Assignment # 3: Associations Unlimited

Trends in the formation and dissolution of new interest groups and social movement organizations can be of great value in trying to untangle the causes of trends in attention to issues by the media and the government. There exists an excellent source of current information on existing national level interest groups and social movements in the U.S. It is *Associations Unlimited.* This data base is available on-line. Annual volumes containing the same information for previous years are published as the *Encyclopedia of Association*.

In this assignment we ask you to replicate a series of searches in *Associations Unlimited* for the key phrases "civil rights" and "abortion. Then we ask you to develop both an organizational founding and an organizational density time series chart using the results from one of your abortion searches. Then, we ask you to complete a search using your own choice of a key word or phrase to produce a current count. Do this two times using different search criteria.

To access the Associations Unlimited, enter LIAS. Choose E-Resources (A-Z). Choose Associations Unlimited. You will access the Basic Search Screen. Chose "Subject/Any Word Search."

The basic unit of analysis for creating time series of organizational foundings is an annual count. But first we want you to learn to search this data base in order to generate organizational density estimates for early 2004. First click on "Search Tips" and read the rules for searches.

National Only. At the top of the search screen you will see three boxes designated National, International, and Regional, State and Local. The default option, as you will see is for all of these to be on. This data base is reasonably complete for National level organizations, but is not at all comprehensive for International or for Regional State and Local Organizations. Therefore, we will use only National, and you must click off the two other boxes. Before you begin your searches only the National box should have a check.

For the first part of this assignment, we ask that you generate annual counts for organizations that are found with searches using the phrase civil rights. First, enter civil rights in the "Free Text:" window, and click search. Then enter "civil right" in the "Free Text:" window, and search. Then click on List of Subjects to the right of the "Subject Descriptor:" window and click. Click on "C" at the top of the screen, and scroll down until you find civil rights. You will notice that you are not provided an option of civil rights only, but an option of "civil rights and civil liberties. Choose "Civil rights and Civil liberties" and it will appear in the "Subject descriptor:" window, and then search. Make sure you have cleared the form after completing a search and beginning a new one. Once you have completed these searches, enter the total organizational counts for each of them below.

Then, complete three searches for the keyword "abortion" that replicate the conditions for the three searches you completed for civil rights, and enter the total organizational counts below.

Search Conditions	Counts	
	Civil Rights	Abortion
Free Text without ""		
Free Text with ""		
Subject Descriptor		

Next, create a data base for year of founding for each of the organizations that are included in the "Subject Descriptor" search for "abortion." Do this by clicking on each organization and recording its founding date. For instance, you will find that "The Abortion Access Project" was founded in 1992. Once you have gathered all of the founding dates for the organizations located in this search, create a distribution of founding dates. You may want to group them into five years intervals for presentation (e.g. 1990-94, 1995-99, 2000-2004 and so on backwards). Then, create a cumulative total number of organizations for each of your founding periods, by adding the number of new organizations founded in each period to the total from the previous period. This is your organizational density time series. Now enter this data into an Excel data base a create a chart that displays both the founding data and the density data over time.