

## Conference Abstracts

# Conference on Computing and the Social Sciences 1993

### Conference Summary

The Conference for Computing in Social Sciences 1993 (CSS'93) was held May 19-21, 1993, at the National Center for Supercomputing Application (NCSA) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. CSS'93 was the fourth annual conference of the Social Science Computing Association (SSCA). The purpose of SSCA is to promote the development of computing within the social sciences through organized activities and the interchange of ideas, data, teaching materials, experiences, research results, and other resources.

The theme of CSS'93 was "Grand Challenges for the Social Sciences." High performance computing can provide social scientists with the resources necessary to effectively address large-scale problems of national and international interest in the areas of global climate change policy analysis, pollution prevention and waste management, urban development, disease control, global and social modeling, and social science visualization. Paper topics included the utilization of high performance computing, artificial intelligence, database management, networks, GIS, visualization, socioeconomic modeling, analytic methods, hypermedia, and policy impacts of computing.

Below you will find a subset of conference abstracts. Please contact individual authors for complete papers. For more information about CSS'93 or the SSCA, contact the conference organizer, Melanie Loots, National Center for Supercomputing Application, 405 North Mathews Avenue, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801; tel: 217-244-0072; fax: 217-244-2909; e-mail: mloots@ncsa.uiuc.edu

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### Computer Ethics: Some Issues for Social Science Computing

Ron Anderson  
University of Minnesota

Computer specialists in the social sciences sometimes face specific decisions on whether or not to violate a software license or how much effort to devote to ensuring the privacy of records in their data files. In order to make these ethical decisions we must consider broad ethical issues such as property rights, intellectual credit, and confidentiality. To facilitate such consideration,

selected ethically relevant case studies will be presented.

The audience will be asked for their ethical opinions on these scenarios, then the ethical decisions within these cases will be interpreted according to the newly adopted Code of Ethics of the Association for Computing Machinery.

Then data will be reported on student opinions regarding appropriate ethical behavior in such cases. The data will come from international surveys in several countries and include responses from several different grade levels. It will be possible to explore the question of whether or not greater knowledge and experience with computers results in more ethically oriented opinions. Implications of these issues and research results for social scientists will be discussed.

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### Sexually Explicit Personal Ads

Laura Corradi

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Personal ads are directly affecting everyday life. Their impact can be estimated by looking at the number of people placing ads, the amount of magazines that devote several pages to ads, publications specifically created for personal ads, computer networks which offer specialized ads (like in internet.bondage, internet.SM) and opportunities for e-mail sex. Many studies on personal ads have a psychological behavioristic structure and do not deal with the important changes related to this phenomenon in everyday life. Our standing point is that personal ads serve to mediate social—specifically sexual—relations and have a significant effect upon the form of these relations. Personal ads are a mass-media and represent an option that can be taken into consideration when looking for a sexual partner. Our work considers 1751 sexually explicit personal ads written by men, women, couples. The sample includes people looking for same sex as well as other sex partners. Different kinds of sexual preferences are discussed.

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