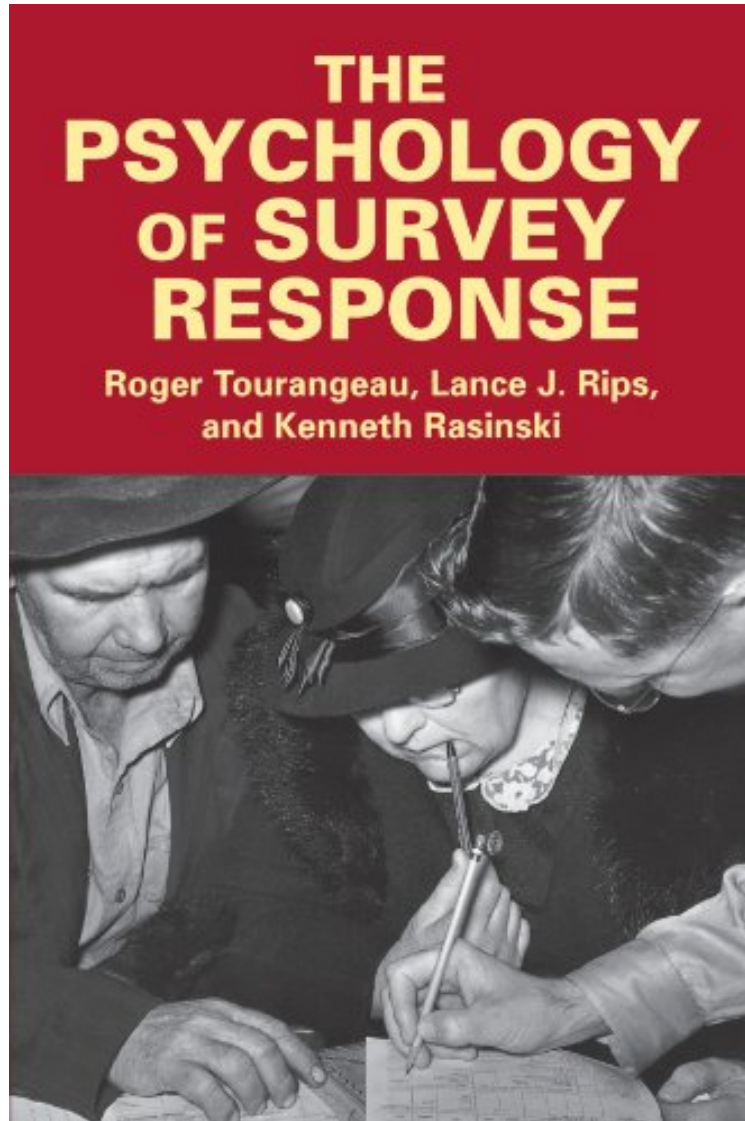


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The Psychology of Survey Response

Roger Tourangeau, Lance J. Rips, Kenneth Rasinski
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Roger Tourangeau, Lance J. Rips, Kenneth Rasinski : The Psychology of Survey Response before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Psychology of Survey Response:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. What Were They Thinking?By John M. FordThis book distills years of research into a theory of how people answer survey questions. Authored by three respected survey researchers, it is written for "...(1) social psychologists, political scientists, and others who study public opinion or who use data from public opinion surveys; (2) cognitive psychologists and other researchers who are interested in everyday memory and

judgment processes; and (3) survey researchers, methodologists, and statisticians who are involved in designing and carrying out surveys. "The authors begin by reviewing previous theories of survey response and then introduce their own model. This model is organized around four mental processes that survey participants must perform: Comprehend the question, retrieve information from memory, make a judgment based on that information, and translate that judgment into a response. Much of the book is organized around this model. Subsequent chapters address how participants understand--and misunderstand--survey questions, remember relevant information, and make judgments about it. We explore the effects of different question formats, alternative wording and variations in question order. Then the authors explore how survey participants decide to answer, including how they filter and edit their responses before committing to them. The book closes with a discussion of the implications of this model for future survey practice and research to improve that practice. This book is indeed useful for practitioners and researchers. It is worth digesting in its entirety, but its organization supports selective grazing by practitioners who want to focus on improving a single aspect of their surveys. Since it is over ten years old, the book has drifted behind current thinking in some respects. Readers would be wise to supplement with articles from *Public Opinion Quarterly* and more recent methods books, such as Groves, Fowler, Couper and Lepkowski's *Survey Methodology* or Fowler's *Survey Research Methods*.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Customer
Very good book. Arrived in great condition.
12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Clear writing, logical structure - everything you need to know about respondent biases and how questions ought to be asked.
By D. Stuart
Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski collaborated over four years to put this terrific volume together - and the hard work shows in its 342 pages of clearly written text and and close to 40 pages of references. Full marks all round!
The book covers psychological topics (such as how respondents recall facts - or don't, and how people make estimates,) as well as such technical topics that guide us in questionnaire design. The three authors cover a huge range of human biases in the way respondents perceive and contextualise the questions we endeavour to write. At every step they provide us with clear and sometimes dramatic examples, for example where responses shift by more than 30 per cent simply through question order. This is one of the few market research/survey design texts where the writing is cogent and clear: written in a style that I'd describe as colleague to colleague. Bravo! What a difference this makes. I consequently rate this book right up there with the excellent Scott Plous book, *Psychology of Judgment Decision Making* as one of the two most essential backgrounders for survey designers and questionnaire writers. We ignore respondent biases at our peril: this volume specifically shows us how to write more reliable, less ambiguous questions - and how to interpret the sometimes unexpected results we receive for our efforts.

Drawing on classic and modern research from cognitive psychology, social psychology, and survey methodology, this book examines the psychological roots of survey data, how survey responses are formulated, and how seemingly unimportant features of the survey can affect the answers obtained. Topics include the comprehension of survey questions, the recall of relevant facts and beliefs, estimation and inferential processes people use to answer survey questions, the sources of the apparent instability of public opinion, the difficulties in getting responses into the required format, and distortions introduced into surveys by deliberate misreporting.

"A superb job...Offers an excellent and unique account of cognitive and communicative influences in survey situations. The insights it provides make it an indispensable source for both researchers and practitioners." *Contemporary Psychology*

"For survey researchers, it provides a very scholarly and readable review of psychological theorizing and its implication for survey responding; for psychologists it offers a range of important phenomena that broaden the scope of psychological inquiry. . . . Readers are guaranteed to gain highly useful new insights from the author's masterful integration of research." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*

"The *Psychology of Survey Response* provides a masterful review and integration of what we know about survey responding. Written by some of the leading researchers at the interface of psychology and survey methods, this book will be of great interest to survey researchers and psychologists alike." Norbert Schwarz, University of Michigan

"This is the best and most comprehensive book in the growing literature on the psychology of survey responding. It includes useful summaries of the behavioral science, often providing better exposition than the primary sources, and it draws clear, useful implications for practice. It is a landmark example of the application of scientific theory and laboratory findings to real life problems." Reid Hastie, University of Colorado at Boulder

About the Author
Roger Tourangeau is a Vice President at Westat. Lance Rips received his Ph.D. from the Psychology Department at Stanford University in 1974 and taught at the University of Chicago from 1974 to 1993. Since 1993, Rips has been a Professor of Psychology at Northwestern University. He is on the editorial board of *Cognition*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and *Informal Logic*.