained Bleakley. Should the content on handheld devices somehow be regulated or restricted? What is an effective way to provide teens with the sexual information they seek in a method they are comfortable using? And if it is through the use of tech-

nology, how to effectively deliver it to an age-appropriate audience?

Although there are many unanswered questions, Bleakley is sure of one thing: To get a better understanding of kids’ attitudes toward sex, researchers’ sights need to be lowered to the 12- to 14-year age group. “By the time we’re looking at affecting those attitudes, 14 to 16 is too old.”



The incidence rate of HIV is seven times higher among black than among white Americans. Although adolescents with HIV/AIDS represent just about five percent of total cases in the U.S., they constitute one of the fastest growing groups of newly infected persons. Blacks under the age of 25 account for nearly two-thirds of those new cases.

How best to target this high-risk group with HIV-prevention messages? Research from the Annenberg Public Policy Center has demonstrated the value of specially targeted television and radio messages. Black adolescents are heavy users of media. But they can be a skeptical audience. Hence, to be effective the messages have to strike home.

With a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, Annenberg’s Adolescent Risk Communication Institute (ARCI), directed by Dan Romer, teamed up with researchers at four universities and MEE Productions, Inc., a Philadelphia company that produces award-winning media for black youth. The team created a media campaign that was delivered to adolescent audiences in Macon, GA, and Syracuse, NY, with Columbia, SC, and Providence, RI, serving as comparison cities that did not receive the ads. Nearly 1,660 adolescents, ages 14 to 17, were surveyed over a period of 18 months.

The messages had several goals: One debunked the myth that condoms are uncomfortable. Another promoted the idea that waiting to initiate sex demonstrated respect for one’s partner and maturity. All spots featured this tagline: “Life is what



**Undergraduates (from l to r) Gabe Baltazar, Mary Beth Fender and Andrea Kohn code ARCI's database of popular movies for risky behaviors such as smoking.**

you make it. Be Safe. If you are sexually active, there's only one way to protect yourself for sure...Use a condom correctly every time." Each ad featured hip-hop music and black adolescent actors. The early results of the campaign will be reported in a special issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*.

"We wanted to produce a range of effects, from behavior changes in the most at-risk segments of the population to changes in beliefs and attitudes among those less at risk," said Romer. "Although the media campaign has only just ended, our findings to date indicate that the messages are resonating. The use of mass media messages to encourage safer behavior in the highest-risk adolescents and changes in norms among all youth appears to be a promising strategy. We are now planning research to see if the changes produced by the campaign can persist as adolescents age."



After a nearly decade-long fight, Congress appears poised to give the Food and Drug Administration the authority to regulate tobacco products. Of special concern are those products marketed to attract – and hook – young smokers, a segment of the population where tobacco use has not declined as quickly as it has among adults. The promotion of tobacco use among teens comes in many forms, including popular

films, where smoking can be portrayed as sophisticated or a sign of rebellion. While the effects of tobacco advertising are well-documented, less is known about how popular media have influenced impressionable youth to engage in risky behavior such as smoking. As part of a long-term effort by ARCI, led by Associate Director Patrick Jamieson, the Media and Health Coding Project (online at [www.youthmediarisk.org](http://www.youthmediarisk.org)) has examined trends in film portrayals of smoking since 1950 to determine if they are related to youth and adult smoking rates.

The research, underwritten by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has already found that images of tobacco products in films are closely related to national adult smoking rates. However, scenes that show important characters smoking are more closely related to adolescent smoking rates that are not declining as fast. "Great efforts will be needed to impose 'R' ratings on movies that show the stars smoking," said Jamieson. "Although movie smoking may seem glamorous to youth, getting hooked on smoking has life-threatening consequences."



Amy Jordan, Dan Romer and others at APPC see an opportunity for the research at the Annenberg Public Policy Center to expand and provide much-needed guidance to lawmakers and policymakers in Washington as they wade into improving health policy and programs. In the area of communication alone, a wide gap exists that must be bridged.

