By Daniel Yankelovich

From their beginnings in the 18th and 19th centuries, the social sciences in universities have been pulled in two competing directions—the pursuit of scientific knowledge on the one hand; and on the other, the search for solutions to important societal problems. In this competition, the first direction—pursuing scientific knowledge—has prevailed overwhelmingly in American universities, a reality with far-reaching consequences.

There are several reasons why university-based social sciences have come to prioritize scientific inquiry over practical problem solving. The main one, I believe, is the spectacular success of the natural sciences. Their triumph is one of humanity’s greatest accomplishments. Emulating this inspiring model has proven too difficult for the social sciences to resist.

Other influences reinforce this one. It has proved easier to conduct scientific inquiry from a university base than to engage in messy social problems. Freedom to pick and choose one’s own line of inquiry has been a boon to tenured professors in an era when individualism is more highly valued than communal endeavor. And it has been all too convenient to fall back on the rationalization that, if you wait long enough, science eventually leads to successful problem solving. In reality, however, this truism may not apply to the social sciences as much as it does to the natural sciences. Though the label of science is attached to both, the social and the natural sciences are far from identical.

My own professional experience has led me to a very different set of conclusions. I have devoted over half a century to applied social science research in a variety of fields such as public opinion, social mobility, racial discrimination, poverty, mental health, addiction, consumer research, education, health care and how to strengthen self-respect and social cohesion. In all of these applications, I’ve worked with a range of academic studies in the social sciences. Many of them reveal useful insights, but with rare exceptions, they do not lead to practical solutions to problems.

The reason is fundamental. All share a set of premises that almost guarantee failure to solve real-world problems. Most focus on a single discipline, e.g., economics or psychology or political science. In more than fifty years of experience I have never once encountered a serious societal problem that fit within the boundaries of any one social science discipline.

The nation truly needs a number of university-based centers dedicated to solving urgent societal problems through effective social science methods.

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Continued on p.2
serving for the past several years. Change could come from several directions. If the Obama admin-
istration falters, Republicans could take full control of the government after 2016, breaking the stalemate. Whether such a victory would also shrink the ideological gap between
the parties is very doubtful. Any Republican presidential candidate, whose positions might appeal to
moderate Democrats and independents will have a very hard time winning the nomination from a Repub-
lican primary electorate dominated by the tea partiers and social conservatives (extensively overlapping
categories). A nominee acceptable to the party’s dominant right wing, even if victorious, would have little
prospect of bridging the partisan divide and could expect all-out opposition from the remaining Demo-
crats, replicating the Republican strategy after 2008.

From the opposite direction, a Democratic takeover of the House would require a considerably greater
shift in voting patterns than a Repub-
clian presidential victory, and it is diffi-
cult to imagine a scenario in which congressional Republicans allow
themselves to botch things so extra-
ganately that a national tide sweeps
them from power in 2014 or 2016. It
is easy to imagine the Senate changing party hands possibly more quickly, over the next several elections, but
unless one party wins a filibuster-
proof majority of 60 – a rare and un-
likely occurrence – the Senate’s rules
will continue to facilitate unrestrained
minority obstruction. Recent efforts
to amend these rules have come to
naught, although it remains conceiva-
ble that the minority may someday
exhaust the majority’s patience.

As I see it, the only reliable source of change would be an elec-
torate that punishes extremism and intransigence and regards moderation
as the path to a working government. As Jacobson’s “Partisan Polarization in American Politics: A Background
Paper” (Presidential Studies Quar-
terly December 2013) omitting notes

At the moment, the inven-
tory of urgent problems facing our
democracy grows more daunting
year by year. In 2011, 5,000 colleges and universities all
have social science departments that
largely ignore these problems.

The new Center should not in-
terefer in any way with faculty and
students at UCSD who wish to pur-
se pure scientific inquiry. It simply adds another option for those who
prefer the problem-solving direction. If the Center succeeds in its problem
solving mission, the university will also have added a powerful new
resource to its scientific knowledge-
gathering capability. With a bit of
luck, the university may happily acknowledge that it has found a way to
go in both directions at the same
time.