"There is a generation of kids who are using new media technology that we as adults don't understand," Jordan explained. "We need to get a handle on how it affects lives."

And, she added, "We need to do a better job in making sure our research is heard and understood." ♦

Letter to the Editor, *The New York Times*, Dec. 17, 2008

"There is a big difference between the verbal warning labels used on packs of cigarettes in the United States and the more graphic pictures used in Canada...When tested in the United States, the Canadian warnings appear to be far more effective for both smokers and nonsmokers than the bland statements we now use.

"What little we know about the brain's addiction center indicates that it responds not only to potentially addictive cues but also to any that signal uncertainty about rewards and penalties. Could those labels actually be effective in creating doubt in smokers regarding their dangerous habit?"

Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Dan Romer



# BEHIND THE SCENES:

## Campaign '08 strategists talk candidly

Every presidential campaign is “a race to the top of the mountain,” according to Steve Schmidt, senior advisor to John McCain’s 2008 quest for the White House. “In our case, it felt as if the Obama campaign was walking up the side of the mountain on paths....On our side of the mountain, you needed ropes and ice axes and any slip led to certain death.”



Photo: John Vettese

**Steve Schmidt**

In a freewheeling and candid discussion of the 2008 presidential campaign, 11 top Democratic and Republican strategists gathered in Philadelphia in mid-December for a private post-election debriefing, convened by the Annenberg Public Policy Center. A week later, a public debriefing by independent expenditure groups that crafted presidential campaign messages was held in Washington, hosted by APPC’s FactCheck.org.

Both sessions provided unvarnished as-

sessments of the strengths and weaknesses of the campaigns from those who labored 24/7 to get their messages heard and their candidates elected. As in 2000 and 2004, an edited transcript of the debriefings will be published in book form, with an accompanying DVD, this summer by the University of Pennsylvania Press.

Although bitter rivals during the long and historic presidential contest, the campaign tacticians expressed admiration for the work of the other side. “It was a brilliant campaign,” Schmidt told David Axelrod, Barack Obama’s media advisor. Axelrod replied: “I think we all have a lot of respect for each other. We know what it entails to be involved in these campaigns. And we know that we’re all motivated by the same impulse to try to do something good within the system for the country.”

The financial disparities between the two campaigns exerted a powerful influence on strategies and opportunities, both sides agreed. John McCain depended on public financing for his campaign. Barack Obama opted out of public financing. As a result, the Obama team operated with a war chest that seemed bottomless.

In July 2007, when Schmidt joined the McCain team, the campaign was “upside down and in a ditch,” he told his audience. Eight months later, when Sen. McCain secured the Republican nomination, “the campaign office had 37 people in it and

was dead broke.” Finances dictated that the campaign join forces with the Republican National Committee to produce “hybrid” ads, promoting McCain but also targeting opponents or issues, such as “liberals in Congress.” These hybrid ads made “no sense,” said Schmidt, and were described as “like watching a Fellini film on acid.” Ultimately, the McCain team went its



Photo: Jeremy Quattlebaum

**David Axelrod**

own way on advertising, but by then, said Schmidt, it was too late to deliver a signature message for the candidate.

By contrast, the Obama team developed one of the most tightly focused message machines in American politics. For 22 months, there was just one message: “Change we can believe in.” “We didn’t deviate,” said Plouffe. Nor did the candidate.

“If you look at our announcement speech

in Springfield [Ill.] on February 10th, 2007, many of its core elements were in the speech he gave November 3<sup>rd</sup> [2008] in Manassas, Virginia, at 11 o'clock."

That message control filtered down to the grassroots level. "We wanted those volunteers at the door on October 20th in Roanoke, Virginia, to be as crisp in what they were saying as our advertising and our [candidate] was," said Plouffe. "And the only way to have that done was maintaining control over everything."



Photo: Acaben, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr\\_Obama\\_Springfield\\_01.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr_Obama_Springfield_01.jpg)

**From the day he announced his candidacy in Springfield, Ill., Barack Obama's message never deviated.**

The campaign took heat from some in the Democratic Party for not sharing its coat-tails – or fundraising clout. The Obama team didn't budge despite "tough internal discussions" with party leaders, said Plouffe. "Most of them didn't think it was going to work to their benefit but in the end, it did."

Inside the McCain campaign, Schmidt and his colleagues labored to distance their candidate from an increasingly unpopular president. Iraq, said Schmidt, "did as much as any other issue to injure [McCain] politically and to diminish the difference in his brand, his difference from the president. When McCain backed a troop surge in Iraq, his numbers rose. Then came Barack Obama's July trip to Iraq, the Middle East and Europe, culminating in a huge outdoor rally in Berlin.

"Senator Obama looked as if he should be standing on the world stage," said Schmidt.

"He looked like a president of the United States. Everything about him, from how articulate he is, to the eloquence and gracefulness of his physical movements. He looked tremendous."

Although it earned their candidate high marks, the Obama team knew the trip had its risks. "[I]t was a high-wire act and there were many places where the thing could have gone awry," recalled Axelrod. "Tip-toeing through Israeli politics or any number of other places, where something could have gone wrong. But it went well."

So well, in fact, there was pushback – something that happened every time "it looked like we were getting too big for our britches," said Axelrod. "I think there was a sense that Barack Obama had enormous potential but people weren't sure whether he had earned this opportunity [to be president]. They wanted him to prove it...And

nominating convention in Denver in late August pleased with the stirring speech delivered by their candidate. As they sat on the plane, their Blackberries started "going nuts," recalled Axelrod. John McCain had chosen Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin as his running mate.

For McCain, the choice was every bit as calculated as Obama's selection of Delaware Senator Joe Biden a week earlier. Biden brought to the table "a few gray hairs and a long resume," said Axelrod, offsetting Obama's lack of experience in foreign affairs.

Palin also was handpicked to send a message to voters, said senior advisor Nicolle Wallace, who noted that Palin's selection "was the first secret the McCain campaign actually kept."

"He sought a running mate who had done some of the same things that he had done, had stood up to special interests, had stood up to her own party, had taken a stand against corruption and was a doer and a player on the national energy scene," said Wallace.

The media jumped all over Palin, spoofing her interview with NBC's Katie Couric, probing the private lives of her family, criticizing her inability to answer substantive questions. Although McCain and his advisors believed Palin held her own, they were dismayed at the news media during the campaign. Especially McCain.

"Senator Obama looked as if he should be standing on the world stage. He looked like a president of the United States. Everything about him, from how articulate he is, to the eloquence and gracefulness of his physical movements."

Steve Schmidt

I think that's reasonable. I think they wanted to know that this guy was ready to be president of the United States."

The Obama team left the Democratic

"John McCain was sad that the media had changed so drastically from 2000," said Wallace. "The media in 2000 was a press corps that got on a bus and spent a day talking [with the candidate] about an issue..."



The media of 2008 would get on a bus leg in the middle of a conversation, type out a blog about how his sock was down or didn't match his shoe."

"John McCain was sad that the media had changed so drastically from 2000....The media of 2008 would get on a bus leg in the middle of a conversation, type out a blog about how his sock was down or didn't match his shoe."

Nicolle Wallace

"The media has an impulse control problem," added Wallace. "It cannot help itself from jumping on the seediest or the most unseemly or the most unsubstantiated rumor."

Anita Dunn, who was on Obama's central communications team, was also critical. "The nature of campaign coverage in 2008 was totally reactive. It was non-stop. There was no context and no analysis. I was shocked for at least two days, until we figured out exactly how we wanted to play it."