Daniel Yankelovich, a UCSD benefactor and as-
sociate of the Division of Social Sciences, has en-
joyed a distinguished ca-
reer as an analyst of pub-
ic opinion. He is the co-
founder and chair of Pub-
lic Agenda, a public-
interest advocacy organi-
zation. The Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research is dedicated to finding practical solutions to
the nation’s most urgent problems. Theory and ap-
lication are fused as fac-
ulty, students and commu-
nity members work across
disciplines to narrow the
opportunity gap in educa-
tion, jobs, health care and
more.

Emeriti Association creates a support group

As we emeriti age, some of us unfortunately become isolated due to the loss of a partner or a debilitating
accident or illness. The Emeriti Association is starting a pilot project that will offer support by
colleagues to those in need. Some examples of the type of support that may be provided are: calls, visits,
phone/computer assistance, rides, advice, etc.

Please contact Mel Green if you know of any Emeriti Association member who might appreciate
some type of support from a colleague. It would be very helpful if you would indicate the nature of the
problem and any emeriti who may know the person on more than a casual basis.

The members of the emeriti support group will then determine whether support is desired and if so,
find someone willing to provide it. Names of those assisted will be kept confidential.

The support group members currently include: Irma Gigli, Carol Plantamura, Arnold Mandell,
Maxine Bloor, and Joel Dimsdale. Additional volunteers should please notify Mel Green.

Mel Green
Email: mgreen@ucsd.edu
Cell phone: 858-735-3545

UCSD Emeriti Association

Anecdottage

By Sandy Lakoff

In trying to explain to my class on the government and politics of the Middle East the role of the Israeli
collective-farm movement in the early years of state-
hood, I first called their attention to Mel Spire’s classic study,
Kibbutz: Ventre in Utopia. In that book, I point-
ed out, Mel had elucidated both the pros and cons of this experiment in communal living. Then I illustrated
one of the problems by telling an old Israeli joke about
the ultra-radical Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz that was so
determined to do away with everything bourgeoisie that it
abolished the raising of children in separate families.
Instead, the kids were reared collectively so as to pro-
mote a Spartan-style communal solidarity. The joke had
it that one of the boys so raised went to his mother in
despair. He told her he had fallen in love with Dina, but
his father told him he couldn’t marry her because she
was his sister. “I got over her,” he went on, “and fell in
love with Chana, but once again father said I could not
marry her either because she too is my sister.” To which
his mother replied, “My son, marry either Dina or
Chana, you are not your father’s son.”

UCSD Emeriti Association

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The Montana Department of Employment, Division of Labor Standards claimed a small rancher was not pay-
ing proper wages to his help and sent an agent out to in-
vestigate him.

GOVERNMENT AGENT: “I need a list of your em-
ployees and how much you pay them.”

RANCHER: “Well, there’s my hired hand who’s been with me for three years. I pay him $200 a week plus free
room and board. Then there’s the mentally challenged guy. He works about 18 hours every day and does about 90%
of the work around here. He makes about $10 per week, pays his own room and board, and I buy him a bot-
tle of bourbon every Saturday night so he can cope with life. He also sleeps with my wife occasionally.”

GOVERNMENT AGENT: “That’s the guy I want to talk to – the mentally challenged one.”

RANCHER: “That would be me.”

(Thanks to Edie Parte)
presidential victory in 2016 fol-
lowed by a disastrous early presi-
dency would seem to give them any hope of taking over.