And how they elected to play it was to "communicate around the filter" of the media. "We decided very quickly that we were going to force the media to actually cover the campaign on our terms." There would be no leaks, no backstories doled out to favored members of the media – and strict limits placed on access to the candidate, especially on national print journalists.

Like Wallace, Dunn had harsh words for the media's failure to focus on substance. "The place where I think the press [produced] its worst coverage of the general election was in the total absence of any kind of scrutiny of the issue on which we spent the most money in the general election, health care." The only in-depth reporting on the differences in the two candidates' positions on health care came from local media, said Dunn.

Dunn also credited the work of independent organizations such as APPC's FactCheck.org for researching the candidates' claims and weighing in on their veracity. These "referees ended up playing a signifi-

cant role," said Dunn. Their findings, she added, carried credibility with the voting public and were often cited by the campaigns themselves.

FactCheck hosted its own debriefing in Washington, inviting representatives from the Republican and Democratic national committees as well as interest groups as di-



verse as Freedom's Watch, Planned Parenthood and Defenders of Wildlife to discuss getting their messages across during the 2008 election season.

Rich Beeson, political director of the Republican National Committee, reiterated Steve Schmidt's frustration about the effectiveness of so-called "hybrid" ads. "You don't get as clean of a hit as you do with a straight candidate ad," Beeson said. Noting that the Obama campaign had \$746 million at its disposal, he said, "We brought a knife to a gun fight and we had to do everything that we could to maximize the resources

we had."

Third-party ads also proved to be successful, the panelists noted. One in particular generated a huge response. Shortly after Sarah Palin was selected, the Defenders of Wildlife, which has a strong base in her home state of Alaska, decided to act.

With a budget of about \$6,000, the organization put together a 60-second ad describing Palin's support for aerial hunting of wolves, with a \$150 bounty for a severed leg, and bought air time in Ohio and on the internet. The ad became a story on its own, was featured in *Saturday Night Live* skits and in a *New Yorker* cartoon, and generated more than \$1 million in contributions.

From the audience came a question: Does Obama's success spell the end for publicly financed elections? Lawrence R. Scanlon Jr., director of the political action department of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which

spent more than \$84 million in the 2007-2008 election cycle, responded:

"I don't think so because [Obama's] a very unique candidate and they clearly have the magic elixir, but a lot of other candidates don't have that....I think there will be some candidates who will want to take advantage of the system."

Steve Schmidt, McCain's strategist, thinks differently. To be successful the next Republican nominee will have to raise close to \$1 billion, he told the Philadelphia audience. As a result, "public financing is over." ♦

# Democracy: The Implications of Ignorance

Americans lack basic knowledge about the judicial branch of government and the crucial role an independent judiciary plays in our democracy, said retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor at the third annual Leonore Annenberg Lecture in Public Service and Global Understanding, presented Nov. 21 at the Annenberg School for Communication.

Particularly worrisome is how little young people understand – or care, she observed.

Citing data gathered by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, Justice O'Connor noted that while nearly two-thirds of Americans can name at least one of the judges on Fox Television's *American Idol* program, less than one in 10 can identify the chief justice of the United States. Even worse, she added, "most young people aren't interested, frankly, in the chief justice of the United States."

Voters in three-fourths of the states elect their judges, yet the public often does not understand the role the judiciary plays. "Think about the implication of this ignorance for the continuing vitality of our nation," O'Connor warned.

O'Connor, who served 25 years as an associate justice before retiring in 2006, has become an advocate for public education in civics, especially for young people. She is the guiding force behind a free, interactive instructional program for middle school students called "Our Courts." In addition, she speaks frequently about the dangers of costly and contentious judicial elections around the country. Both subjects were high on her agenda during this speech, entitled "The Constitution, the Courts and Civic Education."

State judicial elections have become increasingly nasty and expensive, O'Connor told her audience, triggering a funding "arms race." These days, a state judicial campaign can cost as much as a race for a U.S. Senate seat. In 2006, two candidates



**Justice Sandra Day O'Connor speaks on the judiciary, democracy and engaging the next generation.**

for the Illinois Supreme Court raised a total of \$9.3 million.

"That's amazing to me," said O'Connor. "I used to be a state supreme court judge [in Arizona]. If I ever raised over \$500, I can't remember it."

"The frightening part is these election dollars are [funding] one of the major sources of information [the public receives] about the role of the judiciary." But that informa-

**"These ads are to judicial selection what french fries are to nutrition."**

Sandra Day O'Connor

tion often comes in the form of incomplete and sometimes inflammatory television ads.

"These ads are to judicial selection what french fries are to nutrition," she continued. "Full of information but very little of it is helpful, and some of it is downright harmful."

TV ads often misrepresent facts and are designed to frighten voters, she said. Complicated legal decisions the candidate may

have made are reduced to slogans, and "faithfulness to the law is subordinated to sound bites."

The contentiousness of judicial elections erodes public confidence in the impartiality of those sitting on the bench. "We have to educate people about the value of an independent judiciary," O'Connor told her audience. And the place to begin is in the schools. Unfortunately, she noted, half of the states have eliminated civics and government as a part of their curricula.

It is possible to engage young people in government and politics, she said. "We saw that in the [presidential] election." The way to build interest is to utilize technologies popular among students – blogging, text messaging, social networks and interactive games. O'Connor noted that the Annenberg Public Policy Center has been active in helping devise some of the interactive teaching tools used in Our Courts.

Returning to the subject of judicial independence, O'Connor told her audience that the courts and judges cannot protect themselves against special interests that seek to affect the outcome of litigation by influencing who occupies the bench. "We need to educate the public that [judicial]

accountability and judicial independence are two sides of the same coin," she said. "Accountability ensures that judges perform their constitutional role and judicial independence allows judges to avoid outside pressures that would pull them out of that role."

"If our citizens have a good education about what our system of government is all about," she concluded, "I think our nation will be in good hands." ♦

## Scholars learn while mining APPC data

During their first year, the three fellows at the new Annenberg Center for Advanced Study in Communication have been busy digging and learning, trolling through the vast storehouse of data amassed by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, and honing their skills in the postdoctoral world.

For Sally Dunlop, who holds a doctorate in psychology from the University of Melbourne, the two-year fellowship has been a welcome change from the intense focus of writing a dissertation. Now, she's free to work on smaller projects. "That's a more realistic way to work," she said. "I like having a few things going on. When you hit a block on one subject, you can move on to the other." Dunlop, who hopes to return to Australia at the end of the fellowship and work in the area of public health, has studied the influence of the media on adolescents' use of seatbelts. She's also delved into APPC's database on teen smoking and marketing.

Priya Nalkur-Pai, who holds a doctorate in education from Harvard, has been improving her quantitative research skills to supplement her qualitative research experience. She finds the freedom to explore a wide range of topics on adolescent development rewarding.

Nalkur-Pai, Dunlop and the third fellow, Cortney Evans, whose doctorate is in marriage, family and human development from Brigham Young University, have also participated in programs of guest speakers, sessions on grant-writing and applying for jobs as well as writing for scholarly journals.

Amy Jordan, who directs the center, also rates the first year a success. "I can't be more pleased with how the cohort has jelled. They've been very productive. APPC has given them a lot of opportunities they otherwise would not have had." ♦

# Bringing Civics to Life

The next generation of national leaders – students now in middle and high school – knows alarmingly little about how democracy works. One national survey showed that a third of students couldn't even name the governor of their state.

It was the goal of Leonore Annenberg, who believed deeply in the value of civics education, to erase that lack of knowledge. In endowing the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics last year, she hoped to engage young people in how government functions at all levels.

Forget musty old civics textbooks. The new Institute will develop curricula that involve those on democracy's front lines. Innovation is the key.