The Senate is no lock for ei-
ther party, and the lineup for 2014 favors the Republicans. Democrats must defend 20 of the 33 seats up for election, seven from states won by Romney; Obama took only one of the 13 states that will have Re-
publican-held seats on the ballot. But the Republicans’ chances of picking up the six seats they would need for a majority depends on keeping the extreme-right Tea Party faction in check, at least in states that are not deep red. It may not be easy for Republican offi-
cials to avoid such nominations, because Tea Party sympathizers make up a majority of Republican primary electorate in many states. The Tea Party faction’s views on such issues as immigration, abor-
tion, same-sex marriage, global
water, and taxation makes them resist-
ant to changes in the party’s message that might expand its ap-
peal beyond its conservative base.
The Right’s demonstrated capacity to punish incumbent Republicans in primaries discourages departures from party orthodoxy. Unfor-
luckily, the members.         Two things stand out. First, of course, is that the congressional par-
ties have moved apart; the ideologi-
cal gap has widened from .568 to .845 in the Senate, and from .527 to 1.070 in the House over this peri-

America’s partisan Divide: Sharp and Deep-Set

Continued on p. 7

Continued on p. 4

by Gary C. Jacobson

Distinguished Professor of Political Science

Acute partisan conflict arising from the ideological polarization of the national parties is now a domi-

nating feature of American politics. The series of prominent short-term compromises to stave off disasters such as the default on the national debt or a government shutdown. Conflict and gridlock have damaged the public standing of everyone involved, for most people detest the partisan pos-
tions we have been ob-

Professor Gary Jacobson

An article examining the causes and consequences of the growing ideological divide in national politics.

By Gary C. Jacobson

Distinguished Professor of Political Science

Acute partisan conflict arising from the ideological polarization of the national parties is now a domi-
nating feature of American politics. The series of prominent short-term fixes to avoid pending disaster become the order of the day. To consider what, if anything, might alter this state of affairs, it is

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The gaps for both chambers in the 112

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giance to the Democratic party in districts of liberal coloration and ra-
cially more compatible Republicans.

In-migration also contributed to an increasingly Republican elec-
torate, which gradually replaced conservative Democrats with con-
servative Republicans in southern House and Senate seats. Conserva-
tive whites outside the South also moved to the conservative Pa-
try, while liberals overcame

The decline in shared constitu-
tions between the parties and pro-
testine support and roll call voting

Partisan defection rates reported in the ANES studies for House elec-
tions peaked at 24% in the 1980 election and for Senate elections at 22% in 1972. By 2012, the defe-
cation rates had declined to 10% in

c(shape the 2012 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), that
tage exceeded 90%.)

As a consequence of these
tions, the ideological leanings of districts are more divergent. In

distributor trends have been noted

date the congressional parties have grown increas-

After 1972, each party’s dele-

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A new era of competitive voting for a party to make significant gains

The increase in the Republicans’ structural advantage after the most re-

In sum, there is ample evidence that

Although Republican gerrymanders reinforced this advantage by redistri-

The Republicans’ structural advantage means that Democrats are likely to remain a minority in

Midterm elections rarely feature a

TheRepublicans’ structural

voters are distributed more

efficiently across House districts than are regular Democratic voters.

One important consequence of these
tions is that members of Con-

or vice versa – for the entire six-
decade ANES series. In the 1970s, a quarter of the House and Senate elec-
torates reported voting a split ticket; by the 2000s, the average incidence of
ticket splitting had fallen to 16% in House elections, and 13% in Senate elections. The rates for 2012 were 11% and 10.9%, respectively.