Work has already begun. Two videos describing the structure and jurisdiction of the federal courts have been completed, featuring judges themselves. An interactive diagram of the court system is available for students and teachers. And an interactive DVD providing an overview of the court system, including a legal lexicon from landmark Supreme Court cases and courtroom simulations, is being prepared.

Over the coming year, high school students will meet with governors, judges and legislators to hear firsthand the du-

ties and responsibilities of these offices and those who fill them. Their discussions and question-and-answer sessions will be recorded and made available in communication formats teens frequently use. Among the offerings will be the *Our Constitution Card Game*, an interactive video game compatible for web browsing and smart phones.

While creativity and imagination are being applied to the instructional offerings, the Institute is carefully tailoring its materials to meet National Social Studies Standards. Schools in four states already have signed on to use the curricula.

Drawing on additional programming materials produced by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, including the award-winning FactCheckEd.org, Annenberg Classroom and Student Voices, the information and lesson plans will be diverse. Materials will be continuously updated.

Early next year, students will attend the National Governors Association meeting in Washington, where they will confer with top state executives to ask about the function of state government, its relevance in the federal system and the powers and limitations of the office of governor. Government classes boring? Not any more. ♦

## FactCheck Wins Again

For the third year in a row, FactCheck.org has been named the best political Web site in the 2009 Webby "People's Voice" competition. As the leading international award honoring excellence on the Internet, the Webbys are presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences. This is the 13<sup>th</sup> year the awards have been presented.

Winners of the People's Voice category are chosen by Web users who cast votes

for their favorite sites. Other People's Voice winners in this year's voting included Wired.com, the Huffington Post blog and Flickr.

"We're pleased that our readers value the information we provide," said Brooks Jackson, director of FactCheck.org. "That's what inspires us to keep on sorting through the spin and holding politicians accountable." ♦

# On the RECORD

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THE ANNENBERG  
PUBLIC POLICY CENTER  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Annenberg Public Policy Center  
3535 Market St., Suite 200  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
(215) 898-9400  
[www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org](http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org)



# APPC

## MAKES SENSE OF POLITICS TO THOSE AROUND THE WORLD

Στη σελίδα υπογραμμίζεται επίσης ότι ο ισχυρισμός των Ρεπουμπλικανών πως η Αλάσκα παράγει το 20% της ενέργειας των ΗΠΑ "δεν είναι αληθής, ούτε καν προσεγγίζει στην αλήθεια", σύμφωνα με άλλη ιστοσελίδα, την [factcheck.org](http://factcheck.org) που εξακριβώνει την αλήθεια των όσων δηλώνουν οι δύο υποψήφιοι κατά τη διάρκεια της προεκλογικής εκστρατείας τους.

Source: [typos.com.cy](http://www.typos.com.cy), the online newspaper of Cyprus, [http://www.typos.com.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a\\_id=96388](http://www.typos.com.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=96388)

"The shotgun nature of the second debate made it very difficult to learn anything," said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

Source: *The Australian*, <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24500326-5013948,00.html>

"A quanto pare" ha commentato Dan Romer, direttore dell'Annenberg Adolescent Risk Communication Institute, "i giovani non hanno più la stessa passione per i giochi di carte come alcuni anni fa. L'entrata in vigore dell'UIGEA ha fatto scendere vertiginosamente le percentuali di uso settimanale nel 2007, e il 2008 si è assestato sugli stessi livelli (si è passati dal 4,1% del 2006, all'1,8-1,9% degli ultimi due anni - NdR). Non bisogna dimenticare, però, che a livello nazionale 300mila ragazzi giocano online ogni settimana, ogni mese sono 700mila".

Source: *la Repubblica*, Italy, [http://www.repubblica.it/news/giochi\\_e\\_scommesse/rep\\_giochi\\_scommesse\\_n\\_005749.html](http://www.repubblica.it/news/giochi_e_scommesse/rep_giochi_scommesse_n_005749.html)