Reflecting these individual-level changes, the 2012 ANES studies for House
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One important consequence of these
tions is that members of Con-
gence to the Democratic party in favor of the ideologically and racially more compatible Republicans. In-migration also contributed to an increasingly Republican electorate, which gradually replaced conservative Democrats with conservative Republicans in southern House and Senate districts. Conservative whites outside the South also moved Republican. Congressional parties’ electoral bases is even more striking in the aggregate voting data. The presidential vote in a state or district offers a serviceable measure of its relative political leanings. Reckoning with the ANES studies for House elections peaked at 24% in the 1980 election and for Senate elections at 22% in 1972. By 2012, the deflection rates were only 11% and 10.9%, respectively. The decline in shared constituencies between the parties and opposite-party members of Congress defects in ticket splitting among voters since the 1970s. Partisan defection rates reported in the ANES studies for House elections peaked at 24% in the 1980 election and for Senate elections at 22% in 1972. By 2012, the defection rates fell to only 11% in House elections, 11% in Senate elections, and the proportion of the congressional electorate made up of self-identified liberals and conservatives has shrunk by nearly two-thirds since the 1980s and after 2012 was down to only 6.7%, a manifestation of partisan sorting; thus very few representatives (29 to 10.9%) now serve districts without a clear partisan tilt. The increase in the Republicans’ structural advantage and the recent districts won by Romney, Democrats controlled the process in six states with a total of 202 House seats, whereas Democrats controlled the process in only six states with a total of 47 seats. Republicans exploited this opportunity to gain seats in their marginal districts, adding 46 seats to their majority, the Republicans’ structural advantage means that Democrats are likely to remain a minority in the House for the rest of the decade. They would need a favorable national tide at least as powerful as the one they rode to power in 2006 and 2008 to pick up enough seats to win a majority under this configuration. Midterm elections rarely feature a national tide favoring the president’s party, and it would be completely unprecedented for Democrats to gain the 17 seats they currently need to attain a majority in 2014. Normally, the president’s party loses House seats at the midterm; in the three historic exceptions (1938, 1998, and 2002), the most it gained was nine. It is also unusual for a party to make significant gains in both chambers of Congress at least two terms. Only a Republican majority
socially conservative, all shrinking demographic categories. The white share of the electorate, 88% when Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980, and 84% when George W. Bush won in 2000, was only 72% in 2012 and is projected to decline to less than two-thirds in a few more elections. Unless the Republican Party broadens its appeal to young, minority, secular, and women voters, it will have a hard time competing for the presidency.

The prognosis, then, is for a continuation of divided government featuring ideologically polarized partisan conflict, because the current configuration of national politics favors electoral realities that are unlikely to change soon. It would take a major electoral upheaval for Democrats to take over the House. The staunch conservatives who dominate the Republican House coalition are firmly entrenched in safe districts who promise a religion other than Christianity. The incoming class of freshmen includes 40 new members who are female, ethnic minorities, and six openly gay or lesbian members. The 2012 elections basically reiterated the partisan status quo – Democrats picked up six seats in the House and Senate in 2013, nearly three-quarters are Democrats, as are 23 of the 28 Latinos, 41 of the 41 African Americans, and minorities outnumber white males in the Democratic caucus for the first time in history, while nearly 90% of the Republicans are white Christian men. Of the record 102 women taking seats in the House and Senate in 2013, nearly three-quarters are Democrats, as are 23 of the 28 Latinos, 40 of the 41 African Americans, all 11 Asian Americans, all six openly gay or bisexual members, and 36 of the 37 Americans who profess a religion other than Christianity. The incoming class of freshmen includes 40 new members who are female, ethnic minority, non-Christian, or gay (some in multiples of these categories); only five of them – all women – are Republicans. The 2012 elections basically reiterated the partisan status quo – Democrats picked up six seats in the House, two in the Senate – but the demographic mix of the winning members pointed to a strong undercurrent of continuing and profound change in the composition of Congress. The growing demographic differences between parties and regions reflect the growing political importance of women and minorities.

America’s governing institutions are inherently prone to stalemate and, according to James Madison’s famous Federalist 10, designedly so. The bicameral legislature, presidential veto, and separate electoral bases and calendars of representatives, senators, and presidents were intended to thwart simple majority rule, and they always have. The Senate’s requirement of a supermajority of 60 votes to overcome filibusters on most types of legislation imposes yet another barrier to action. Thus when the parties are deeply divided and neither enjoy full control of the levers of government, it is useful to have a clear idea of how it came to be. The evidence, in my view, shows that elite polarization is firmly rooted in electoral politics and is therefore likely to remain until electoral configurations change.

The systematic evidence documenting the increasing partisan polarization in Congress is familiar to all congressionals involved in the analysis of scores based on all non-unanimous roll call votes taken during each Congress. These serve to locate each member for each Congress on a liberal-conservative scale that ranges from -1.0 to 1.0, the higher the score, the more conservative the member.

The main source of this electoral transformation was the partisan realignment of the South. The civil rights revolution, and particularly the Voting Rights Act of 1965, brought southern blacks into southern electorates as Democrats, while moving conservative whites to abandon their ancestral allegiance. The Right’s demonstrated capacity to punish incumbent Republicans in primaries discourages departures from party orthodoxy. Unless national leaders find a way to avoid fielding candidates whose appeal is limited to the party’s most conservative voters, Republicans will continue to lose winnable Senate seats.

The Republicans’ main problem, however, is at the presidential level. Explanations of Obama’s reelection have rightly focused on his ability to attract the votes of growing segments of the electorate: young people, singles (especially single women), social liberals, the nonchurched, and ethnic minorities – Asian Americans as well as Hispanics. Under Ronald Reagan’s coalition, in contrast, was overwhelmingly white, older, married, religiously observant, and socially conservative, all shrinking demographic categories. The white share of the electorate, 88% when Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980, and 84% when George W. Bush won in 2000, was only 72% in 2012 and is projected to decline to less than two-thirds in a few more elections. Unless the Republican Party broadens its appeal to young, minority, secular, and women voters, it will have a hard time competing for the presidency.

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Most lack a compelling way to assess the relative importance of one influence over another (e.g., class size versus teacher training versus the role of the principal in assessing school performance). They do not select interventions strategically to suit particular situations. In short, they all lack a sound working knowledge of how the rules of problem-solving research differ from the rules of gaining scientific knowledge.

This situation may be tolerable as long as the nation is in good shape and can afford to subsidize the social sciences without obliging them to help solve important problems. But under current circumstances, with a polarized government in Washington, sluggish economic growth, and a lack of social cohesion, it seems to me morally indefensible not to apply social science knowledge and methodology to alleviate the stress to which the nation is currently exposed.

My purpose in launching the Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research is to encourage research designed to address some of the nation’s most urgent problems, such as how best to:

- open up the clogged channels of social mobility,
- deal with mental health issues in a practical way without bankrupting the country,
- reduce health care costs in areas where social norms may be dysfunctional (e.g., end-of-life care
- improve education performance and equality of opportunity for young people in underserved communities, and
- restore a sense of cohesion to American democracy and reduce polarization.

The nation truly needs a number of university-based centers dedicated to solving urgent societal problems through effective social science methods. At the moment, the inventory of urgent problems facing our democracy grows more daunting every year while our more than 5,000 colleges and universities all have social science departments that largely ignore these problems.

The new Center should not interfere in any way with faculty and students at UCSD who wish to pursue pure scientific inquiry. It simply adds another option for those who prefer the problem-solving direction. If the Center succeeds in its problem-solving mission, the university will also have added a powerful new resource to its scientific knowledge-gathering capability. With a bit of luck, the university may happen to discover that it has found a way to go in both directions at the same time.

Daniel Yankelovich, a UCSD benefactor and associate of the Division of Social Sciences, has enjoyed a distinguished career as an analyst of public opinion. He is the co-founder and chair of Public Agenda, a public-interest advocacy organization. The Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research is dedicated to finding practical solutions to the nation’s most urgent problems. Theory and application are fused as faculty, students, and community members work across disciplines to narrow the opportunity gap in education, jobs, health care and more.

Emeriti Association creates a support group

As we enter the age, some of us unfortunately become isolated due to the loss of a partner or a debilitating accident or illness. The Emeriti Association is starting a pilot project that will offer support by colleagues to those in need. Some examples of the type of support that may be provided are: calls, visits, phone/computer assistance, rides, advice, etc.

Please contact Mel Green if you know of any Emeriti Association member who might appreciate some type of support from a colleague. It would be very helpful if you would indicate the nature of the problem and any emeriti who may know the person on more than a casual basis.

The members of the emeriti support group will then determine whether support is desired and if so, find someone willing to provide support. Names of those assisted will be kept confidential.

The support group members currently include: Irma Gigli, Carol Plantamura, Arnold Mandell, Maxine Bloor, and Joel Dimsdale. Additional volunteers should please notify Mel Green.

Mel Green
Email: mgreen@ucsd.edu
Cell phone: 858-735-3545

CHRONICLES May 2014

UCSD Emeriti Association

Anecdotal

By Sandy Lakoff

In trying to explain to my class on the government and politics of the Middle East the role of the Israeli collective-farm movement in the early years of statehood, I first called their attention to Mel Spiri’s classic study, Kibbutz: Venture in Utopia. In that book, I pointed out, Mel had elucidated both the pros and cons of this experiment in communal living. Then I illustrated one of the problems by telling an old Israeli joke about the ultra-radical Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz that was so determined to do away with everything bourgeois that it abolished the raising of children in separate families. Instead, the kids were reared collectively so as to promote a Spartan-style communal solidarity. The joke had it that one of the boys so raised went to his mother in despair. He told her he had fallen in love with Dina, but his father told him he couldn’t marry her because she was his sister. “I got over her,” he went on, “and fell in love with Chana, but once again my father said I could not marry her either because she too is my sister.” To which his mother replied, “My son, marry either Dina or Chana, you are not your father’s son.”

UCSD Emeriti Association

The Montana Department of Employment, Division of Labor Standards claimed a small rancher was not paying proper wages to his help and sent an agent out to investigate him.

GOVERNMENT AGENT: “I need a list of your employees and how much you pay them.”

RANCHER: “That would be me.”

GOVERNMENT AGENT: “That’s the guy I want to talk to – the mentally challenged one.”

RANCHER: “That would be me.”

The fate of the moderate Blue Dog Coalition of House Democrats is indicative of capitulation, resignations, retirements, and defections that left 57 to 27 in 2010 and further to 14 in 2012. If voters actually prefer representatives who have a peculiar way of showing it. Thus for the foreseeable future, the challenge will be to make government work despite an electoral configuration that continues to promote divided government and polarized politics.

This is an abbreviated version of Jacobson’s “Partisan Polarization in American Politics: A Background Paper” (Presidential Studies Quarterly December 2013) omitting notes and graphs.
By Daniel Yankelovich

From their beginnings in the 18th and 19th centuries, the social sciences in universities have been pulled in two competing directions—the pursuit of scientific knowledge on the one hand; and on the other, the search for solutions to important societal problems. In this competition, the first direction—pursuing scientific knowledge—has prevailed overwhelmingly in American universities, a reality with far-reaching consequences.

There are several reasons why university-based social sciences have come to prioritize scientific inquiry over practical problem solving. The main one, I believe, is the spectacular success of the natural sciences. Their triumph is one of humanity's greatest accomplishments. Emulating this inspiring model has proven too difficult for the social sciences to resist.

Other influences reinforce this one. It has proved easier to conduct scientific inquiry from a university base than to engage in messy social problems. Freedom to pick and choose one's own line of inquiry has been a boon to tenured professors in an era when individualism is more highly valued than communal endeavor. And it has been all too convenient to fall back on the rationalization that, if you wait long enough, science eventually leads to successful problem solving. In reality, however, this truism may not apply to the social sciences as much as it does to the natural sciences. Though the label of science is attached to both, the social and the natural sciences are far from identical.

My own professional experience has led me to a very different set of conclusions. I have devoted over half a century to applied social science research in a variety of fields such as public opinion, social mobility, racial discrimination, poverty, mental health, addiction, consumer research, education, health care and how to strengthen self-respect and social cohesion. In all of these applications, I've worked with a range of academic studies in the social sciences. Many of them reveal useful insights, but with rare exceptions, they do not lead to practical solutions to problems.

The reason is fundamental. All share a set of premises that almost guarantee failure to solve real-world problems.

Most focus on a single discipline, e.g., economics or psychology or political science. In more than fifty years of experience I have never once encountered a serious societal problem that fit within the boundaries of any one social science discipline. The nation truly needs a number of university-based centers dedicated to solving urgent societal problems through effective social science methods.

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